

## **GREENSFELDER PARK**

### **PARK HISTORY**

The land which is now Greensfelder Park was assembled in the 1850s by William T. Christy and Robert K. Woods of Woods, Christy & Co., which was primarily a dry goods company in downtown St. Louis. Woods and Christy formed a lumber company which logged the area. The property later passed to Christy's son Calvin M. Christy, who extracted the clay and other minerals on the property for his Christy Fire Clay Company, organized in 1881. Christy sold to Charles Evans in 1893, and Evans is said to have offered a 300-acre tract to the City of St. Louis for use as a park. To enhance the site a dam was constructed in 1895 on the property's main tributary but was washed away during the spring rains of 1896.

Mining continued on the property in the 1920s and 1930s under the Cobb, Wright and Case Mining Company, which went bankrupt in 1938. Missouri's Conservation Commission then acquired part of the former Christy property for Rockwoods Reservation, but not this portion. The parksite was always forested but suffered from periodic logging operations, intense grazing from the nearby Allenton stockyards, and fire. The last severe forest fire occurred on Easter 1941.

The area was donated to St. Louis County in 1963 by the Trustees of the St. Louis Regional Planning and Construction Foundation. The Foundation was established in 1939 by A. P. Greensfelder, civic leader and chairman of the board of the Fruin-Colnon Construction Company. At the time of his death in 1955 he was chairman of the St. Louis County Park Board, the County Park and Recreation Advisory Committee, and member of the board of trustees for Creve Coeur Memorial Park. The Foundation was intended to provide financial assistance to public improvements, civic projects and engineering programs of education and research. A stipulation of the donation was that a ten-year development program be planned and implemented.

Originally called Rockwood Park, the park was officially renamed in September of 1965. The first phase of construction began in 1966 and was completed and dedicated in May 1967. Another major development involving picnic areas, the visitor center, the equestrian areas and a new barn utilized 1969 Bond Issue funds and was completed and dedicated in October 1973. Construction of a public shower and Muckerman Shelter was

completed in November 1981. Most recent construction was the Myron Glassberg Pavilion. The Pavilion was donated by Sonya Glassberg in memory of her late husband. Construction was completed the spring of 1994.

A ropes initiative course was constructed in 1975 by Operations personnel and park rangers with the assistance of Minnesota Outward Bound personnel and the St. Louis Regional Experiential Adventure Movement (STREAM).

### **ALBERT PRESTON GREENSFELDER**

Albert P. Greensfelder was born in St. Louis in 1879. Greensfelder graduated from Washington University in 1901, and spent most of his career at various positions at Fruin-Colnon Contracting Company, including secretary, president, chairman, and consulting constructor. He married Blanche Younker, also of St. Louis, in 1909, and the couple resided on Lindell Avenue in University City. In his long career he served as vice chairman of the Missouri Conservation Commission, was a member of the Missouri, St. Louis County and University City Planning Boards, and was a member of the National Capital Park and Planning Commission. At the time of his death in 1955 he was chairman of the St. Louis County Park Board, the County Park and Recreation Advisory Committee, and member of the board of trustees for Creve Coeur Memorial Park, which he helped the county obtain and establish as the first County Park. Greensfelder Shelter at Creve Coeur Park bears his name. In 1963 the St. Louis Regional Planning and Construction Foundation, which Greensfelder established in 1939, donated the land, which is now Greensfelder Park. The Albert P. Greensfelder Foundation funded Greensfelder Recreation Complex, in Queeny Park.

### **MUCKERMAN SHELTER**

In 1980, Peter William Herzog and his wife Joan Lunstedt Herzog donated \$5,000 and  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an acre at the southwest corner of Allenton and Hencken Roads to the St. Louis County Department of Parks and Recreation. The land is part of Greensfelder Park, and the shelter built is the Alex Muckerman Memorial Pavilion. Alex Muckerman was the son of Ralph A. and Joan Muckerman, who had married in 1955. Ralph Muckerman died in 1973, and Joan married Peter Herzog in 1979. Alex

Muckerman died sometime between his father's death, and the donation in 1980.

### **GLASSBERG SHELTER**

Myron Glassberg was the son of Blanche Greensfelder's sister, who died when he was eight years old. He was subsequently raised in the home of Albert P. and Blanch Greensfelder. A. P. Greensfelder became a role model for him, especially in regard to his interest in parks and love of nature. Sonia Glassberg came to St. Louis at the age of 21 and was married to Myron for 52 years. Myron passed away in 1991. Sonia Glassburg now lives in Naples, Florida and has funded several projects to carry on Myron's interests, including Turtle Park at Oakland and Tamm, the restoration of the World's Fair Pavilion in Forest Park, and Glassburg Shelter at Greensfelder Park, which Sonia donated in memory of her husband. She is currently considering the purchase of the Buder property, 800 acres in Jefferson County.

### **BEULAH SHELTER**

Beulah the mule was probably born around 1963, or as early as 1957, depending on the source consulted. Ed Bright acquired Beulah around 1967 in Eminence, Missouri. She was originally purchased for a friend of Bright's, but the friend had already purchased a horse, and Ed decided to keep Beulah for himself. Beulah resided in a 19<sup>th</sup> century barn on the grounds of Bright's farm, Brightfield. In August of 1971 Beulah won the title of the World's Champion Riding Mule at the National Show of the American Donkey and Mule Society. At the same show she was judged "best mule on the grounds." After her championship, she was twice on the cover of The Donkey and Mule Society. She and Ed even posed for an art class at Washington University. In 1976 Ed and Beulah became the state's official outriders, meeting the Bicentennial wagon trains that passed through Missouri on the way to Valley Forge. They rode in six different states as Missouri's hosts. They were the only team to ride with the three major wagon trains that assembled for the celebration. In addition, they led many parades throughout the state. In 1972 Bright donated \$1000 to the County Parks in Beulah's name for the construction of an equestrian shelter in Greensfelder Park. Beulah Shelter was constructed that same year, and the equestrian trail it was constructed on is now called Beulah Trail. There is also a Beulah Campsite at the park. Beulah is the only mule in Missouri, and

probably the nation, to have a shelter dedicated to her. Ed Bright died in 1979, and Beulah came under the care of the St. Louis County Parks. Ginger Griffon cared for Beulah for 11 years at Suson Park, until Beulah died in 1998.

### **OTIS BROWN CAMPSITE**

Otis Brown was the owner of Otis Brown Stables in Frontenac. He and his wife Bee Wider, whom he married in 1938, owned and ran the stables until 1988. Brown was a horse lover involved in the American Horse Show Association and the Bridlespur Hint Club. He died in 2001 at the age of 86 of heart disease. This campsite was named in his honor.