



Victoria

The city of Victoria has a Recreation Commission which is in charge of the youth recreation programs for kids age 5 to 14 years. The programs include:

- Soccer
- Baseball
- Softball
- Biddy Basketball
- Instructional Basketball
- Flag Football
- Volleyball

Source: <http://victoriaks.com/recreation.htm>

REGIONAL PARKS AND RECREATION

There are key recreational facilities, on a regional basis, where the residents of Victoria County participate.

Cedar Bluff Reservoir

Construction of Cedar Bluff Reservoir began in April of 1949 with the intention of providing flood control, irrigation and recreation. The reservoir was completed in 1951 and filled that same year. This Bureau of Reclamation owned reservoir, which is managed by the Department of Wildlife and Parks, quickly became a popular recreational destination. The reservoir and surrounding public lands provided many

opportunities that had previously been non-existent to this region. In 1962, Cedar Bluff State Park was developed to accommodate the public by providing outdoor recreational facilities and activities. Cedar Bluff State Park continues to thrive today. Annual visitation is consistently over the 250,000 mark.



Photograph 7.1
Aerial of Cedar Bluffs State Park and Reservoir

The facility offers camping, cabins, fishing and hunting. It has 6,869 surface acres at conservation level. The maximum depth of the reservoir is 42 feet.

Source: <https://ksoutdoors.com/State-Parks/Locations/Cedar-Bluff>



Lake Wilson (Wilson State Park)

Wilson State Park was established by the Kansas Legislature in 1966. The Hell Creek Area was established at this time.

Wilson State Park has four large shelters available for use. Tatanka (the church) is a great place for weddings and is located on the Hell Creek side of the state park. The Otoe area has Pine Shelter and Yucca Shelter. All the shelters are covered and have picnic tables and charcoal grills. Electricity is available at Tatanka & Pine. Yucca shelter does not have electricity.



Photograph 7.2
Aerial of Wilson Lake

Lake Wilson Marina is located in the Hell Creek Area of the state park and is a full service marina. They carry all kinds of items needed for camping and fishing, including food/drink, dry goods, bait and tackle, and many other items. Boat slip rental, storage rental, and boat repair are also available through the marina.

Webster State Park

Webster Reservoir was built by the United States Department of Interior Bureau of Reclamation in 1958. Webster State Park was added to the Kansas park system in 1965. The facility is located in Rooks County. The facility offers camping, hiking trails, cabins, fishing and hunting.

The facility has several camping areas, including:

- Eagles Landing;
- Old Marina Campground 29-31;
- Old Marina Campground 21-26;
- Old Marina Campground 1-20 and 27-28;
- Hill Top Campground;
- Lakeview Campground;

- Rock Point Campground;
- Goose Flat; and
- Old Town.

The facility has 3,740 surface acres. The maximum depth of the reservoir is 42 feet.

Source: <https://ksoutdoors.com/State-Parks/Locations/Webster>



Photograph 7.3
Aerial of Webster State Park

GOLF COURSES

There are three golf courses serving Victoria and the Ellis County area. The following are basic descriptions of each facility.

Ellis Golf Club

The Ellis Golf Club is a nine hole facility measuring 2,912 yards and is a Par 35. The course is located



Photograph 7.4
Ellis Golf Course
Source: Ellis County GIS

on the southeast corner of the community.

Fort Hays Municipal Golf Course

The Fort Hays Municipal Golf Course is an 18-hole facility measuring 6,282 yards and is a Par 71. The



course is located adjacent to the old Fort Hays State Historical Site.



Photograph 7.5
Fort Hays Golf Course
Source: Ellis County GIS



Photograph 7.7
RPM Speedway
Source: Ellis County GIS

Smoky Hill Country Club

The Smoky Hill Country Club is a private club. The course is an 18-hole facility measuring 6,261 yards and is a Par 71.



Photograph 7.6
Smoky Hill Country Club
Source: Ellis County GIS

This is a multi-use facility for concerts and all motor sports such as tractor pulls, demolition derbies, tough trucks, motorcycle events, and many other functions. The grandstand has a seating capacity for more than 4,000 people, with restrooms and concessions located on the grounds. The speedway is located at the Ellis County Fairgrounds.

Source: <http://www.rpmspeedway.net/?page=about>

MUSEUMS

Ellis County Historical Society

The Ellis County Historical Society's was previously located in the old First Presbyterian Church (circa 1926) with special exhibits contained within the old 1879 First Presbyterian Church (Stone Church). The Historical Society also houses an archival collection containing information on people, places, and events pertinent to Ellis County. The Historical Society also owns and maintains the old Boot Hill from 1867. The Society also owns and maintains a number of other historical structures. The facility is currently looking for a new location.

Ellis Railroad Museum and Doll Collection

The Ellis Railroad Museum and Doll Collection Museum is located at 911 Washington in Ellis, KS. The museum contains railroad artifacts, as well as, over 5,000 square feet of working model railroad. The facility also has a miniature train which visitors are able to ride.

Source: <http://www.ellis.ks.us/rmuseum.html>

ATTRACTIONS

Throughout Ellis County, including the communities, there are several attractions, including historic buildings. The following are descriptions of the various attractions in the county.

RPM Speedway

The racetrack facility is a 3/8 mile high bank clay oval dirt track. The track schedule runs from April through October with races on Saturday nights. The race track promotor brings in URSS 305 Sprint, IMCA Modified, Stock, Hobby Stock, Sport Compact, and Northern Sport Modified races.



Sternberg Museum of Natural History

The Sternberg Museum of Natural History is located in northeast Hays near Interstate 70. The museum has four major collections including:

- Geology;
- Paleontology;
- Botany and Paleobotany, and
- Zoology.

The museum has permanent and visiting exhibits within the facility.

Source: <http://sternberg.fhsu.edu/>



Photograph 7.8
Sternberg Museum of Natural History
Source: Ellis County GIS

Walter P. Chrysler Boyhood Home and Museum

The Walter P. Chrysler boyhood home and museum are located at 10th and Washington in Ellis, Kansas.

According to the Website:

The Walter P. Chrysler Boyhood Home was built in 1889, in typical nineteenth-century, Midwestern style, constructed of white pine clapboard with a cedar shingle roof. The Chrysler family occupied this house from 1889 until 1908.

Many families owned the home until 1952 when Joe Herbert, the Dodge/Plymouth dealer in Ellis, bought the home because it was becoming run down. The Chrysler Corporation purchased it from Herbert and in 1954 the home officially opened as a museum. In 1955, Jack Chrysler, Walter's son and other Chrysler management came and presented the deed of the home to the city of Ellis. There was a celebration complete with a parade.

A new building was erected behind the home in 1994 to display personal items of Walter Chrysler.

Walter's Grandson, Jack Chrysler Jr., Great-Grandson Frank Rhodes, other Chrysler family members and Chrysler management were in attendance for the grand opening of the new Museum.



Photograph 7.9
Walter P. Chrysler Home

Source: <http://www.chryslerboyhoodhome.com/index.asp>

Bukovina Society of the Americas Museum

The museum is located at 718 Washington in Ellis. The Bukovina Society of the Americas Museum provides information about the history of the German immigrants who arrived from Bukovina, which currently is part of Romania and Ukraine. They originally mi-grated from Germany to Bukovina in the late 1700s and early 1800s. After one to two generations of living in Bukovina, land became scarce and many of the German immigrants came to the United States, as well as Canada and South America.

The origins of the Bukovina Society of the Americas in Ellis began during the course of several days in the fall of 1988. From Sept. 26 to 29, three people interested in the heritage of the ethnic German people from Bukovina, Austria, met for the first time.

On Dec. 10, 1988, the Bukovina Society was formed. A Bukovinafest now is conducted every three years. The society is international in scope and cooperates with other Bukovina organizations around the world.

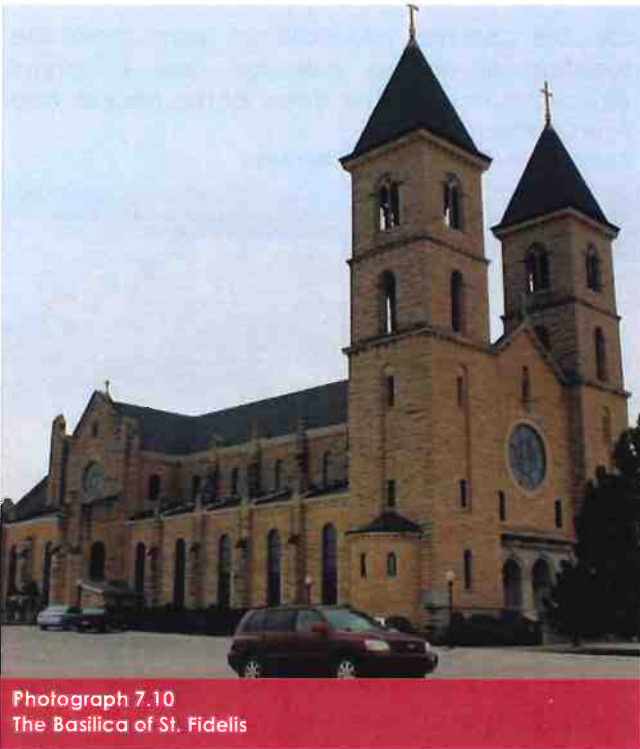


HISTORICAL Sites

The Basilica of St. Fidelis-"The Cathedral of the Plains"

The presence of this large church on the Plains of Kansas is a lasting testimony to the faith and hard work of a people whose roots go deep into the soil of this farming community of Victoria.

The first settlers of this area were gentlemen farmers from England who arrived in 1872 with the intention of duplicating their aristocratic lives in spite of harsh weather and rough ground. They named their village, Victoria, in honor of their queen and laid out the streets according to the



Photograph 7.10
The Basilica of St. Fidelis

plan of London.

They were joined in 1876 by a group of poor immigrants from southern Russia known as Volga-Germans, who were fleeing from service in the Czar's army and dangers to their Catholic faith. Creating a village of sod-huts adjacent to Victoria, they named it Herzog, after their town in southern Russia on the Volga River. The British soon found pioneer life too extreme of a contrast with respect to the lifestyle they had known in England. They could not make the land adapt to them and they could not adapt to the

demands of the land. In a few short years most returned home leaving the town's name as the only lasting memorial to their efforts now in the care of the Volga-German community.

Hardened by their experience of a hundred years on the steppes of Russia, where they had first arrived at the invitation of Empress Catherine the Great in 1763; the Volga-Germans stayed to work with the land and make it their home.

The massive Romanesque structure stands in the form of a cross, facing west with its majestic towers rising above and dominating the prairie landscape. On the facade above the rose window, a stone statue of its patron, St. Fidelis of Sigmaringen, keeps watch. The church is 220 feet long, 110 feet wide at the transepts, and 75 feet at the nave. Its ceiling is 44 feet above the ground and the towers rise 141 feet. The seating capacity of 1,100 made it, at the time of its dedication, the largest church west of the Mississippi.

Source: <http://www.stfidelischurch.com/History/StFidelisChurch/tabid/5200/Default.aspx>

Historic Fort Hays

Established in 1865 in the land of the Cheyenne and Arapaho, the fort protected railroad workers and travelers on the Smoky Hill Trail. See the soldiers' clothing, weapons, and personal items, including George Custer's dumbbell forged by the fort's blacksmith. Congressional Medal of Honor recipient Sergeant John Denny served at Fort Hays from January 1882 to December 1884. He and other African American "Buffalo Soldiers" are part of the rich Fort Hays history that includes names like Generals George A. Custer, Nelson Miles, and Philip Sheridan; Major Marcus Reno; William "Buffalo Bill" Cody; and James B. "Wild Bill" Hickok.

Fort Hays was relocated to its current site in 1867 and remained active until 1889. Once a large complex of 45 major buildings, only four remain. These buildings, along with the visitor center, tell the story of life in a 19th century frontier fort.

The visitor center displays items from the Plains Indians and the fort's military personnel. The seven-minute video *Clash of Cultures* is available, and a touch screen panel provides a tour of the



Photograph 7.11
Fort Hays Visitor Center

site as it was during the life of the fort. Visitors can see:

- Clothing made by Plains Indians;
- Plains Indian toys;
- Arrows with a beaded quiver;
- George Armstrong Custer's dumbbell, possibly forged by the fort's blacksmith;
- Sabers, including that of General Alexander Hays for whom the fort was named;
- Spencer carbine;
- Remington army revolver;
- The two officers' quarters are frame construction and were home to officers and their families. Both buildings have two rooms on the first floor and two on the second, with the dining room and one-story kitchen in the back, and
- The furnishings are pieces from the time period.

Visitors can see

- Sparsely decorated rooms with camp furniture depicting early life at fort;
- Rooms with elaborate amenities from 1880s Victorian era;
- Glass front bookcase and wash stand made at Fort Hays;
- Humidor used in officers' quarters;
- Table and three chairs from enlisted men's barracks, and
- Baby's highchair that converts to a stroller.

The stone guardhouse, built in 1872, is 100 feet long and 24 feet wide. Exhibits tell the story of the everyday lives of enlisted soldiers. A barracks bunk, a jail cell, and uniforms are on display. Interactive touch screen panels play period music as visitors hear stories and reports about enlisted men who lived at the fort.

The stone blockhouse, built in 1867, is hexagonal in shape with a 17 foot radius; two wings extend north and south, each 17 feet square. Exhibits explore the stories of some of the officers who were stationed at Fort Hays and explain what happened to the fort after the military left in 1889.

On the grounds informational signs show the location of original buildings, and 13 metal silhouettes help tell the stories of the people who lived in them.

Source: https://www.kshs.org/fort_hays



Photograph 7.12
Fort Hays Officers Quarters

Chestnut Street District, Hays

The Chestnut Street District is the center of the Hays community and follows the original footprint of Chestnut Street prior to 1929, when it was renamed to Main Street. A portion of the district is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Its restored historical and architectural ambiance creates a culturally unique destination. A cornerstone of the district is the Carnegie-inspired public library, rated as one of the top five libraries in the nation.

While you will no longer find a street named Chestnut, look for one of the three gateway



markers memorializing the district as you enter the downtown to know you've arrived. Located at the corners of Eighth and Fort, Eighth and Oak, and Seventeenth and Main, each marker was designed and built by local artist, Pete Felten. The Chestnut Street District is home to the oldest arts council in the state and host to several world-renowned artists and their studios.

Source: <http://www.chestnutstreetdistrict.com/2015/Location.html>

Holy Cross Shrine, Pfeifer

Holy Cross Shrine in **Pfeifer, Kansas** is a magnificent 1918 church building which towers 165 feet above the handful of homes remaining in the town surrounding it. Although the Catholic parish served by Holy Cross Church was dissolved in 1993, the building itself remains open to the public on a daily basis. The few remaining parishioners formed Holy Cross Charities, a non-profit corporation that depends solely upon donations to maintain the church and nearby cemetery.

Holy Cross Church features a vaulted rib ceiling supported by decorative columns and pointed arches for the windows and doorways. The structure is 50 feet wide at the nave, and 75 feet wide at the transepts. At 165 feet high, the main tower is believed to be the tallest Gothic church spire in Kansas. The two side spires are each 100 feet high. Construction of the post rock limestone church began in 1915 and it was dedicated on May 3, 1918.

Parks/Recreation/Attractions Goals and Policies



Photograph 7.13
Holy Cross Shrine



THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK