

the 7 Wonders of Osage County

Comments from students who helped choose the Seven Wonders

Osage County Courthouse



"People travel from different places to see what the courthouse looks like and visit other unusual looking courthouses."

Kala Barajas  
Osage City Middle School

Burlingame Downtown Bricks



"The brick streets in Burlingame represent the town's history. It is also one of the few brick streets left in the state of Kansas. Our brick road is built on the Santa Fe Trail, and if you are a little bit older, you may feel better because the brick street is older than the people who drive on it."

Burlingame Seventh Graders

Santa Fe Depot



"Everyone notices the depot when they come into town, and they say 'This place has a lot of history inside of it.' People also meet at the depot for things. It tells the history of Osage City, because it's always had a train going through it. It is like the city slogan, 'Right on track.'"

Katelyn Payne  
Osage City Middle School

Santa Fe Trail



"The Santa Fe Trail once went through Osage County. The trail traveled from Missouri, through Osage County, down to New Mexico. On its way, it passed through the area that is now Santa Fe Trail High School. Near the school and many other places in Osage County, the ruts from many traveling wagons can still be seen. These ruts show exactly where the trail went. Knowing that Osage County was part of the history of our country changes the way we look at the county today."

Chloe Cowen  
Carbondale Attendance Center

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Osage County Courthouse



Wayne White/Herald-Chronicle

Courthouse serves as center for the county

Rosie Blacketer  
Staff Writer

The Osage County Courthouse has a long history dating back to 1887. The original courthouse was built in 1887 by the Lyndon Improvement Association.

Lots were then deeded to Osage County for \$1 apiece. The deed read in part, "as long as it is used for a courthouse." This original building stood on the northeast corner of 7th and Topeka streets, in Lyndon.

When the old structure was deemed old and no longer useful, bids were submitted to purchase it. Robert Murdock won the bid for \$125.50, and was awarded all materials from the building. He tore it down in October 1925, using the materials to build a bungalow on his farm.

On June 30, 1921, a contract was awarded to build a new courthouse in the town square. Mon. J. Green was to build the present-day courthouse,

which is located at 717 Topeka Ave, for \$196,600, and construction began the following month.

The cornerstone of the courthouse was laid Dec. 8, 1921, the roof was finished in May 1922 and dedication of the new building was April 22, 1923. Henry Justin Allen, then governor of the state of Kansas, gave the keynote dedication speech.

The courthouse is considered the main historic commercial core in Lyndon and sits on a full city block, along with the county jail. Prior to construction of the courthouse, the block was occupied by private homes and commercial buildings.

The three-story, cubed reinforced concrete structure has frame floors and a frame and steel truss roof. The building measures 100 by 83 feet. It has brick and clay tile curtain walls, faced with tooled limestone at the base and blond brick on the second and third floors.

The architect's use of symmetry and choice of

classically inspired architectural features inspired the design of the courthouse.

Other features of the building include limestone and brick rectangle blocks arranged to look like a row of teeth, fluted decorative pilasters, and a flat roof. It sports steel doors and windows; the original doors were steel with large panels of beveled glass and bronze kick plates. The front doors featured decorative bronze-plated grilles over the plate glass.

Over the years, necessary remodeling has caused offices to be shuffled to other locations, due to the ever-growing need for more space in the courthouse.

The courtroom itself has always occupied the third floor of the courthouse, but over the years, offices on the second and third floors have come and gone.

Jean Timm, of the Osage County Historical Society, assisted in research of this article.



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