

## ORIGINAL EFFORTS AND CONTRIBUTORS TO THE PROCESS OF SECURING THE STATUE

SOMETIME IN THE 1940s, KANSAS CITY BUSINESSMAN, J.P. WHITAKER, ORIGINATED THE IDEA OF MAKING REPLICAS OF THE "STATUE OF LIBERTY" TO BE PLACED IN CITIES ACROSS THE NATION. THE KANSAS CITY COUNCIL TOOK THE IDEA AND ENGAGED IN A CRUSADE TO "STRENGTHEN THE ARM OF LIBERTY". THE WHITAKER CABLE COMPANY WOULD SUPPLY THE STATUES TO COMMUNITIES THAT WANTED TO PURCHASE ONE. BETWEEN 1949 AND 1952, APPROXIMATELY TWO HUNDRED REPLICAS OF THE STATUE WERE PURCHASED BY BOY SCOUT TROOPS AND DONATED TO COMMUNITIES IN 39 STATES AND SEVERAL TERRITORIES OF THE UNITED STATES. OVER THE YEARS, MANY OF THESE STATUES HAVE BEEN LOST OR DESTROYED, BUT PRESERVATIONISTS WERE ABLE TO ACCOUNT FOR 100 OF THEM IN 2013.

ROY BARNES, EXECUTIVE FIELD DIRECTOR OF THE KANSAS CITY AREA COUNCIL OF BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA, SPOKE TO THE ROTARY CLUB OF LIBERTY IN NOVEMBER OF 1949 ABOUT THE OPPORTUNITY TO OBTAIN A REPLICA OF THE STATUE OF LIBERTY. THE THEME FOR THE SCOUTING PROGRAM AT THAT TIME WAS "FORWARD ON LIBERTY'S TEAM." IN JUNE OF 1951, THE PIONEER DISTRICT BOY SCOUT COUNCIL VOTED TO ERECT THE REPLICA OF THE STATUE OF LIBERTY IN LIBERTY RATHER THAN EXCELSIOR SPRINGS.

A COMMITTEE NAMED TO MAKE THE PURCHASE SELECTED THE SITE AND SUPERVISED THE INSTALLATION. MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE INCLUDED C. RAY FRANKLIN, LLOYD YATES, DISTRICT SCOUT CHAIRMAN; KENNETH EIKER, JOSH KINDRED, HUGH LOUGHREY, AND CONN WITHERS. IT WAS DECIDED THE STATUE WOULD BE PUT ON THE GROUNDS OF THE ONLY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AT THAT TIME, FRANKLIN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ON WEST MILL STREET. THE BOY SCOUTS OF CLAY COUNTY MADE DONATIONS AND WORKED TO SECURE ADDITIONAL DONATIONS TO GET "LADY LIBERTY" HERE. OTHER THAN THE BOY SCOUT AND CUB SCOUT TROOPS, THERE WERE ABOUT 75 OTHER CONTRIBUTORS WHOSE NAMES ARE PRESERVED IN THE BASE ON THE STATUE, ON A SCROLL. ARTHUR L. REPPERT, KENNETH EIKER, AND R. HARVEY WASON WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR COLLECTING MONEY.