

Stewart Bell Jr. Archives
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Jim Barnett Park Collection
Collection Number: 755 WFCHS

CONDITIONS GOVERNING ACCESS: Collection is open to all researchers.

CONDITIONS GOVERNING REPRODUCTION AND USE: Restrictions may apply concerning the use, photoduplication, or publication of items in this collection. Consult a member of the archives staff for information concerning these restrictions. The user assumes all responsibility for identifying and satisfying any claimants of copyright. Some materials may require special handling.

PROCESSING INFORMATION: Initial processing undertaken in 1988. Last updated by Buffy Knappenberger in June 2025.

EXTENT: 0.42 linear feet

DATE: 1936 - 2022

SCOPE AND CONTENT: The Jim Barnett Park Collection contains materials concerning the development of Jim Barnett Park in Winchester, Virginia. The bulk of the materials are organizational papers, tax records, correspondence, committee reports, and plans, produced by the Winchester-Frederick County War Memorial Association, which began campaigning to develop the park in 1945. There are also budget reports from the years, 1969 to 1974, information about the Fast Pitch Softball Hall of Fame, and newspaper clippings.

BIOGRAPHICAL/HISTORICAL: Jim Barnett Park began as a small community playground located on land on the outskirts of Winchester City and offered organized recreational activities for the town's residents. In 1945, the Winchester-Frederick County War Memorial Association initiated a fund-raising campaign to build a complex honoring veterans of Winchester and Frederick County. The campaign was successful, and a ribbon cutting ceremony for the new War Memorial Building took place on November 11, 1956. The City has continued to expand the park by adding various new features and amenities.

The park is named after James E. Barnett, who served as its director for thirty years before his retirement in 1987. Barnett was a native of Huntington, West Virginia and attended the University of Kentucky. He began his career with the City of Winchester in 1957. At the time, the Winchester Recreation Park consisted of the original War Memorial Building and some picnic shelters. During his tenure, Barnett oversaw a significant expansion of the park's offerings, including the swimming pool complex, Christianson Familyland, an amphitheater, a fishing lake, sports facilities, and other amenities. He also encouraged local civic groups to sponsor picnic shelters and established numerous sports programs for children and youth. On August 26, 1987, the Winchester Parks & Recreation Board resolved that the City Recreation Park should be known as "Jim Barnett Park."

RELATED MATERIAL: Teen Age Club (TAC) Collection, 1675 THL

IMMEDIATE SOURCE OF ACQUISITION: Gift of multiple donors.

CONTAINER LIST:

BOX 1

News Articles unnumbered, printed (photocopy)

Fast Pitch Hall of Fame

McCormack Amphitheater—news article

Park Commission, City of Winchester, ordinance creating a park commission, Feb. 16, 1923, 1 item, printed

Study for development of Rouss Park, c. 1946, 2 items

Physical Location: Map Case 4, Drawer 4

War Memorial Association—incorporation, by-laws, and dissolution, 1945-1974, 20 leaves, typescript; 9 leaves, manuscript/typescript on printed form; 1 leaf, typescript on printed form (photocopy)

War Memorial Association—directors and committee reports, 31 leaves, typescript; 7 leaves, manuscript; 1 leaf, manuscript on printed form

War Memorial Association—North Kent Street lot, 11 leaves, typescript; 2 leaves, blueprint

War Memorial Association—tax correspondence, 1945-1975, 11 leaves, typescript; 4 pages, printed

War Memorial Association—tax returns, 1963-1974, 16 items, manuscript on printed form

War Memorial Building Dedication Programs, November 11, 1956, 2 items, 2 pages (each), printed

War Memorial Building—plans and correspondence, 1945 – 1955, 28 leaves, typescript; 2 items, printed

Winchester Parks and Recreation—budgets, 4 items, typescript (includes the following years):
1968-1970; 1970-1971; 1971-1972; 1973-1974

Reunions held annually in Park, no date, 3 leaves, typescript