

Our Missouri Podcast

Title: Episode 17: "A River in the City of Fountains"

Guest: Amahia Mallea

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KEVIN WALSH: Welcome to *Our Missouri*, a podcast about the people, places, culture, and history of the 114 counties and independent city of Saint Louis that comprise the great state of Missouri. Each episode focuses on a topic related to the state ranging from publications about Missouri's history to current projects undertaken by organizations to preserve and promote local institutions. The *Our Missouri Podcast* is recorded in the J. Christian Bay Rare Books Room at the State Historical Society of Missouri's Columbia Research Center, and is generously provided to you by the State Historical Society of Missouri. And now, here's your host, Sean Rost.

SEAN ROST: Good morning, good afternoon, and good evening, or at whatever hour you are tuning in to listen to the *Our Missouri Podcast*. My name is Sean Rost and I will be your guide as we explore the memories, moments, and misfortunes from our Missouri. Today's episode marks the end of Season 1 of *Our Missouri*, and all of us here appreciate your continued support of the podcast. We will be back in September 2019 with Season 2, but also be sure to mark your calendar for our special summer series on the 50th Anniversary of the Apollo 11 Moon Landing which launches at the end of June. To wrap up Season 1, we have a special guest with us today talking about an important topic not only in the history of the state, but also for current issues along its banks—the Missouri River. Our guest is Amahia Mallea. She holds a PhD in History from the University of Missouri, and presently serves as an Associate Professor of History at Drake University. Her book, *A River in the City of Fountains: An Environmental History of Kansas City and the Missouri River*, was published by the University Press of Kansas in 2018. In it, she explores the complex history of the river known as the "Big Muddy." Welcome to the *Our Missouri Podcast*, Amahia.

AMAHIA MALLEA: Hi. Thank you. Nice to be here.

SEAN ROST: Could you tell us a little bit about the origins of your book project?

AMAHIA MALLEA: Sure. So, I moved to Missouri for graduate school at Mizzou to study environmental history with Susan Flader. I think I was already oriented towards rivers because the year before graduate school I had been living in Bilbao which is in the backcountry in Spain. It's an old gritty industrial city on the banks of the Nervión River. It had only recently revamped its urban riverscape. It had the fancy Guggenheim Museum by Frank Gehry. So, it had this kind of grit and shine, and much attention to the river. The city was very attentive to its river. Before that, of course, I had been an undergraduate and lived in Portland, Oregon—which is also a city that is oriented towards its rivers—the Willamette and the Columbia. I had studied—I did a capstone research and I also worked at the historical society—both of them having to do with the Columbia River. So, I was already thinking about rivers. When I moved to Missouri—the

Missouri River is a mighty, majestic river, and yet, I wasn't feeling it from people who lived there, especially in Kansas City, which is where I started doing the research. There seems to be a disconnect between the people who lived in Kansas City and the fact that this mighty, majestic river was flowing by them, flowing through them, and people didn't see it or appreciate it. So, that disconnect was part of what I was very interested in exploring. As I continued to do my research, I just deeply fell in love with the Missouri River. I would bike along—if you live in Columbia, you have access to the Katy Trail very nearby. I would—almost every day—go out and ride along the river. Eventually, I took a bicycle trip 1,600 miles up the river from Columbia—just to stay close to the river and to talk to people near the river and to feel like I knew the river and the landscape and the cities alongside of it better. So, yeah, I spent a lot of time with the river.

SEAN ROST: What kind of resources did you utilize as you were working on the project—primary sources, secondary sources?

AMAHIA MALLEA: Mostly primary sources. As an environmental historian, I'm looking to use sources in a new way. My first attention has been to the urban infrastructure of Kansas City. How does the city function? What is the built environment like? How does the city literally run through the river through its infrastructure into people and then back out through its infrastructure to re-return to the river? That sometimes requires looking at primary sources in new ways. Sometimes reading between the lines. Thinking about how social and economic power, for example, shaped built environments. I think I was also attuned to Kansas City specifically because it was ripe for a re-envisioning, I think, of its relationship to its region. Prior to this, a lot of attention—and good attention—has been paid to the politics of Kansas City. But, I was very interested in the way that the region exists, in part, in a very split way. Kansas City, Kansas, and Kansas City, Missouri, and all of its suburbs are a unit and they do operate as a unit. And yet, they're also incredibly segregated. I think seeing all of the history in juxtaposition to the present made this a timely topic. In the early 21st Century when I started graduate school—this was also a time period when the Corps of Engineers was revising its master manual—that's the document that manages the Missouri River—also the Lewis and Clark Expedition Bicentennial Commemoration was just around the corner. So, there was a moment in time where a lot of people were paying attention to the river. So, this was a good time, I thought, to reconsider Kansas City's history.

SEAN ROST: Now, people who live in and around the Missouri River might see it simply as a waterway that bridges cross over or a waterway barges travel up and down upon. Yet, how do you see the river as an important component of people's everyday lives?

AMAHIA MALLEA: The Missouri River is—as I said—literally flowing through people. Every aspect of Kansas City's economic and social life—whether it's bathing the baby and making breakfast and flushing the toilet—is reliant upon the Missouri River. This, as well, of course, earlier in the 20th Century was much more obviously—the river was more obviously connected to its economy because Kansas City was a big booster of barge navigation on the Missouri River and on using the river to transport goods. That didn't quite pan out, but that was a focus for Kansas City's political and economic elite for much of the end of the 19th and 20th centuries. I

think it's really easy—as someone who has spent time in Kansas City—it's very easy for the river to be invisible. If you cross the river, you're going to do so at fifty-five, sixty-five, and up miles an hour. You are jockeying with traffic, and if you want to look at the river, you're going to have to do so while staying in your lane and craning your neck. There's no very much—historically—the public interface with the river has really declined since the mid-20th Century. That is, the majority of people can't get to the river. There are flood walls. There are levies. There are rock embankments. It's very difficult for the average Kansas Citian to feel connected to the river, even though in everyday life the average Kansas Citian is intimately connected to the Missouri River. I wanted to reveal that connection because I think that if we culturally feel that we are connected then we care. If we understand that intimate connection that we have—and some of that connection is just really mundane. As I said, it's drinking water and its toilets flushing and its runoff. We forget how connected we are because we take those utilitarian aspects for granted. I think probably most people could be familiar with this by when the city water goes out or when your power goes out. It's only then when you realize how important it is. We've become very accustomed to having those resources at our fingertips at all times. So, I wanted to reveal the ways that the river is at our fingertips at all times, and these very mundane uses that are so key to the health and wealth of the Kansas Cities. People's health—physical health—but also its economy is built upon the free and easy use of the Missouri River—the flowing through of the Missouri River into infrastructure bodies and back into the river again.

SEAN ROST: Now, presently there has been issues of flooding along various points of the river. We can think of up in Nebraska and Iowa and even portions down here in central Missouri and along the Missouri River Valley. There are those who will argue that the Missouri River really floods every year. But, you notably started your book with the 1903 flood. Why was that flood so significant to the people living in the Kansas Cities and really throughout the Missouri River Valley?

AMAHIA MALLEA: 1903 was a significant flood year. I started at that time for a couple of reasons. One actually does have to do with the attention that is paid to a river because of a flood. And so, while I have just listed off the mundane ways that the river is important to people, people do think of the river when it floods. And so, we forget the important ways that the river is with us on a daily basis. We tend to think of those extreme events, like a flood. So, 1903—it is a dramatic flood year, but it's also a year that people pause and they think and they are very conscious of the river's existence. Now, it tends to be in a negative way. When you know your ecology, you know that actually flood is, as you said, something that happens every year. The spring rise, for example, is an important part of the ecological cycle in the floodplains, etc. But, something else is happening in the early 20th Century that makes the 1903 flood significant and that is that prior to 1903 the boosters in Kansas City—the political and economic elite—people who are connected to political power and to industry—are lobbying for two things—flood control and navigation infrastructure. They're asking of this from the federal government. And so, the state of Missouri and its most important lobbyist, which becomes Kansas City, is arguing for federal dollars to be spent to manage the Missouri River in a way that will be good business in Kansas City and elsewhere—but especially Kansas City. Kansas Citians are the most vocal. The 1903 flood proves to be a significant event in proving that this river management is

necessary. That it's necessary to tame to the river with levies and infrastructure. And so, gradually we see in the 20th Century more and more funds that are put towards managing the Missouri River for economic uses. So, both to be able to build in the bottoms, for example, and have levies or flood walls that will protect the businesses that are there. But also, to put the river in a straitjacket. To have wing dams that channel the water so that you have a faster, deeper channel. All of this has had great ramifications for the Missouri River basin as it has shifted ecologically and the geography has shifted as well. But, its intent was to provide an economic river for the Kansas Cities. A river that would work for the industrialists of the Kansas Cities. So, the 1903 flood becomes one great piece of evidence in the file against the river and why it needs to be managed. Something similar is going to happen at mid-century. There will be another flood for the record books in the '40s and this happens just in time for the approval of the Pick-Sloan Act. The Pick-Sloan Act is the dream come true for the boosters and the lobbyist of river management. Not only does the Pick-Sloan Act—named for someone from the BLM¹ and someone from the Corps of Engineers—revamp the Upper Missouri Basin, but it changes the Lower Missouri Basin. So, upstream this is the start of all of these very large dams with the exception of one dam that was put in during the New Deal up in Montana. But, the other big dams are authorized through the Pick-Sloan project. Then, downstream it provides all of this money for the straitjacketing of the river. So, yes, floods helped policymakers make up their minds. So, in those moments, people are willing to put money down to make sure that such a disaster doesn't happen again. Cities, for example, because they have so much in the flood bottoms experience flooding as a disaster. So, the 1903 flood was very significant for that reason. It really is the beginning of a dramatic change in the relationship that the Kansas Cities have with the Missouri River. I would say that that change is set in stone in 1951 when the next major flood happens. At that point, many Kansas Citians have moved away from the bottoms, and the separation, the segregation, from the river becomes much more concrete in the postwar era.

SEAN ROST: Now, Kansas City is known for its boulevards and fountains. In fact, it's called "The City of Fountains." And really, it's well known for its parkways and waterways and kind of the long stretches that exist throughout large portions of the city. How did social reformers and politicians seek to utilize both these waterways and parkways in the name of community betterment and reform?

AMAHIA MALLEA: Well, every single one of those fountains is a celebration of the river. Kansas City does call itself "The City of Fountains," and I think rightly so. I think that is—whether Kansas Citians realize it or not—it's a celebration of the river and its symbolic of the importance of the river in their daily lives. I do hope that as we continue to talk about this that people will see that, that they will recognize a fountain as a symbol of their relationship with the world around them. Fountains start in the early 20th Century. They start in the Progressive Era. They are sold as social betterment. They are sold by Progressives and reformers as ways to provide healthy, safe drinking water—and not just because teetotalers, who are hoping people will drink water instead of beer—that's part of it—that by providing a drinking fountain on the street, for example, people can [quench their thirst] without having to go into a tavern. This, of

¹ Bureau of Land Management.

course, is important in Kansas City because the Pendergast Machine uses taverns in places like the West Bottom for political organizing. But, social reformers, Progressives of all stripes, especially, I would argue, those who are influenced by sanitary efficiency or by sanitation and by sanitary engineers—people we would call today environmental engineers—they are making the connection between a healthy and viable city and access to things like clean drinking water. We see during this time in the early 20th Century cities are kind of competing with each other to become healthy. Nobody wants to have the reputation of being an unhealthy city. So, whether it's Omaha or Chicago or Kansas City, these cities are touting their statistics and how healthy their citizens are. It's also a turning point in technology. In the early 20th Century, we will begin to see the use of technologies like chlorination that will make drinking water safer. And so, the start of an infrastructure that is accessible to the majority, and by the 1920s and '30s, the majority of Kansas Citians do have access to city drinking water. And so, that transition to a publicly owned resource that is accessible by the majority that happens in the Progressive Era. So, the fountains become symbolic of the city's power to transform and to protect its citizenry. Its infrastructure, also, I think, is symbolic of the way that a city shapes its citizens. Although by the New Deal the majority of people have access to drinking water, the majority of people in Kansas City do not have access to sewerage yet. That lags behind. So, drinking water access comes first. Sewerage second, often. And, I also don't want to make it seem like all Kansas Citians are treated equally by their city governments—whether its Kansas City, Kansas, or Missouri—because we see great disparity in the way that people have access to city resources, to urban infrastructure. There is a privileging of white, middle class, and elite families in Kansas City. Giving them better access to infrastructure, that is health giving, and that includes drinking water and sewerage. So, the Progressive Era is the time period when most American cities really began to take their shape, and that the infrastructure of public health is extended and it's slowly extended to the majority. Kansas City does become very famous the way that it presents itself as a landscape, a genteel landscape. You referenced the parkways as well and the park system. This is something that Kansas City was very proud of. Other cities would come and tour Kansas City to see the infrastructure and to use it as a model for their own cities. There was great debate within Kansas City about how to build and fund and upkeep this infrastructure. This kind of genteel park and boulevard infrastructure—as there is today. Whether this infrastructure was in part built for the minority or whether it was for the majority or whether it was serviced equally by the city. These are long debates that begin early in the 20th Century. There is bias in the way that parks are built. I found it very interesting as I went through primary sources the way that Kansas City would sell its park improvement with before and after photographs. It would have a photograph of a dilapidated community, and there would usually be children in the pictures. They were usually children of color so it might be African American children who are playing. That would be the before picture. Then, the after picture would be a genteel parkway. The city parks department represented these before and after photos as sort of playground for children of color versus a parkway for white people who have cars. This kind of juxtaposition between the two was meant to symbolize great improvement for the city of Kansas City, Missouri. So, we do see bias in the way that parks are employed as resources available to a select number of Kansas Citians.

SEAN ROST: Before we return to our conversation, let's take a step back in time with Bob Priddy to an event from this week in history in a "Missouri Minute."

BOB PRIDDY: I'm Bob Priddy with this "Missouri Moment" about the story of an airplane flight. It was cloudy that day. The runway was marshy. A small plane—heavily loaded that early morning—when the young pilot reached for a dream. The plane slowly gained speed. Lifted off the soft ground. Cleared a tractor at the end of the runway by fifteen feet. Some power lines by twenty [feet]. Then, over a hill and some trees. Charles Lindbergh was on his way to Paris on that May 20, 1927. Charles Lindbergh came to Missouri for an air race in 1924. He gave flying lessons to earn a living, and joined the Missouri National Guard. He started flying the mail from Saint Louis to Chicago. Although he crashed a couple of times, he emerged unhurt, and decided he could fly all the way to Paris. Late in 1926, he rounded up some financial backers—many from Saint Louis—to finance a solo flight. Never done before—but he did it in thirty-three hours. Not the first transatlantic flight, but the first person to do it alone. Charles Lindbergh, a member of the Missouri National Guard, flew a plane named for a Missouri city into the record books. You can see it today at the Smithsonian's National Air & Space Museum. I'm Bob Priddy for the Center for Missouri Studies.

SEAN ROST: At one point in the book, you say that Kansas City, Kansas, produced more of the wealth of the region whereas Kansas City, Missouri, held that wealth. What do you mean by that?

AMAHIA MALLEA: If you think of the West Bottoms, if you think of the bottoms along the Kaw or Kansas River, which is where a large part of Kansas City's industrial history is. That's where you have the meatpacking, for example. It's where you have the heavier industry. A lot of that is actually on the Kansas side of the border. If you think of, even today, where the graineries are—the elevators—full of wheat, that's on the Kansas side. So, Kansas City is drawing in the resources of its region, of the Great Plains. For example, those cattle or those wheat fields. It's drawing labor as well. Much of the production and the wealth generating production is happening on the Kansas City, Kansas, side of the border. The state line runs right through the middle of the bottoms. The bottoms are quizzically split by the state line. The people who owned those industries tended to live on the Missouri side of the line. And so, although this is operating—the Kansas Cities are operating as a unit, there are also ways that we see segregation of finances, for example. So, the people who own the wealth are investing themselves on the Missouri side of the line even if the wealth and capital is being generated on the Kansas side of the line. So, I think that Kansas City, Kansas, has felt like it's gotten the short end of this the way that most people think of the Kansas Cities as they think only of Kansas City, Missouri. I think Kansas City, Missouri, has put itself forward as the highbrow part of the Kansas Cities. The cultural capital of the region. Kansas City, Kansas, is just as important to this urban unit, but it doesn't get the same acknowledgement or respect. And so, I think it's important to recognize that many of those industries that put Kansas City on the map, that make it a competitor—a distant competitor, but still second place to Chicago in meatpacking, for example—is actually on the Kansas City, Kansas, side of the line.

SEAN ROST: Interesting. That's actually in present day too thinking about all that's on the west side versus what is on the east side on the state borderline. That's very interesting. We've talked

about this a little bit going back to the distribution of resources with public sanitation and public water. During the early 20th Century, Kansas City, Missouri, styled itself really as an "All-American City," and that was defined really by the fact that they pointed out their large native-born, white population. Yet, in points in your book you point out that that was not necessarily the case for the entire Kansas Cities. What do you mean by that?

AMAHIA MALLEA: Yeah. This connects to your previous question. Just as the industrial production is happening more so on the Kansas side of the line, that's also where the industrial workers reside, especially earlier in the 20th Century. Prior to the 1951 flood, a lot of people still lived close to where they worked. And so, you have communities like Armourdale, for example, that are full of people who live and work in the meatpacking industry. What we see is that the majority of immigrants or people of color live nearer to where they work. These are industries that attract immigrant populations and therefore they live on the Kansas side of the line. Kansas City, Missouri, loves to sort of claim the great wealth of the Kansas Cities for itself, but would choose to be selective when it talked about its population. Kansas City, Missouri, advertised itself as the most American city, and it did so because it had early in the 20th Century—if you excluded the rest of the Kansas Cities—it had a large native-born population. This was part of that competition with Chicago, right. Chicago had a large immigrant population. This is in the midst of nativism and the height of the Klan in American politics and society. And so, early in the 20th Century to claim that you had this large native-born, white population was to ignore the reality of the Kansas Cities which did operate as a social and economic unit. So, a majority of immigrants—a larger percentage of those immigrants—lived on the Kansas side of the line. So, it was a clever attempt by Kansas City, Missouri, to ignore the reality of its population.

SEAN ROST: Now, there are larger sections in the book towards the end that you point out that during the 20th Century there were two competing visions of the Missouri River that really emerged. One was an "Economic River," and one was a "Healthy River." How have health and wealth defined the river and its history?

AMAHIA MALLEA: Well, I use those terms, "Economic River" and "Healthy River," to try to distinguish between two strains that are debating what the appropriate use and management of the Missouri River is. The "Economic River" I discussed when I talked about the boosters and the political and economic elite and those were connected to state power in Missouri, for example, who are lobbying for federal dollars to manage the Missouri River for the economic benefit of industrialists. They have a vision that I call the "Economic River." That is that the river's purpose is to serve to produce more from the industrial economy. It functions as part of the industrial economy. The "Healthy River," on the other hand, is a vision that is developed by public health officials, by sanitarians, by Progressive reformers. People who are more attuned to public health and the needs of the citizenry, whether that be the city or the entire basin. There are two individuals that I talk about in the book that are really important to contributing and defining this vision of a healthy river. One of those is Samuel Crumbine. He was a doctor from Kansas and he becomes head of the State Board of Health in Kansas for a long time before moving on to do work in the [Herbert] Hoover administration. He's one of our most important public health officials in this important period of reform of public health nationwide. A time period in which

new attitudes [of] information and technology is being taught to the average American citizens. The way germ theory is being decentralized, for example. Crumrine truly believed that the Kaw River [and] the Missouri River that these were rivers that needed to be managed for water quality. What was important was the way that waterways protected people. The ways that cities relied on these waterways for basic urban services. The other person that's important is Robert E. McDonnell from the firm Burns & McDonnell. McDonnell and his firm did a lot of the engineering—the sanitary engineering—and the public infrastructure for drinking water plants and sewer plants around the Midwest. Although it was good for his business to lobby in favor of public drinking water systems and sewerage systems, he also had a strong political belief in progressive reform and the need to secure democracy through these basic aspects of human health. If everyone has good public health, then you can create economic wealth. And so, both Crumrine and McDonnell argued from a perspective that the river needed to be managed in order to prop up the good health of the community, of the city, of the region itself. Both of them from their fields—from their medical fields, from engineering fields—worked towards this. But, while the "Health River" vision was important, it was in tension with the vision of the "Economic River." Ultimately, the "Economic River" wins. We have today a river that is managed first and foremost for flood control and navigation, for irrigation, for recreation. Over the course of the 20th and early 21st Century, drinking water quality or public health have been a minor concern for the way that the river is managed. So, I would argue that it's time for a re-envisioning of how we define economics and health and how we think of the river. A healthy river and a healthy populace I think will indeed contribute to a healthy economy. So, the argument or the theory sort of rests on whether you think good economics creates good health or whether you think good health creates good economics, and which of those you prioritize. And so, this is something that sanitarians and Americans have debated always. What do you prioritize? Do you prioritize the economy and assume that that money will create good health? Or, do you focus first and foremost on the public good and on creating healthy bodies and doing so equally with the assumption that whatever comes out of that is what a good economy looks like. So, I think we continue to have this debate today. The fact that we still are debating the river's management and what the proper role of the river is in our economy is evidence of that.

SEAN ROST: Finally, I want to kind of think about the present day, and you brought it up there a little in the last question. We can think back to the 19th Century when access to the waterways of the Missouri River was so important for trade and commerce and for a lot of different things, and up through the building of river walls, the construction of what you define as this navigable river. How do Kansas Citians—and really we could think of people living across the entire expanse of the river—how do they view their relationship with the river today?

AMAHIA MALLEA: I think there are some chinks in the flood wall. Since I have moved to the Midwest, I've started to see the ways that people's attitudes toward the river are shifting. One of the other ways that I came to know and to be connected to the river was through river cleanups. River Relief, for example, sends hundreds of people out every single year out onto the river's banks or out onto boats in order to collect garbage. For many people, this is the first time that they've had a chance to be on or near the river. I think that we're seeing more and more grassroots work that gets people interested in their waterways. This is in Kansas City along the

Blue River. The same thing has happened. More and more people are interested in seeing and protecting their waterways. The origin of that I think is in part related to the environmental movement starting in the '50s, the '60s and the '70s. In '73, there's a flood on the Missouri River that, I think, slowly begins the shift among some conservationists about what a better use of the Missouri River would be. There's a slow swelling at the grassroots in asking for more public spaces near the river. I think the single most important thing that then happens is the 1993 flood. The 1993 flood provides the opportunity for those germinating ideas that there should be more public space, and that the river needs to be managed differently. It provides the opportunity for some changes. And so, after the 1993 flood, there were willing sellers. People who owned land in the bottoms, for example, up and down the Lower Missouri Basin were willing to sell. So, that's how we get the origin of the Big Muddy National Wildlife System. The string of pearls along the Missouri River. So, of course, the idea is that you provide not just public space for people to go and get near the river, places for people to hunt, but you also give the river room to rise. So, you take the pressure off of places farther downstream if you allow the river to rise into its flood bottoms during flood times. And so, the 1993 flood is what provides that opportunity. I think also, just like the 1903 flood, it reinserts itself into the public memory. All of the sudden people are like, "Wow, there's a river there and that river has power." Here in Des Moines—although I did not live here—in 1993 the city of Des Moines lost its drinking water for, I think, twelve days—about the same period of time that Kansas City lost its drinking water in the 1903 flood. That was a very dramatic experience for people. People still talk about it today. They still reminisce about the ways that they went about their daily life without access to safe public drinking water. So, in addition to those changes to create public access and to begin to shift in small ways the management of the river with those national wildlife refuges, we also begin to see more demands from the public to have access to boat ramps, for example. There are very few of them. There are very few places where you can take boats in and out, where you can fuel up on the river, where you could put a canoe in safely and take it out farther downstream. And so, creating an infrastructure for people to access the river has been slow, but it really begins after 1993. I think the Lewis and Clark Expedition Bicentennial Commemoration was also important because suddenly people wanted to see the river. In order to remember this event, people wanted to get near the river and we begin to see some infrastructure shift, even in Kansas City which has been the slowest city to change its infrastructure and to embrace the river. We see some trails. We see some public parks. Slowly more interest, more interest in seeing the river. Currently, if you are in the West Bottoms, it's very difficult to get to the river. There's likely a twelve-foot flood wall between you and the river. There are a few places like the Berkley Park—I forgot what its new name is—it's not Berkley Park anymore. It's the old port. Places like that that are down on the river that are public spaces where if you wanted to see clearly, touch, watch the river—slowly—these are places that are developing. But, as I said, Kansas City is much farther behind most American or developed countries in the world in the way those cities have treated and revived their urban connection to the river. I think we've also started to see, in addition to things like River Relief and cleanups on the river, things like there's a race now that goes from Kansas City down to, I think, Saint Charles or to somewhere near Saint Louis. That is, I think, a kayak race on the river. I think it's called the Missouri River 340. So, in small ways, there's some exciting things that are happening. People are more aware of the river than they were before. At

the grassroots level, a lot of that comes back to the 1993 flood, and we've also started to see, then, these policy shifts in the way that federal entities, for example, are treating the Missouri River.

SEAN ROST: Thank you very much for joining us today for this fascinating conversation.

AMAHIA MALLEA: Thank you. I appreciate it, Sean.

SEAN ROST: Thanks for listening to this week's episode. As always, I am your host, Sean Rost. The show's producer is Brian Austin. The opening and concluding credits are narrated by Kevin Walsh. If you are interested in more of the people, places, culture, and history around our Missouri, check out the following upcoming events:

Coming up this summer, the *Our Missouri Podcast* will launch a four-part series celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Apollo 11 mission and moon landing. In an effort to document the history of the moon landing and grow the Historical Society's oral history archive, we will be collecting stories from listeners who are interested in speaking about their memories of this historic event. These "Memories of the Moon Landing" conversations will be preserved in the Missouri Innovation & Exploration Oral History Project (C4352), with some of the stories being featured on the podcast. In you are interested in contributing your story, please contact us by email at "ourmissouri@shsmo.org."

KEVIN WALSH: Thank you for listening to the *Our Missouri Podcast*. If you would like to learn more about the podcast, including past and future episodes, information about guests, and upcoming events, please visit our website at shsmo.org/our-missouri.