

1958-1967



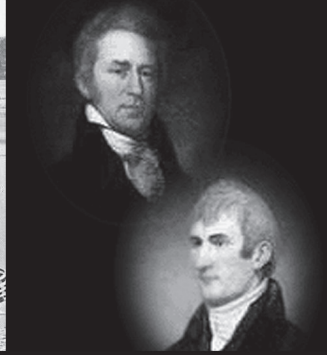
The sixth decade of the

# *Kansas City District*

## *World Events*

### **1957**

- Kansas City District initiates construction on Pomme de Terre dam and reservoir.
- Kansas City District supervises design and construction of military housing 1958.
- Water Supply Act permits the incorporation of storage space in Corps of Engineers reservoirs for domestic, municipal and industrial water needs.
- Kansas City District is engaged in construction of intercontinental ballistic program facilities.
- Maj. Gen. Galloway, Missouri River Division - Division Engineer, advises that the nation's defense program will be "in a state of expansion, reorganization and change for many years to come".
- Federal government grants a 50-year lease to the Kansas Park and Resources Authority for use of a 780-acre tract at Kanopolis Lake.
- Kansas River basin experiences extensive local flooding 1959.
- Construction begins on Big Bend Dam in South Dakota, the last of the Corps of Engineer's main stem Missouri River projects.
- U.S. Senate Select Committee on national Water Resources recommends comprehensive studies of water and related land resources be undertaken for all river basins in the nation. Recommendations are translated into legislation in the Water Resources Planning Act of 1965.
- Kansas City District begins construction of Pomona dam and lake 1960.
- Kansas City District completes local protection project at Abilene, Kan.
- Corps of Engineers adjusts earlier main stem river surveys.
- President Dwight D. Eisenhower proposes a "no new starts" policy, which Congress rejects and to which the President responds with a veto of the public works appropriation bill for fiscal year 1960.
- Senate Select Committee on National Water Resources is created 1961.
- Kansas City District begins construction of first-generation ICBM facilities at Forbes and Schilling Air Force Bases.
- Kansas City District begins construction of Wilson and Milford dams and reservoirs.
- Kansas City District begins large local protection project at Manhattan.
- Kansas City District completes Soldier Creek diversion in Topeka.
- Kansas City District places Pomme de Terre dam and reservoir, a unit of the Osage River basin system in Missouri, in flood control operations; dedication is 1963.
- Little Blue River basin experiences the most damaging flood on record to that date.
- Congress adopts resolution to have the Corps of Engineers investigate the need for further flood control improvements on the Blue River in Kansas and Missouri 1962.
- Flood Control Act, Sec. 207, provides authority to develop public-use recreational sites along banks of the Missouri River.
- Flood Control Act authorizes project modifications to Harry S. Truman dam and project to include hydroelectric power generating facilities and a substantial multipurpose pool.



# 100 YEARS OF HISTORY

## Dam Building and Military Construction in the Cold War Era

The Kansas City District performed at race pace in the 1950's and 60's. Even at this speed, it was a challenge for the District to accomplish its varied civil works and military missions.

A huge engineering program, termed the Pick-Sloan plan in the Missouri River basin, was being carried out with great speed to prevent the catastrophic floods that were a part of the lower basin's history.

The District finally had an authorized flood control program and appropriations, and it was charging the hill to get protection in place before the next flood. Certain projects were given priority.

Most pressing was the immediate need for flood control structures at Kansas City.

A flood wall and levee program there was deemed essential in the initial stage to supply interim protection during construction of dams and reservoirs, both on the main stem and the tributaries.

Channel stabilization in the lower reaches of the main stem river was selected as desirable for early work because of the length of time required to confine the 498.1 miles of channel to Rulo by means of permeable dikes, and deposition of sediments.

On the agricultural levee project, studies showed that in the area downstream from Kansas City, the risk of overtopping the planned local protection works in the absence of stream reservoir control was high enough to eliminate them from consideration until the future.

Congress approved changes to Pick-Sloan in the 1954 Flood Control Act. The Kansas City District quickened its pace to implement revised plans in the Osage Basin in

Missouri and the Kansas River basin. The District started nine major dam and reservoir projects in the decade beginning in 1957.

Reservoir development programs invariably encounter opposition, which stems predominantly from local interests in the proposed reservoir areas. For the Grand River Basin in Missouri, state and federal agencies combined efforts with local interests to get Congress to approve restudies or to eliminate the dams previously authorized.

In undertaking dam and reservoir construction the Kansas City District weighed the desires of local interests. The District took into account the earning or producing powers of lands and improvements, and the indicated losses compared with the anticipated project benefits from the basin and regional points of view.

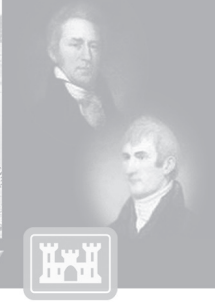
Many members of Congress and the Bureau of the Budget regarded Corps project justifications as "economic fairy tales." The Corps of Engineers had been using the Budget of Bureau's Circular A-47 since 1952 as the authorized guide to justify water resource development projects. There was much dissatisfaction with it.

New budget directives were issued in the Eisenhower administration that was directed to more comprehensive planning and economic analysis. In short, most of the critics said the Corps of Engineers was failing to include considerations other than engineering in its planning and economic objectives. Flood control engineering and construction of dams was far ahead of watershed management programs and the planning for multiple uses of water stored in reservoirs.

The diverse planning and engineering role of the Kansas City District in heartland America was even further amplified as the decade of the 1950s progressed. The nation's defense program in the region would be "in a state of expansion, reorganization and change for many years to come," Maj. Gen. Galloway of the Corps of Engineers said.

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## 100 YEARS OF HISTORY

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President Dwight D. Eisenhower was pursuing a policy of countering Soviet expansion all over the globe. The basic premise of the policy of “deterrence” was that there would be no war because the U.S. was capable of responding to an attack with a devastating counterattack.

As implemented, this meant perpetually innovating military technology to provide the nation with the leading-edge weaponry advances. This policy provided the Corps of Engineers with tremendous challenges to have in place the facilities from which the technology of deterrence could be launched.

It was an era of fast-paced change and tension. In 1957, the Soviet Premier boasted that his military had developed an intercontinental range rocket and the Soviets successfully launched an Earth orbital satellite.

The new sense of urgency led to immediate implementation of new weapons systems. President Eisenhower approved an “emergency” intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) program. The Atlas ICBM was designated for deployment with the Strategic Air command, whose strategic deterrent value was based on a mixed force of aircraft and missiles, and which relied on the Corps of Engineers for engineering and construction.

The first generation of ICBMs, the series D, E, and F Atlas, were deployed by Strategic Air command at Forbes and Schilling Air Force Bases in Kansas. The missile facilities were “essentially nonstandard” and the Kansas City District engineers had to learn the intricacies of the latest rapidly evolving missile technology and fit each to site.

It is difficult to comprehend how complicated it was to set up an operational missile site. Equally challenging, it was necessary to ensure that the construction program was “prosecuted with a minimum of lost motion” and that the end result achieved the national defense objective: the earliest possible ICBM operational capability with the most advanced weapons system. And the evolutionary spiral was steep in this Cold War era.

President John F. Kennedy accelerated the missile building program in response to Soviet aggression. The Air Force asked the Corps of Engineers to build launch and support facilities at McConnell Air Force Base, Kans, for the Titan and the Minuteman weapons systems.

The Kansas City District prepared itself for the complex technical intricacies associated with the second-generation missile facilities’ developments. The Corps of Engineers then established the Ballistic Missile

Construction Office.

The District’s missile facilities activity was scaled down and gradually phased out. Its fast paced missile mission lasted a decade, producing important construction achievements, performing a strategic national security role.

The District’s knowledge and skills in high technology construction had been significantly advanced. It was prepared when the Air Force asked it to construct a precision instrument laboratory.

At Forts Riley and Leavenworth, the District built for the Army a state-of-the-art flight simulator facility, sophisticated operations and communications buildings.

The Kansas City District also performed more traditional military construction, in this heated Cold War era. Fort Leonard Wood was expanded as a staging area for Army personnel as well as a basic training facility. The District built a series of regimental areas as self-contained units which included administrative buildings, training facilities, barracks and mess halls.

Forts Riley and Leavenworth got improvements and additions, including tactical facilities, classrooms, and barracks. At all the posts, the District upgraded and expanded the amenities. The District managed construction of over 2,660 units of dependent housing from 1957 to 1961, at Forts Riley, Leavenworth and Leonard Wood.

The steadily escalating U.S. participation in the Vietnam War resulted in activating munitions plants. The District supervised reactivation of the Lake City and the Gateway Army Ammunition Plants, in Missouri. It undertook the role of overseeing rehabilitation of projects at the Sunflower Ordnance Works and the Kansas Army Ammunition Plant.

As the Vietnam conflict escalated, President Lyndon B. Johnson got a \$69.9 billion defense appropriation for the 1967-68 fiscal year, the largest single appropriation ever passed by Congress to that time. At the same time, the Kansas City District was implementing the “value engineering” concept to work in concert with its contractors is more economical and efficient.

In January 1966, the Kansas City District Commander said that if any single word could describe the District’s capability at that time, it was “flexibility.” The District was prepared to expedite military design and construction as military requirements demanded, but change was imminent.