

PACKWOOD PARK

PARK HISTORY

Packwood Park is divided into three units. The Rock Hollow unit is separated from the other two by some intervening privately owned properties.

Packwood Unit

In November 1987 St. Louis County Parks Department purchased the 117-acre Packwood Estate from the Humane Society of Missouri. The property cost \$175,000 and was funded through the 1986 Bond Issue. The tract had been a bequest to the Society from George Horatio Packwood, Jr. (1890-1976), a manufacturer of industrial skin cleansers. The tract of land is heavily wooded with a rough and steep topography. The site abuts 1700 feet of the Meramec River. The site also has archaeological value, located in the same chert deposit area as the Crescent Quarry and Beaumont-Tyson Quarry National Register archaeological sites. Numerous artifacts have been found on the site.

Rock Hollow Unit

Rock Hollow is a narrow, deep valley east of the Packwood Unit, draining from Ridge Road in the north to the Meramec River in the south, a distance of about 1.5 miles. The Hollow had long been sought for preservation because of its high quality flora and unique geological formations. The narrow valley had minimal disturbance, except for Lawler Ford Road, a 19th-century road that followed the valley from the uplands in the north to a ford across the Meramec River, which the road crossed into the Crescent Valley.

In 1980, Bakewell Corporation purchased the property and subdivided it with the intent of developing a high-quality residential area to be called Quail Hollow Estates. This portion of Lawlor Ford Road was renamed Quail Hollow Estates Drive. Development did not occur due to such factors as the high costs of utilities and roads. The State of Missouri purchased some of the Bakewell lots located at the south end of the Hollow to protect the visual integrity of the adjacent riverfront lands they already owned. State lands in this area are referred to as the Rock Hollow Unit of Castlewood State Park.

In 1995, the County acquired three lots totaling 146 acres of the Bakewell

properties as part of the compensation for the sale of the 6-acre Grandview Park site. In 2003 the Great Rivers Greenway (formerly Metropolitan Park and Recreation District) acquired the remaining 106.56 acres owned by Bakewell, which was located in the upper valley, north of the other ownerships. This land is to be leased to St. Louis County in 2004.

Glencoe Unit

Following Meramec River floods in the 1980s and 1990s, several residences damaged in the Glencoe community were purchased via National Flood Insurance and other Federal buyout programs, and the properties were transferred to St. Louis County. Totalling about 4.8 acres, they represent the Glencoe Unit of Packwood Park. In 2003 a trailhead for the Al Foster Trail portion of the Ozark Trail was developed and opened on the property. Packwood Park is included in the Meramec River Greenway.

GEORGE HORATIO PACKWOOD, JR.

George Horatio Packwood, Jr. was born in Maitland, Florida in 1890. He graduated from Alabama Polytechnic Institute in Auburn, Alabama, in 1910. He worked as an electrical engineer with a variety of railway companies before accepting a position with the City of St. Louis in 1918. In the evening he studied at the library and worked in his loft, developing an industrial skin cleanser that would clean without removing a layer of skin. He called it Formula Number One. He spent many years of hard work in developing and marketing the product. The company he founded eventually became a leading producer of industrial skin cleansers. He sold the company to the Calgon Corporation in the 1960's. In his lifetime he provided assistance to the Humane Society of Missouri, St. Martin's, and the Central Institute for the Deaf. He died in 1976. In 1987 the St. Louis County Parks Department purchased the Packwood Estate from the Humane Society of Missouri. Today the land is known as Packwood Park.