

# Pioneer Park

In Old Westport

## Noted Local Sculptor Created the Statuary

Tom Beard, Kansas City artist and sculptor, was commissioned by the Westport Historical Society and the Native Sons of Greater Kansas City to originate and sculpt the nine foot bronze statuary of the three pioneers. Including the research, it was a two year project.

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A joint venture of  
Native Sons of Greater Kansas City,  
(816) 926-9397 and  
Westport Historical Society  
4000 Baltimore, Kansas City, MO  
(816) 561-1821





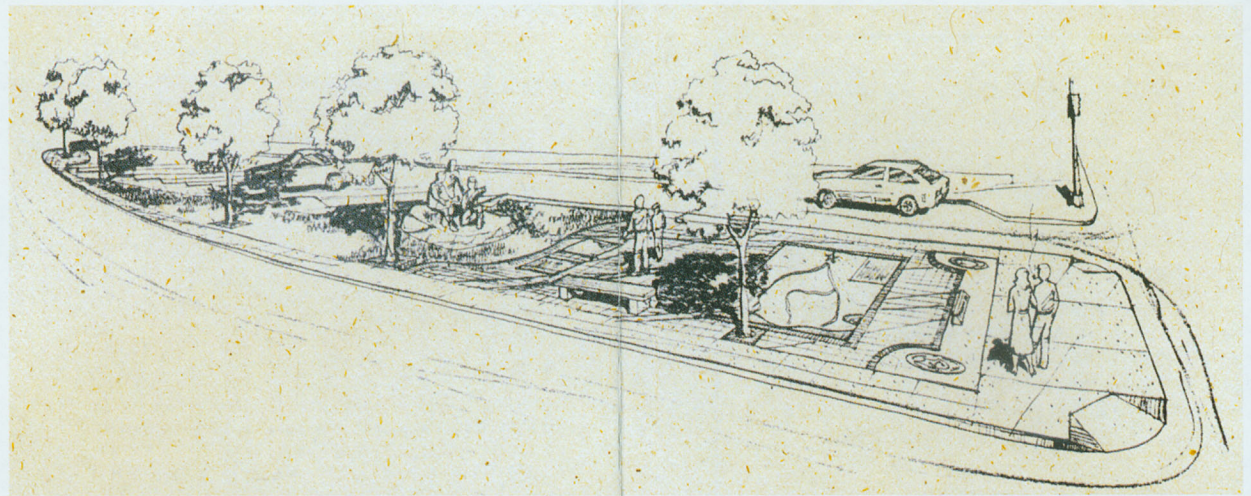
## Western History Comes Alive

At Westport and Broadway  
In Kansas City

Pioneer Park is not just "another" park. It represents realistic historical symbolism of the early west, near this spot, where it happened. The westward movement and the development of the west in the 19th century is a subject of increasing interest every year.

In addition to the heroic size bronze statuary group of the three "Pioneers," a giant 12x18 foot terrazzo map shows the three trails west during the mid nineteenth century: the Santa Fe, the California and the Oregon trails.

Visitors from across the country pause to admire Pioneer Park and reflect on the historic times as America moved west.



## Three Pioneers

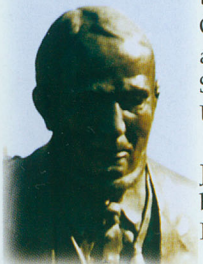
**Jim Bridger**, 1804-1881, was one of the most famous mountain men. He was an Indian fighter, fur trapper and trader, guide to the far west, U.S. Army scout and explorer. He discovered the South Pass through the Rockies in 1827, the Great Salt Lake in 1834 and founded Fort Bridger in 1843. In 1866 he bought Chouteau's store, 504 Westport Road, which is one of the oldest buildings still standing in Westport. He died blind at age 77 and is buried at Mount Washington Cemetery.



**Alexander Majors**, 1814-1900, "the great freighter," was born in Kentucky. He entered the freighting business in 1848 and became managing partner of Russell, Majors and Waddell in 1854. The firm employed 4,000 men, had 3,000 wagons, 40,000 oxen and 1,000 mules.



Among their far-flung enterprises were the famous Pony Express and the Overland Stagecoach Lines to Denver and Salt Lake City. His home is at 8201 State Line Road and he is buried in Union Cemetery.



**John Calvin McCoy**, 1811-1889, has been called "the father of Kansas City." In 1833 he platted a town around the

trading post he built on City Lot No. 1 (northeast corner of Westport Road and Pennsylvania) and called it "West Port, Missouri." In 1839 he was a member of the Town Company which bought 257 acres at Westport Landing on the Missouri River. He platted the Town of Kansas, Missouri, now Kansas City. He was a businessman, surveyor, realtor and builder. He is buried in Union Cemetery.

## Three Trails West

The Santa Fe Trail, well over 770 miles in length, was commercialized by William Becknell on his trip to Santa Fe in 1821. It carried the vast American wagon trade with Mexico until the coming of the railroads. In the 1840's and 50's Westport and Town of Kansas became the starting points for the wagon caravans, with Santa Fe as the southwestern terminus. In just five months of 1859, 2,300 men, 1,970 wagons, 840 horses, 4,000 mules, 15,000 oxen and 73 carriages left Westport over the Santa Fe Trail.

The fur trade, the gold rush, and a strong national feeling for expansion opened the California and Oregon migration. Between 1842 and 1848 at least 300,000 pioneers moved along the trails. From this site, Westport bustled with wagons, traders, mules, oxen, bales and barrels.