

## THE SOPHIA M. SACHS BUTTERFLY HOUSE



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a division of the



Chesterfield, MO — The Sophia M. Sachs Butterfly House, a division of the Missouri Botanical Garden, officially opened to the public September 18, 1998. Located in Faust Park, the central feature of the attraction is an 8,000 square foot glass conservatory where visitors mingle with more than 60 species of the world's most beautiful butterflies in free flight. The Butterfly House was the first in the country to be granted accreditation by the American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA).

Director Joe Norton calls the visitor's experience "awe-inspiring." The interior conservatory is lushly planted with exotic flowering tropical plants. Visitors see enormous species diversity including huge iridescent blue morphos from Costa Rica, the ruby lacewing from Malaysia, and the golden birdwing from the Philippines. The Miracle of Metamorphosis display exhibits chrysalides with butterflies emerging as visitors watch.

According to Norton, "A visit to the Butterfly House is not only exciting and educational, but promotes environmental stewardship through example." An additional 8,000 square feet of interior space is devoted to exhibit space, classrooms, and visitor amenities.

The Emerson Theater provides an inspiring orientation of the life cycle of butterflies and a preview of the wonder to come. The Lopata Learning Lab is the focus of formal and informal classes and demonstrations for all ages. No visit is complete without a stop in the upscale Madame Butterfly Gift Shop, brimming with butterfly-inspired merchandise.

More exhibits and environments for explorations are located just outside the building. The Entry Plaza is paved with "messages" from St. Louis families. The two Sculpture Gardens that flank the entry plaza are inhabited with playful creatures by St. Louis artist Robert Cassilly. The creatures include a 30-foot long "Lopatapillar" caterpillar designed for youthful investigation and an enormous Mysterious Monarch butterfly with faceted eyes. The sculpture is surrounded plants by that provide nectar and shelter to native species of butterflies.

The "backyard" at the Butterfly House offers a Butterfly Garden where visitors learn how to attract butterflies to their own homes and neighborhoods.

The Butterfly House is located at 15193 Olive Boulevard in Faust Park, Chesterfield, St. Louis County, Missouri. The park is located about 20 miles west of downtown St. Louis. Hours of operation are: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily from Memorial Day through Labor Day; 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday the remainder of the year. The Butterfly House is closed on Mondays from Labor Day to Memorial Day (except Monday holidays), and on Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day. Admission is \$6 for adults, \$4.50 for seniors (65+), and \$4 for children age four to 12. Children age 3 and under are admitted free. Special admission rates are available for scheduled school groups. Contact (636) 530-0076 or visit [www.butterflyhouse.org](http://www.butterflyhouse.org).

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### The Building

Ground was broken in June of 1997, and construction began on the Butterfly House. The 8,000 square foot Conservatory Garden is sheathed in 646 pieces of glass, each measuring 4' x 6' and weighing approximately 200 pounds. The center vault, soaring to 36' high at its apex, is one of five vaults designed to minimize visual (and flight) obstruction.

Great care was taken in the design and engineering of the building to assure a natural and safe habitat for butterflies. An additional 8,000 square feet adjacent to the conservatory houses classrooms, a theater, visitor amenities, and a gift shop.

The Christner Partnership, Bannes Consulting, and BSI Construction executed design, product management and construction.

### ***Butterfly Garden***

In June 2000, the Butterfly House opened the Butterfly Garden, featuring nectar sources and host plants to attract both native and migratory butterflies. The Butterfly Garden has earned certification as a National Wildlife Federation Schoolyard Teaching Habitat. Landscape architect Matt Moynihan designed the Butterfly Garden under the direction of Butterfly House staff horticulturalists.

### Sophia M. Sachs

The Butterfly House is named in honor of Sophia M. Sachs, wife of the late Sam Sachs, who founded Sachs Electric Company and played a key role in the early development of Chesterfield, Missouri.

### Butterfly Houses

The first butterfly house opened in 1976 on an island in the English Channel. The first butterfly house appeared in the United States in 1988. When the Sophia M. Sachs Butterfly House opened its doors in September 1998, it became the ninth such facility in the United States, and the only butterfly house in the Midwest at that time.

## **Faust Park Facts**

### Rich in History

What is now a 200-acre public park in St. Louis County was originally Thornhill Farm, owned by Missouri's second governor, Frederick Bates. At the turn of the century, the estate was purchased by the Faust family, prominent in St. Louis history.

For many years, it was home to Leicester Busch Faust, grandson of Adolphus Busch and Tony Faust, and his wife Mary (née Plant), descended from Pierre Laclede, the founder of St. Louis. In 1968, the Faustus donated 98 acres of their farm, including the original Bates house, to St. Louis County. The house was restored and the land used to create Faust Park.

### Rich in Architecture

In 1997, the remainder of the family estate (approximately 100 acres), which had remained a private enclave for more than a century, was also donated to the County. The estate's Manor House and outbuildings were designed by Tom P. Barnett, one of the most skilled architects to work in St. Louis. Barnett, Haynes, and Barnett designed many prominent structures in St. Louis including the new St. Louis Cathedral and #1 Portland Place. The Manor House is a unique example of Pueblo Revival styles. A freestanding conservatory, the Victorian Greenhouse, is a romantic focal point for the estate. Even the dairy barn is distinguished by its "Lamella" roof, a complex wooden structure that spans the entire 100-by-50-feet without intervening support.

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### A Family Recreation Area

Today's visitors to Faust Park find a beautifully maintained park with picnic and play area, and several family attractions. The Sophia M. Sachs Butterfly House is filled with excitement and surprise. The park is also home to the fully restored St. Louis Carousel, where visitors can ride one of the more than 60 hand-carved animals in indoor comfort. Families enjoy a look back in time by touring the Historic Village, re-created with structures from 19<sup>th</sup> Century St. Louis. Faust Park is often the site of concerts and special events.

### **Centrally Located**

Faust Park is easily accessible from the major highways in the area. From the intersection of I-64/40 and I-270: Take I-64/40 west to the Clarkson/Olive exit (19-B). Turn right on Olive; Faust Park is about 2 miles down the road on the left.

From the intersection of I-70 and I-270: Take I-270 south to I-64/40 west to the Clarkson/Olive exit (19-B). Turn right on Olive; Faust Park is about 2 miles down the road on the left.

### Park Information

The Faust Park phone number is (636) 532-7298.

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For more information, contact the Missouri Botanical Garden's Public Relations Department at (314) 577-0254 or (314) 577-5141 or check the Garden's Web site at [www.mobot.org](http://www.mobot.org). For 24-hour recorded Garden visitor information, call (314) 577-9400 or 1 (800) 642-8842 toll free.

The Butterfly House's mission is to foster a better understanding and increased awareness of our natural world.

The Missouri Botanical Garden's mission is "to discover and share knowledge about plants and their environment, in order to preserve and enrich life." Today, 149 years after opening, the Missouri Botanical Garden is a National Historic Landmark; and a center for science and conservation, education and horticultural display.