



**2014
INDUCTEE**



HENRY PERRY

Business/Industry Category

Henry Perry, known as the “father of Kansas City barbecue,” was the first recorded commercial barbecue restaurateur in Kansas City. He is an icon of success for generations of barbecue enthusiasts and entrepreneurs. The city’s rich history of barbecue can be traced to this former steamboat restaurant worker who made Kansas City his home in 1907 after spending his teens and early twenties floating on the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. Henry started a barbecue pushcart operation where he sold smoked meats to workers in Kansas City’s Garment District.

In less than five years, Henry expanded his barbecue business from a smoked meats pushcart in an alleyway to opening Kansas City’s first barbecue restaurant in an old trolley barn. His pit not only provided a variety of smoked meats; including raccoon, mutton, pork, beef and succulent slow-cooked ribs that he sold on pages of newsprint for 25 cents a slab; it also served as the training ground for barbecue legends like Charlie Bryant. When Henry died in 1940, he left his restaurant to Charlie, who ran it with the help of his brother, Arthur. Over the years, Arthur Bryant’s has continued Henry’s legacy and become a pillar of Kansas City’s renowned barbecue community.

Henry’s hard work and commitment to building a barbecue business, coupled with his pitmaster talents for making tasty, smoked meats and sauces, greatly contributed to Kansas City becoming well-known worldwide for its barbecue culture today. Each year, several thousand people visit Kansas City to experience the best barbecue and sauces around.