
Convention Hall & Sedalia Parks

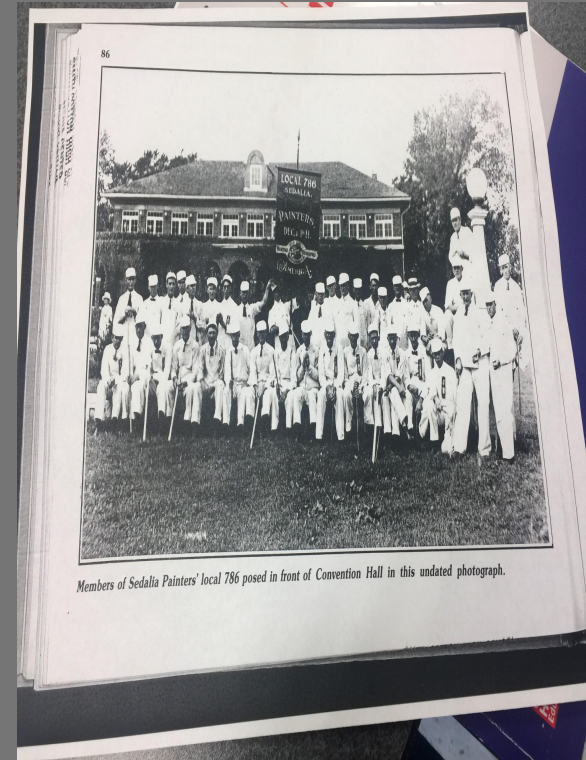
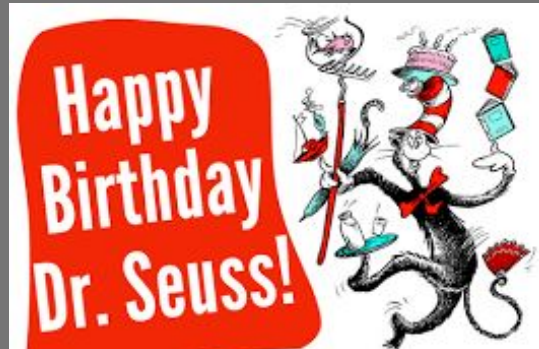
Olivia Poteet, Hour Three

What is the Convention Hall and what is it used for?

The Convention Hall is a brick building located in the middle of Liberty Park. Inside it includes several classrooms upstairs. On the main level is the office, gym, and stage for entertainment.

The Convention Hall regularly hosts events for the community; events include sports, recitals, meetings, classes, and holiday/theme based programs for all ages.

Example of program theme:



Members of Sedalia Painters' local 786 posed in front of Convention Hall in this undated photograph.



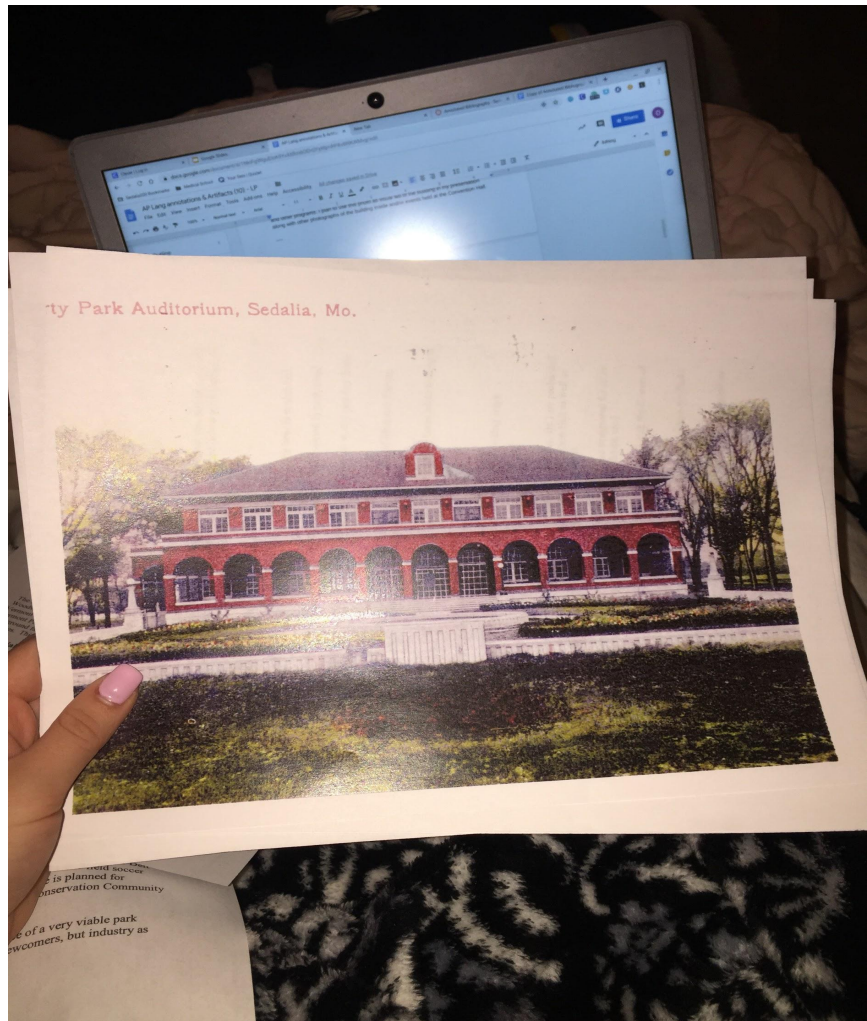
How is the Convention Hall different from the past compared to now?

The purpose of the building is still the same as it was when it was first built. The Convention Hall was used for community events, meetings, and dances. The main difference is the architectural change. Originally the Convention Hall had a brick porch which had to be torn down after one of its walls was knocked down in 1971. Remaining bricks were used to help improve the building.



Liberty Park's convention hall was completed in 1912, the result of a \$60,000 bond issue passed by voters in 1911. The early photograph above showcases architectural features that have been removed from the

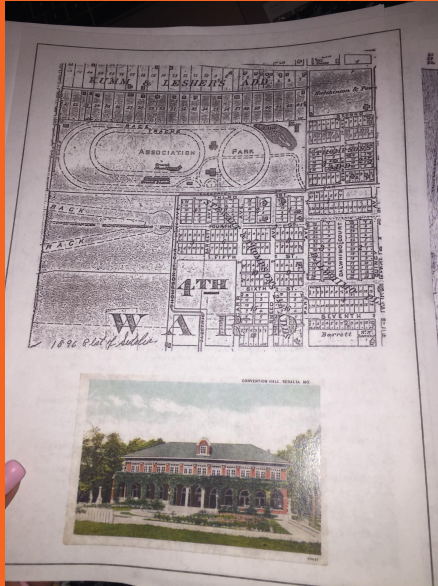
original \$27,000 structure. The porch was razed in 1971 after vandals knocked down one of its walls. Bricks salvaged from the porch were used as part of a \$150,000 facelift. (Above, courtesy of Leslie Hale Collection.)



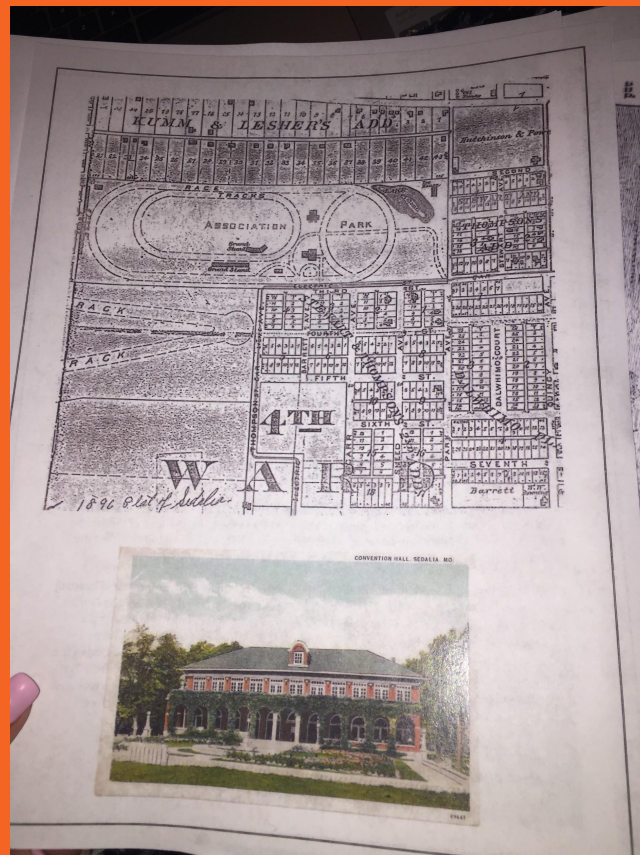
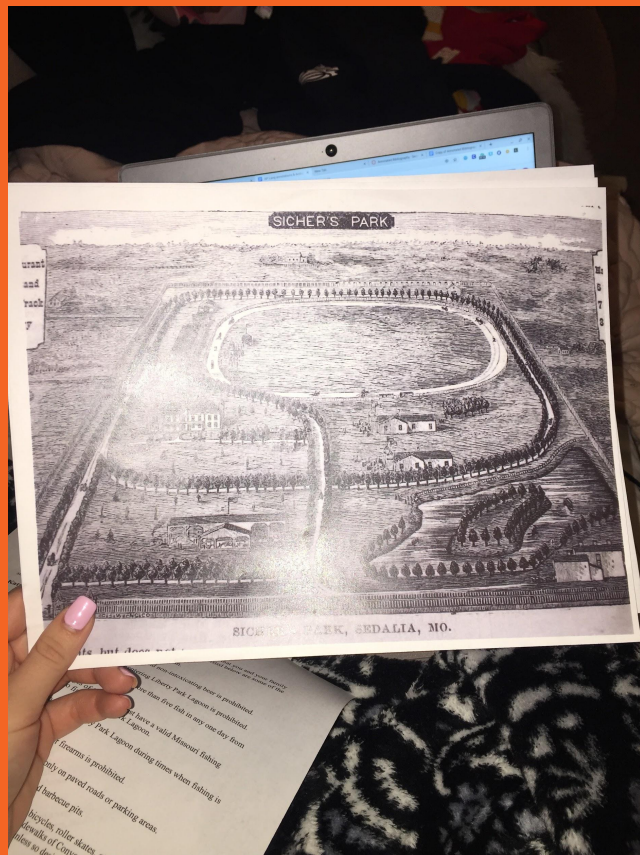
What was the first official park of Sedalia?

The first official park of Sedalia was Sicher's Park, which is now called Liberty Park. Before it was Sicher's Park, it was Mr. Woods farm which the Fair Association purchased fifty acres of. A couple decades later the farm was sold to a German family, the Sichers. Mrs. Sicher and her two sons, Frank and Joseph, financed the park and estimated a cost of a \$30,000 for improvements to the park, which they named Sicher's Park.

While they owned the land they lived in a building that was where the Convention Hall is now. They lived upstairs while using the main floor for community events, dances, and meetings. The Sichers built a mile long race track along with a half mile track inside with a grandstand that seated 5,000 after spending \$30,000 on improvements to the park. They added a water line from the city, Textile and Floral hall, Machinery Hall, stables, pens, an artificial lake with an island, pumps, windmills, and driveways around the park lined with flower gardens. The grand opening of the park took place on July 4 (year unknown).



The original park:



Why does the City own Sicher's (Liberty) Park now?

Due to crime rates going up in Sedalia, the Sicher family was concerned about safely transporting their money from the Park to the bank. One of their neighbors suggested that she could put the money under dirty clothes in a wooden cart and transport it to the bank to deposit the money for them.

Since the growth of Sedalia was slowing down, the Sicher family had no interest in the responsibilities of the Park anymore. On May 3, 1890, Joseph Sicher sold the Park to the City of Sedalia. The Park was named Liberty Park in 1900. From the years 1910 - 1911 they started making many changes to the Park which included construction of the Convention Hall. The baseball stand was also enlarged, and after 1910 they started to use the grounds for large political meetings.

In May of 1950 Sedalia opened two new pools in Liberty Park and Centennial Park. The measurements for Liberty Pool are 140 by 70 feet. They charged 15 cents for children and 39 cents for adults; in 1997 they opened a new pool costing 1.7 million dollars at Liberty park



Site Visits &

Personal experiences

Going to the Convention Hall really helped me since I was able to access documents about my topic that were only available from my site. I was helped and given a substantial amount of information that helped me learn more about my topic and the people in my community.

I think the site visit helped me to understand the community better by seeing how much it has grown over the years (especially since I've always lived here). I was surprised by how many people were at the Park since I was unaware of how many people either go on a regular basis with their children to play on the play sets or to spend their free time fishing.

Site Visit Photos



At first I thought I might not find as much information as I did, but after searching and talking to different people, I've found out a lot more about the Parks than I thought I would. Overall, I feel like I've learned a lot more about not only my topic about the Convention Hall and Parks in general, but our community as a whole. I've found that there's a lot more history in Sedalia than I've ever thought about and I'm glad I was able to learn about part of it while doing research for this project.