COURTHOUSE SQUARE MEMORIAL WALL

Presentation to the Rock Island County Board
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Mark VandeWiele
309-558-3285
mvandewiele@co.rock-island.il.us
WHO KNOWS RICO HISTORY?

6 Questions provided in advance.

Test knowledge of RICo history.

Review answers at end.
RICO BUILDINGS COME & GO

- 1st County Office Bldg. ... 14 years (1883-1897).
- 1st Jail ... 22 years (1835-1857).
- 2nd Jail ... 66 years (1857-1923).
- 3rd Jail ... 62 years (1923-1985).
- 1st Courthouse ... 4 years (1833-1837).
- 2nd Courthouse ... 60 years (1837-1897).
- 3rd Courthouse ... 121 years (1897-2018).
1835 ROCK ISLAND PLAT

- Land is constant.

- Honor the history of Courthouse Square.
COURTHOUSE SQUARE MEMORIAL WALL

- Museum quality acrylic panels displaying:
  - 1897 Courthouse floor plans.
  - County records.
  - Pictures.
  - Timeline.

- 28’ wall in Annex.
- Educate students & citizens.
- Site of 2\textsuperscript{nd} Jail.
1833 RICo formed.

- 61.95 acres includes:
  - Downtown City RI
  - Courthouse Square

1841 Deed from U.S. President John Tyler to RICo.
1ST RICO COURTHOUSE
1833-1837

- John Barrel House  30\textsuperscript{th} St. & 4\textsuperscript{th} Ave.

- First County Election 1833
  - New Commissioners select county seat.
  - Hampton vs. Farnhamsburg (Rock Island)

- 1840 County Pop.  470.
1ST COUNTY JAIL

1836-1857

Now COB Parking Lot
2nd RI Co Courthouse
1837-1897

- 1st Bldg. on Courthouse Sq.
- Brich Estate Retires Debt.
- 1845 – Col. Davenport Murderers Convicted.

This picture courtesy of the Rock Island County Historical Society.
COURTHOUSE SQUARE 1883-1897

- 1st County office bldg. (1883-1897)
- 2nd Courthouse (1837-1897)
- 2nd Jail (1857-1923)
- Site of Courthouse Square Memorial Wall

Sanborn Fire Maps
- Cost $112,201 to construct.
- 80 tons of copper used.
- Two courtrooms.
- Heat supplied by the Jail.
- County pop. 55,000

1897 Courthouse
Rico’s Third Courthouse
Dedicated March 13, 1897

1897 Courthouse Under Construction
The 1897 Courthouse

“...will perhaps remain the seat of justice of the county for a century.”
1883 COB Razed.

1837 Courthouse Razed.

Jail supplied heat.
COURTHOUSE SQUARE 1923-1985

- New Jail (RICO's 3rd)
- New Jail supplied heat via tunnel.
- 1857 Jail Razed.

Sanborn Fire Maps
1948-1953
4 COURTHOUSE REFERENDUMS FAIL

- Roof leaks.
- Downspouts faulty*
- Electrical issues.
- Cited by State Fire Marshal for:
  - Open Stairway
  - Open Rotunda

*Fixed in 1958—other issues remain a problem even today.
Citizen’s Advisory Chairman after 4th Courthouse referendum fails:

“...county citizens are opposed to repairing the courthouse and that no action will be taken on a large scale until the present building is beyond repair and a new one is needed---at much higher cost.”
1958
COPPER DOMES REMOVED
ROOF LEAKS DID NOT STOP
1960
3rd Floor Circuit Courtroom
(2 Stories High in 1897)

- Split into 2 courtrooms.

- Courtroom 2nd story filled-in for offices.

- County pop. 150,991.
CHANGES TO 1897 COURTHOUSE DURING 1970’S

- General Gov’t moved to current COB.
- Courtrooms added.
- ½ the double staircase removed to install current elevator.
- County pop. 168,734.
FEDERAL LAWSUITS
JAIL
OVERCROWDING

- 1985 Jail.
- 2001 Justice Center
- 1/2 Justice Center on Courthouse Square
ANNEX DEDICATED
DECEMBER 3, 2018

RICo’s 4th Courthouse
Located on Courthouse Square
WHO KNOWS RICO HISTORY?

ANSWERS

1. Courthouse Square is located between 14th (Deer) and 15th (Elk) Streets and 2nd (Illinois) and 3rd (Orleans) Avenues.

2. Besides Rock Island (Farnhamsburg), the town of HAMPTON also wanted to be the county seat.

3. RICO came into some money to retire the mortgage on the 1837 Courthouse. The source of that money was REV. JOHN BRICH ESTATE.
4. A famous murder trial occurred in RICo in 1845. The murder victim’s name was **COL. GEORGE DAVENPORT**.

5. There were **TWO** (number) courtrooms in the original 1897 Courthouse.

6. In year **1958** the 1897 Courthouse domes were removed.
COURTHOUSE SQUARE MEMORIAL WALL

Invitation to unveiling later this month.

Watch for further announcements.
Courthouse Square
Honor the past, look to the future.