



Connor Hotel Collection (R0136)

Collection Number: R0136

Collection Title: Connor Hotel Collection

Dates: 1908-1978

Creator: Connor Hotel (Joplin, Mo.)

Abstract: The Connor Hotel Collection contains photocopies of an illustrated promotional booklet, photographs, and newspaper clippings concerning the Connor Hotel in Joplin, Jasper County, Missouri.

Collection Size: 0.02 cubic foot
(2 folders)

Language: Collection materials are in English.

Repository: The State Historical Society of Missouri

Restrictions on Access: Collection is open for research. This collection is available at [The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Rolla](#). If you would like more information, please contact us at rolla@shsmo.org. Collections may be viewed at any research center.

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Preferred Citation: [Specific item; box number; folder number] *Connor Hotel Collection* (R0136); The State Historical Society of Missouri Research Center-Rolla [after first mention may be abbreviated to SHSMO-Rolla].

Donor Information: The collection was loaned for photocopying to the University of Missouri by Elizabeth Nolan Wilson on December 14, 1982 (Accession No. RA0157). An addition was loaned on September 22, 1997 by the Webb City Public Library (Accession No. RA0685).

Related Materials: Additional materials related to the Connor Hotel Collection can be found in the following collections:

Joplin Business College Collection (R0891)

Commercial Club of Joplin Collection (R0900)

Hotel Connor Brochure Collection (R1427)

Missouri Alliance for Historic Preservation Records (CA5973)

Stephen R. Raiche Papers (S0623)

Processed by: Processed by John F. Bradbury, February 3, 1983. Revised by Mark Stauter, October 1, 1997. Revised by Kathleen Seale, May 1, 2020.

Historical Note:

The lavish building of the Connor Hotel in Joplin, Missouri was begun by Thomas Connor in 1906. It opened in 1908 and closed in 1969. Thomas Connor arrived in Joplin in 1871. He was an Irish immigrant who had lived in Ohio, Montana, and Texas before moving to Missouri. He operated a hack service and saloon in Joplin, and in less than six years, he had become president of the Miner's Bank of Joplin. He was instrumental in bringing the first smelter to the area, and he was a principal owner of the Joplin Water Works. He was a well-known public benefactor and an ardent Democrat. He was selected as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention in 1892 and as a State Senator from Jasper County in 1906.

In 1906, Connor began construction of the landmark hotel, which bore his name, but he did not live to see it completed. After his death in 1907, his heirs continued construction as he had planned it. The hotel opened in 1908, under management of the Dean brothers, managers of Kansas City's Baltimore Hotel. The Connor Hotel incorporated the finest building stone, ornate marble, bronze, and mahogany in its construction, and was said to have cost three-quarters of a million dollars. The management touted it as "the finest hotel west of New York." Joplin's social life revolved around the Connor in the days when the city was the heart of the mining boom in the Tri-State Mining District. The Connor's business declined rapidly as the area's mines played out, and it was further diminished by competition from motels. The hotel finally closed in 1969, and despite several attempts, it never re-opened. In a final spectacular episode, the building collapsed in 1978, while being readied for dynamiting, killing several workers who were trapped inside.

Arrangement:

The collection has been arranged into the following two series:

Promotional Booklet
Historical Information

Scope and Content Note:

Promotional Booklet

This series contains a fifty-four page promotional booklet copyrighted by the management upon the opening of the hotel in 1908. The booklet is illustrated, and contains advertisements by the principal contractors and builders.

Historical Information

This series consists of newspaper clippings, pictures of rooms in the Connor Hotel, and a poem remembering the Connor by Elizabeth Nolan Wilson. The newspaper clippings contains articles

pertaining to the history of the Connor Hotel and the ultimate destruction of the building. An itemized list of the newspaper articles is available in the appendix. The series is arranged chronologically.

Container List:

| | |
|--------------|--|
| f. 1 | Promotional Booklet |
| Box 001 f. 1 | Hotel Connor promotional booklet, 1908 |
| f. 2 | Historical Information |
| f. 2 | Newspaper clippings and photographs, 1960-1978 |

Index:

| Index Term | Folder | Image |
|----------------------------|--------|-------|
| Connor, Thomas, 1847-1907 | 1-2 | |
| Connor Hotel (Joplin, Mo.) | 1-2 | Yes |
| Hotels--Missouri | 1-2 | Yes |
| Jasper County (Mo.) | 1-2 | |
| Joplin (Mo.) | 1-2 | Yes |
| Nolan, Ralph | 2 | |

Appendix:

The appendix consist of an itemized list of the newspaper clippings available in folder two that document the history of the Connor Hotel.

| Publication | Article Title | Date |
|-------------------------|---|--------------------|
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | "Front Portion of Connor Hotel Sold To Alsonett; Firm Bought Annex in 1946" | December 25, 1960 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | "Relieve or Regret" | December 25, 1960 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | "Connor Elegance Recalled" | January 30, 1966 |
| <i>Kansas City Star</i> | "Sale of Joplin Hotel Recalls Colorful Past" | February 12, 1967 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | "Connor Sale Looming? " | February 19, 1970 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | "Hotel took more than year to build, cost \$750,000" | August 1, 1971 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | "Hotel ownership still in dispute" | August 1, 1971 |
| <i>The Chart</i> | "'Grand Lady' Stands vacant at 4 th and Main" | February 14, 1975 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | "Group Gains Option to Purchase Connor" | September 2, 1976 |
| | "Historic Hotel Eyed for New Library Site" | no date |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | "Connor Property Proposed as Site of New Public Library" | September 2, 1976 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | "Historic Connor Towers Once Center of Attraction" | September 2, 1976 |
| <i>Kansas City Star</i> | "Connor Hotel Saga Not Over Yet" | no date |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | "Downtown Group Nears Goal in Drive to Acquire Connor" | November 20, 1976 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | "Save the Connor" | November 21, 1976 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | "Connor Owner Grants Extension on Sale Option" | January 7, 1977 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | "City Receives Little Response From Public on Fate of Connor" | February 25, 1977 |
| <i>Kansas City Star</i> | "New Hope for Historic Hotel" | February 28, 1977 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | "City to Ask Board to Condemn Hotel" | no date |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | "Inspector, Newsman Tour Connor Tower" | March 16, 1977 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | "City Orders Repairs Must be Made to Connor Towers Hotel Structure" | no date |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | "State Historian Recommends Connor Remain on Register" | April 23, 1977 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | "Downtown Group Ratifies Agreement" | April 30, 1977 |
| | "Soaring Sapling" | May 20, 1977 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | "HEW Representative to Inspect Connor" | June 14, 1977 |
| | "Study Shows Conner Suitable for Library" | July 15, 1977 |
| | "Connor Decision Due Next Week" | August 17, 1977 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | "Agency Delays Decision on Demolition of Connor" | September 13, 1977 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | "Connor Towers Meeting Set for Thursday Night" | November 1, 1977 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | "Public Meeting set November 3, on Connor Site for Library" | November 1977 |
| | "Officials Say No Proposals to Save Connor Submitted" | November 16, 1977 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | "Official Reach No Decision on Connor During Meeting" | no date |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | "No Proposals for Connor as Monday Deadline Nears" | December 3, 1977 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | "Connor to be Town Down to Make Room for Library" | December 7, 1977 |
| | "Board Authorizes Execution of Connor Memorandum" | December 9, 1977 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | "Connor End in Sight" | December 13, 1977 |
| | "Letter to Editor by Osmund Overby" | December 14, 1977 |
| <i>Carthage Press</i> | "Deadline Today to Save Connor Hotel" | December 20, 1977 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | "State Official to Execute Connor Agreement Today" | December 21, 1977 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | "Officials Continue Efforts on Connor Issue" | December 23, 1977 |

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|-------------------------|--|-------------------|
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | “Connor Agreement Memorandum Mailed” | December 24, 1977 |
| | “Connor Annex Plans Proceed” | January 22, 1978 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | “Grand Lady of the Past” | November 5, 1978 |
| <i>Focus</i> | “R.I.P. Connor Hotel: 1906-1978” | November 5, 1978 |
| <i>Arizona Republic</i> | “5 Trapped As Vacant Hotel Falls” | November 12, 1978 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | “Joplin Man, One of 3 Missing” | November 29, 1978 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | “‘It Just Came Down...in a Big Fog’” | November 29, 1978 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | “Search Dog Draws Credit” | November 29, 1978 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | “Worker Survives 82-Hour ‘Burial’ in Connor Ruins” | November 29, 1978 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | “Connor’ Swayed’ Before Dropping” | November 29, 1978 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | “Explosives to Demolish Connor Annex on Sunday” | November 29, 1978 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | “Connor Hotel Annex Reduced to Rubble” | November 29, 1978 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | “The City Says Thanks” | November 29, 1978 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | “Annex Goes Down” | November 29, 1978 |
| <i>Joplin Globe</i> | “Garvin Gamble on Connor Ended in Disappointment” | November 1978 |