

**SPACES 1804 North Van Ness Los Angeles, CA 90028  
(213) 463-1629**

**Kansas - Samuel P. Dinsmoor - Garden of Eden**

**BIOGRAPHY**

- 1843** March 8. Samuel Perry Dinsmoor was born near Coolville, Ohio. A Fundamentalist and a Populist, he was 9th generation English, 7th generation Scottish, 6th generation Irish and 4th generation French. In 1927 Dinsmoor wrote that he had a record of 23 of his ancestors whose average lifespan was over 76 years old; one had died under 50, but another had lived to 100. Farmed.
- 1862** Enlisted in the Union Army. Spent three years in Company B, 11th Ohio Infantry. Fought in 18 major battles. Saw the battle of Gettysburg; saw the capture of Lee.
- 1866** Moved to Illinois and taught school for five terms (years).
- 1870** Married first wife, Frances A. (Barclay) Journey, on horseback, near Grafton. They had four sons and one daughter.
- 1888** Moved to Russell County, Kansas, settling on a farm near Lucas.
- 1890** Moved to Nebraska.
- 1891?** Returned to Russell County, Kansas.
- 1905 (6?)** Retired from farming and moved to Lucas where he purchased a quarter of a block to build a home. (at the present-day junction of Kansas State highways K-18 and K232)
- 1906 (7?)** Began building a stone log cabin, of native limestone (from a quarry near Lucas) cement, steel, wire, glass and various woods. Local stonemasons employed by Dinsmoor included Steve Truitt. Nicholas Albert Broska, a stonemason, helped Dinsmoor (then 64 years old) cut the stone logs for the cabin Home, which was finished in September 1907. It had 11 rooms, a bathroom, closet and hallways. The interior was finished in California redwood, pine and oak. Concrete was used for the porches, steps and decorative architecture. Dinsmoor spent the next 22 years building the Garden of Eden, a pyramidal mausoleum (40' high of native limestone) and constructing 150 concrete sculptures. The sculpture were made of concrete molded wet over chicken wire. Dinsmoor built his own generating plant for electricity. Other structures included a coal house and ash pit, a badger, owl and pigeon roost (8'sq); a coyote and eagle roost (10'sq); a cement wash house 10x12x8'; 15 cement trees 30x40'high; 14 trees 8-20' tall. There were more than 300 running feet of concrete walkways 3-6' wide.
- 1907-17** Dinsmoor and his first wife lived in the cabin.
- 1908-33** The Garden of Eden was a popular tourist attraction. The Garden contained sculptures of Adam and Eve (Dinsmoor used himself as a model for Adam) and depicted episodes from the Book of Genesis describing the downfall of man as described by Moses with Dinsmoor's own interpretations and thoughts. Other sculptures included Union soldiers and 'grafters such as lawyers, doctors, preachers and bankers.
- 1909** January. Dinsmoor had the words "Cabin Home" put on the Rock Log.
- 1912** Dinsmoor built a 4'x7' concrete flag on a ball bearing, which was placed on a concrete tree.

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- 1916 Dinsmoor built his concrete coffin and mausoleum.
- 1917 In the spring, Dinsmoor's first wife, Frances died at 78 years old. They had been married for 47 years.
- 1924 Spring. Dinsmoor (81) married his second wife, (who had been his housekeeper) Emilie Brozek (born January 17th, 1904 in Podluský Czechoslovakia).
- 1927 Dinsmoor wrote a pamphlet, in which he stated that as of July 1, 1927, he had used 2,273 sacks of cement (more than 113 tons). Over 1,000 visitors had eaten their 'grub' in the dining hall he had constructed for their use.
- Dinsmoor also stated that he had a will saying that no one but his widow, descendants and their husbands and wives would be able to go and see him in the mausoleum for less than \$1.00, so that someone could be paid to look after the place.
- 1928 Dinsmoor's second wife had a son (he was 85 years old).
- 1929 Due to falling health and eyesight, Dinsmoor was forced to stop work on the Garden. During the Depression the stone log house, statues and mausoleum containing Dinsmoor's remains were sold for taxes.
- 1932 Dinsmoor died at 89. He was placed in a coffin with a glass top. The coffin itself was placed in the mausoleum on top of his first wife's coffin. In his will he stated that he hoped the Garden could be maintained and kept for "purely educational" purposes (cf. Hoopes).
- 1967 (or 68) The property was bought by J. Rex Duwe, president of the local bank, who wanted to re-open the Gardens with Wayne E. Naegele who operated a hardware store in Lucas. They cleaned and restored the property and closed the apartments which the log cabin had been turned into.
- 1977 April 28th, The Garden of Eden was entered on the National register of Historic Places.

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**EXHIBITIONS**

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**SOURCES/CONTACTS**

Wayne and Louella Naegele (Owners)

2nd Street and Kansas Avenue

Lucas, Kansas

(913) 525- 6395

Louise Jackson 11/86?  
(revised by C. Pansing)

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**Richard Pankratz  
Director, Historic Preservation Dept.  
Kansas State Historical Society  
120 W. Tenth  
Topeka, Kansas 66612 (913) 296-3251**

**Jennie Chinn  
Folk Arts Coordinator  
Kansas State Historical Society  
120 W. Tenth  
Topeka, Kansas 66612**

**Register of Deeds  
Russell County Courthouse  
Russell, Kansas**