R Connor Hotel (Joplin, Mo.).
136 Collection, 1908-1978.
Two folders, photocopies.

This collection is available at The State Historical Society of Missouri. If you would like more information, please contact us at shsresearch@umsystem.edu.

This collection includes an illustrated promotional booklet, photographs, and newspaper clippings concerning the Connor Hotel in Joplin, Jasper County, Missouri. The lavish building was begun by Thomas Connor in 1906. It opened in 1908 and closed in 1969. The building collapsed while being readied for demolition in 1978.

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 workmen who were trapped inside.

This collection includes photocopies of a fifty-four page illustrated booklet published by the hotel’s management in 1908; several clippings which detail the history and ultimate end of the building, 1960-1978; and five interior views of the hotel.

r157 14 December 1982 Elizabeth Nolan Wilson Loaned for photocopying
r685 22 September 1997 Webb City Public Library Loaned for photocopying

Shelf List

This collection includes an illustrated promotional booklet, photographs, and newspaper clippings concerning the Connor Hotel in Joplin, Jasper County, Missouri. The lavish building was begun by Thomas Connor in 1906. It opened in 1908 and closed in 1969. The building collapsed while being readied for demolition in 1978.

Folder 1: “Hotel Connor,” 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.*
Folder 2: Clippings and miscellaneous material pertaining to the history of the Connor Hotel and the ultimate destruction of the building, 1960-1978.

*25 Dec 1960  Joplin Globe  Front Portion of Connor Hotel Sold to Alsonett; Firm Bought Annex in 1946

*25 Dec 1960  Joplin Globe  Relieve or Regret

*30 Jan 1966  Joplin Globe  Connor Elegance Recalled

*12 Feb 1967  K.C. Star  Sale of Joplin Hotel Recalls Colorful Past

19 Feb 1970  Joplin Globe  Connor Sale Looming?

01 Aug 1971  Joplin Globe  Hotel took more than year to build, cost $750,000

*01 Aug 1971  Joplin Globe  Hotel ownership still in dispute

14 Feb 1975  The Chart  ‘Grand Lady’ Stands vacant at 4th and Main ...

02 Sep 1976  Joplin Globe  Group Gains Option to Purchase Connor

*n.d.  K.C. Star?  Historic Hotel Eyed for New Library Site

02 Sep 1976  Joplin Globe  Connor Property Proposed as Site of New Public Library

02 Sep 1976.  Joplin Globe  Historic Connor Towers Once Center of Attraction

n.d.  Joplin Globe  Connor Hotel Saga Not Over Yet

20 Nov 1976  Joplin Globe  Downtown Group Nears Goal In Drive to Acquire Connor

21 Nov 1976  Joplin Globe  Save the Connor

07 Jan 1977  Joplin Globe  Connor Owner Grants Extension on Sale Option

25 Feb 1977  Joplin Globe  City Receives Little Response From Public on Fate of Connor

28 Feb 1977  K.C. Star  New Hope for Historic Hotel

n.d.  Joplin Globe  City to Ask Board to Condemn Hotel

16 Mar 1977  Joplin Globe  Inspector, Newsmen Tour Connor Tower

n.d.  Joplin Globe  City Orders Repairs Must Be Made to Connor Towers Hotel Structure

23 Apr 1977  Joplin Globe  State Historian Recommends Connor Remain On Register

30 Apr 1977  Joplin Globe  Downtown Group Ratifies Agreement

20 May 1977  Joplin Globe?  Soaring Sapling

14 Jun 1977  Joplin Globe  HEW Representative to Inspect Connor

15 Jul 1977  Joplin Globe?  Study Shows Connor Suitable for Library

17 Aug 1977  Joplin Globe?  Connor Decision Due Next Week

13 Sep 1977  Joplin Globe  Agency Delays Decision on Demolition of Connor

01 Nov 1977  Joplin Globe  Connor Towers Meeting Set for Thursday Night

?? Nov 1977  Joplin Globe  Public Meeting Set November 3 on Connor Site for Library

16 Nov 1977  Joplin Globe  Officials Say No Proposals to Save Connor Submitted

n.d.  Joplin Globe  Officials Reach No Decision on Connor During Meeting

03 Dec 1977  Joplin Globe  No Proposals for Connor as Monday Deadline Nears

07 Dec 1977  Joplin Globe  Connor to be Torn Down to Make Room for Library

09 Dec 1977  Joplin Globe  Board Authorizes Execution of Connor Memorandum

13 Dec 1977  Joplin Globe  Connor End in Sight

14 Dec 1977  Joplin Globe  Letter to the Editor by Osmund Overby

20 Dec 1977  Carthage Press  Deadline Today To Save Connor Hotel

21 Dec 1977  Joplin Globe  State Official to Execute Connor Agreement Today

23 Dec 1977  Joplin Globe  Officials Continue Efforts on Connor Issue

24 Dec 1977  Joplin Globe  Connor Agreement Memorandum Mailed

22 Jan 1978  Joplin Globe  Connor Annex Plans Proceed

05 Nov 1978  Joplin Globe  Grand Lady of the Past

05 Nov 1978  Focus  R.I.P. Connor Hotel: 1906-1978

*12 Nov 1978  Ariz. Republic  5 trapped as vacant hotel falls

29 Nov 1978  Joplin Globe  Joplin Man, One Of 3 Missing

29 Nov 1978  Joplin Globe  ‘It Just Came Down ... in a Big Fog’

29 Nov 1978  Joplin Globe  Search Dog Draws Credit

29 Nov 1978  Joplin Globe  Worker Survives 82-Hour ‘Burial’ In Connor Ruins

29 Nov 1978  Joplin Globe  Connor ‘Swayed’ Before Dropping

29 Nov 1978  Joplin Globe  Explosives to Demolish Connor Annex on Sunday
29 Nov 1978   Joplin Globe   Connor Hotel Annex Reduced to Rubble
29 Nov 1978   Joplin Globe   The City Says Thanks
29 Nov 1978   Joplin Globe   Annex Goes Down
?? Nov 1978   Joplin Globe   Garvin Gamble on Connor Ended in Disappointment
n.d.          Joplin Globe   Six pictures of Connor rooms

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**Index Cards**

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Jasper County (Mo.).
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