



NEWS RELEASE

Shawnee Indian Mission State Historic Site
3403 West 53rd • Fairway KS 66205-2654

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MANIFEST DESTINY THEME OF NEW EXHIBITS AT SHAWNEE INDIAN MISSION STATE HISTORIC SITE

FAIRWAY, KS — The Kansas Historical Society announced that the new crossroads of culture exhibit is now open at the Shawnee Indian Mission State Historic Site, 3403 West 53rd. The opening of the exhibit coincides with the completion of \$1 million in renovations at the site.

The exhibit focuses on the time period 1840-1880 and includes stories of the Oregon-California Trail, westward expansion, missionaries, soldiers, interactions between travelers and Native Americans, and the impact of the railroad on the mission. Manifest Destiny—the belief that America was destined to push to the Pacific Ocean—is one of the primary themes of the new exhibits.

Visitors can watch a brief video on Manifest Destiny, see a recreation of a train depot and a log cabin, and hear stories of people who traveled on the Oregon-California Trail at listening stations.

The Shawnee Indian Mission opened in October 1839 to serve Indian children from 15 different tribes. Students learned basic academics, manual arts, and agriculture. At the height of its activity the mission was an establishment of more than two thousand acres with sixteen buildings, including the three large brick structures which still stand, and an enrollment of nearly two hundred Indian boys and girls. During its history as a school, Kansas Territorial Governor Andrew Reeder had his offices at the mission and the first territorial legislature met there. It was during this legislative session that the so-called "bogus laws" were passed in an attempt to perpetuate slavery in Kansas. While the manual training portion of the school ceased in 1854, the mission continued to operate until 1862. The state of Kansas acquired the mission in 1927. Since that time it has been administered by the Kansas Historical Society, which owns and operates a total of 16 state historic sites. For more information visit kshs.org.

The Kansas Historical Society does not discriminate on the basis of disability in admission to, access to, or operation of its programs. The society requests prior notification to accommodate individuals with special needs or disabilities.