

SUSON PARK

PARK HISTORY

The original Suson tract was purchased by the County from Sidney Salomon, Jr., for \$135,000 in 1962. Salomon was a well-known figure in St. Louis at the time as owner of the old Sportsmen's Park. His fame increased in 1966, when he acquired the Arena and became the first owner of the St. Louis Blues hockey team. The name of this park originated with Salomon as a combination of his children's names, Susan and Sonny. Several of the present buildings and lakes were in existence when the land was purchased. The land acquired from Sidney Salomon has no restrictions. The park was dedicated and opened to the public in May 1964.

Both the animal farm and the lake fishing attractions were available when the park opened and both have been greatly improved and expanded in recent years. The large new barn was constructed with funds from the 1969 Bond Issue. The farm area is heavily visited by school and family groups. Fishing is also very popular due to the accessibility of its 3 lakes and the relaxing park setting.

County parks dredged the lake in 1978, creating a new depth of 10 feet from the original 1-3 feet. Additionally, the lake edges were regraded and landscaped. A few Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) grants were received over the years to improve the fishing experiences in the park.

O'Fallon Brothers Construction Company deeded 10 acres to the county on December 6, 1980 provided that the property be used as a public park and recreation area, that no roadways or streets shall be constructed within the tract, and that no trees shall be cut or removed along the creek line that runs through the property except as may be necessary to preserve and enhance the natural state of the property.

SIDNEY SALOMON, JR.

Sidney Salomon, Jr. was born in New York City to Sidney and Mollie Jesselson Salomon. He graduated from Culver Military Academy in Indiana in 1929, and that same year entered the insurance business in St. Louis. He owned Sidney Salomon, Jr. & Associates Inc. in Clayton, and was so successful that he qualified for the coveted Million Dollar Round Table

more than 30 times. He was an influential Democratic fundraiser, serving as the treasurer of the Democratic National Committee during the 1950's, chairman of President John F. Kennedy's campaign in 1960 and Democratic national committeeman from Missouri for several years. An avid golfer, Salomon was naturally interested in sports. He owned several teams, being the first owner of the St. Louis Blues hockey team, and part owner of the St. Louis Cardinals and the Browns, as well as owning the Arena and the old Sportsman's Park. After retiring in 1977 he and his wife, Jean moved to Cocoa Beach, Florida. In 1962 the Salomon's sold land to St. Louis County for use as a park. Suson Park is named after his two children, Susan and Sonny.

SIDNEY "SONNY" SALOMON III – SUSON PARK

Sidney "Sonny" Salomon III was born in St. Louis in 1937 to Sidney, Jr. and Jean K. Salomon. He married Carol Levenson in 1957, and they had three children. He was a salesman for Sidney Salomon, Jr. and Associates, Inc. and vice president of the Crown Life Club for the United States. He is perhaps best known for establishing the Blues hockey team in St. Louis. In 1966 he and his father purchased a National Hockey League franchise, and subsequently purchased the Arena. St. Louis then beat out Baltimore to get then franchise that became the Blues, and Sonny undertook the large task of restoring the building. The Salomons sold the Blues in 1977 to Ralston Purina and moved to Boca Raton, Florida. He died in 1988 after a long battle with cancer and Hodgkin's disease. His father sold the land, which is Suson Park to the County in 1962, and the park gets its name from Sonny and Susan Salomon.

SPINDLER SHELTER

The Spindler shelter is named after Walter G. Spindler who worked for the St. Louis County department of parks and recreation as the district manager for central/west area. He was married to Jean M. Spindler and together they had three children. After his death in September of 2005 Walter was buried at Jefferson Barracks.

