

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Saratoga Lanes Building

other name/site number Saratoga Billiards & Bowling Alley, Maplewood Planing Mill & Stair Company

2. Location

street & number 2725 Sutton Boulevard n/a not for publication

city or town Maplewood n/a vicinity

state Missouri code MO county St. Louis code 189 zip code 63143

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Mark A. Miles DEC 12, 2007
Signature of certifying official/Title Mark A. Miles/Deputy SHPO Date

Missouri Department of Natural Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain) _____

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Saratoga Lanes Building
Name of Property

St. Louis County, MO
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

n/a

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: sports facility
COMMERCE/TRADE: business
COMMERCE/TRADE: warehouse

Current Function
(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE: sports facility
vacant/not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY AMERICAN
MOVEMENTS: Bungalow/Craftsman

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete
walls brick
roof asphalt
other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 7

Saratoga Lanes Building
Name of Property

St. Louis County, MO
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

Period of Significance

1916-1957

Significant Dates

n/a

Significant Persons

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

n/a

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Architect/Builder

Smith, Fred/builder, contractor

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 8

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other Name of repository:

Landmarks Association of St. Louis

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 9

Saratoga Lanes Building
Name of Property

St. Louis County, MO
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

1 1/5 7/3/3/3/2/0 4/2/7/7/0/8/0
Zone Easting Northing

2 / / / / / / / / / / /
Zone Easting Northing

3 / / / / / / / / / / /
Zone Easting Northing

4 / / / / / / / / / / /
Zone Easting Northing

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Property Tax No.

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

See continuation sheet(s) for Section No. 10

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Lindsey Derrington/researcher

organization Landmarks Association of St. Louis date July 30, 2007

street & number 917 Locust Street, 7th Floor telephone 314-421-6474

city or town St. Louis state MO zip code 63101

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs: Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items: (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

name/title see attached

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127, and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

**Saratoga Lanes Building
St. Louis County, MO**

Summary

Completed in 1916, the Saratoga Lanes Building stands at 2725 Sutton Boulevard in the inner-ring Saint Louis suburb of Maplewood (see photographs 1 and 2). The brick and concrete Craftsman style structure is two stories tall with a flat roof and deep eaves that project over its main elevation and the first bay of its south elevation. It has little detailing beyond the wooden ornamental brackets supporting these eaves (see photograph 3). The Saratoga Lanes Building was commissioned by the Maplewood Planing Mill & Stair Company. Its first floor contained the mill's offices, street front retail space, and a large warehouse space for the mill's goods. The second was home to an eight-lane bowling alley, bar, and pool hall which has been in operation ever since. The building is of fire-proof construction with floors, interior columns, roof wall, and foundation of concrete. Otherwise, it is supported by brick bearing walls and almost entirely faced with brick laid in the stretcher bond. Its first floor exterior walls are twelve inches thick, four inches more so than those of the second floor, on account of being backed by structural clay tile walls meant to further protect the structure against fire. Each floor contains around 7,500 square feet. In all, the Saratoga Lanes Building is an appealing, simple, and functional structure in keeping with those throughout the rest of the Maplewood community. Having sustained a minimal amount of alterations, it retains integrity.

Setting

The east-facing building stands on the west side of Sutton Boulevard south of its intersection with Manchester Road and just north of the former site of an electric streetcar loop constructed in 1896. It comprised the northeast portion of the 1.6 acre, square piece of land owned by the Maplewood Planing Mill & Stair Company. To its rear is a two story brick stable constructed circa 1906, and to its southwest, set far back from the street, is the two story brick mill building constructed circa 1928 to replace an earlier frame structure that had previously housed the mill's manufacturing works. The area bordered on the north by the Saratoga Lanes Building, on the west by the mill building, and on the east by Sutton once served as the mill's work yard and now is a surface parking lot (see Figure 1).

Surrounding the mill complex itself, the area emanating from the intersection of Manchester and Sutton had been platted during the late 1880s and early 1890s for residential use so that by the time development picked up in the tiny community between 1900 and 1910, these roads became the focal point of the area's business district. Most of the commercial structures built during this time were frame and failed to survive an even greater construction boom that struck Maplewood during the middle 1910s and 1920s. Of the few brick structures that were built in this early period, remaining examples in close proximity to the Saratoga Lanes Building include several buildings along Manchester just east of Sutton listed in the Maplewood Historic District (NR 12/20/06) and the Dr. Leander W. Cape Buildings (NR 11/15/05) built between 1898 and 1911 at Hazel Avenue and Sutton immediately to the south. Emanating from the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

**Saratoga Lanes Building
St. Louis County, MO**

commercial district are subdivisions of mostly frame homes built in the Queen Anne style between 1900 and 1910. Otherwise, the commercial strips along Manchester and Sutton are now dominated by the brick commercial structures that replaced the earlier frame ones during the aforementioned second wave of construction. For the most part they are two story brick structures comparable to the Saratoga Lanes Building, giving the commercial district a solid, cohesive feel.

Exterior

The Saratoga Lanes Building is 55 by 150 feet oriented east-west facing Sutton Boulevard. It stands 26 feet tall and is eight bays wide and nine bays deep. The building is set into the sides of two gradually sloping hills that rise to the west and north, resulting in the land at the southeast corner of the building being depressed.

The main elevation is of combed red brick. The sill of each window is comprised of a string course of smooth headers. A soldier course of smooth brick runs along the top edge of the first story windows while a double string course of headers runs along the top edge of those windows on the second story. The second story windows are paired and set in the original casements and transoms. They are vinyl and double-hung with simulated dividers on the upper sashes that likely give the appearance of the originals: six-paned upper sashes on the south elevation and eight-paned sashes on the main elevation all over single-paned lower sashes. Each has a transom with dividers that give it the appearance of being three- and four-paned. The building's first story is asymmetrical to suit the various needs of its tenants as well as a result of the building's being set into two slopes (see photograph 4). Viewing the building from the east, its concrete foundation is visible at its south end but gradually fades as the eye moves from the left to right since the ground gradually slopes to the north. The storefront of sorts at the south end of the elevation originally housed the mill's offices. Four large, high windows stretch from just inside the corner of the building towards the center of the elevation, and under the window furthest to the north is the office entrance. The door is wooden with simple decorative molding. A decorative wooden panel beneath these windows rises up from the raised foundation and covers what likely would be a basement window. The door is of solid wood to mask the steps that rise to the raised floor of the mill offices behind it. Sitting at street level, the central storefront has no need to conceal a drastic difference in grade. As a result, it has a wide display window as well as a glass door with a decorative wooden frame matching that of the office door, both of which would be appealing to tenants wishing to display their goods. While giving the appearance of a separate store front, a second picture window and molded wooden door lead into this central space as well. Finally, at the rightmost (north) end of the building is the glass door opening onto a flight of stairs leading to the bowling alley. Above each of these three sections to the right are multi-paned transoms. All retain their original nine panes.

The south elevation is nine double bays long. It most clearly displays the building's sloping site as the foundation is gradually exposed from left to right as the grade of the land decreases. The main elevation wraps around to encompass its rightmost bay to give it a more

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

**Saratoga Lanes Building
St. Louis County, MO**

finished appearance. With ornamented eaves, identical windows, combed brick, and continuations of the brick string courses that run across the main elevation, the only difference between this portion of the south elevation and the entirety of the main one is that the foundation, here at the most depressed point of the building's site, is exposed. The next eight bays of the elevation are separated by simple brick pilasters running from the foundation to the roofline; from this point on, the building is faced in common brick. Moving towards the rear of the building, the next two bays have the same paired, double-hung windows of the main elevation. Below the second bay from the front of the building, the downhill slope of the land and the raising of the foundation allows for a sunken entrance leading to the building's basement. For the last six bays of the elevation, those on the second story are filled in with clapboard siding as they comprise the area of the building containing the bowling lanes. The first story bays below are filled with siding as well except for the fourth and eighth bays from the right which contain wide entryways with sliding overhead doors side by side with narrow entrances with traditional doors. These lead to the warehouse space at the rear of the building, and the wide entrances would have provided easy access for moving finished wood pieces from the mill building. Above each of these eight rear bays are thick concrete slabs painted a reddish brick-like color. All the windows have sills of string brick courses comprised of smooth headers.

Facing an alley shared by another two story brick structure, the north elevation mimics the south in form without the same amount of detailing. The main elevation does not wrap around this side of the building, and what would be the first bay is a blank brick wall. This portion of the building houses the staircase leading up to the bowling alley. Beyond that there are eight more bays separated by brick pilasters as on the south elevation. These all have sills of string brick courses comprised of smooth headers. But while identical concrete slabs run in between the pilasters below eight clapboard-filled second story bays, there are no window openings on the first floor. As this end of the building is more set into the northward slope of the hill, the foundation is not visible either.

The west, or rear, elevation of the building is four bays wide and faced in common brick (see photograph 5). On the first story the three rightmost (south) bays have original paired double-hung windows with nine panes in both the upper and lower sashes. The leftmost (north) bay is filled in with clapboard siding, as are all four bays on the second story as these contain the back end of the bowling lanes. All have sills of string brick courses comprised of smooth headers. Unpainted stretches of concrete run above the frames of all, with thicker ones above the first story windows and thinner ones above those on the second story. The roof line is stepped down from left to right midway between the second and third bays to follow the downward slope of its site, topped by terra cotta coping.

Interior

The floor plan of the building's first story is very simple (see Figure 2). The spaces formerly used by the mill, the offices and warehouse, are raised about three feet from street level to make them even with the height of the slope at the rear of the building. To enter the offices

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

**Saratoga Lanes Building
St. Louis County, MO**

from the street then one would have to climb a short flight of stairs which have temporarily been removed. The office space is in two sections, with one in front of the other (see photograph 9). Both hug the building's south elevation and are given ample light from the three uncovered sets of windows that overlook the former mill yard. The stairs lead to the first, slightly larger room, which is connected to the smaller room by two doors set into its back wall to the right and left. Five square transom windows run from wall to wall above these. The second room has two doors as well, one on the back wall and one on the right wall, that lead to the warehouse area. Both offices retain their original woodwork around the baseboards and door frames. The floors are linoleum.

The warehouse space is just that, a wide, empty space broken only by concrete support columns (see photograph 10). The floor is comprised of concrete slabs. The original steel-framed windows are all intact, including those covered on the exterior by clapboard paneling. These covered windows are exposed on the interior and are in pairs, with each single window comprised of thirty rectangular panes. The walls are of exposed brick painted white.

The retail space at the front of the building is at street level. It is somewhat box-like and does not seem to retain any original features.

The staircase leading to the bowling alley rises eleven steps to a landing and then fifteen steps to the second floor. Confronted with a wall, visitors must make a short turn to the left. Upon doing this one faces south towards the freestanding bar. The floor plan of this level is quite open (see Figure 3), with pool tables scattered throughout the east of the building overlooking Sutton (see photograph 6). To the right of the bar is a walkway running north-south giving access to a row of benches and scoring tables that face eight wooden bowling lanes that take up the west (rear) end of the building (see photographs 7 and 8). Remodeled between 1954 and 1956, the benches, scoring tables, ball returns, and screens covering the automatic pinsetters are all highly stylized Moderne fixtures. The walls throughout are covered in vertical wooden paneling.

Integrity

The Saratoga Building stands in fine condition as originally built apart from a few reversible alterations. Though the exposed windows have been replaced with single-paned vinyl ones, the original casements and transoms remain and, as the simulated dividers on the second story windows seemingly mimic the originals, could be faithfully restored. The majority of the windows on the south, north, and west (rear) elevations have been covered in the clapboard paneling, yet the original windows beneath are intact and in fairly good condition. Two holes in the facing brick to either side of the main entrance of the bowling alley indicate the former presence of a small awning meant to shield the Saratoga's patrons which has been removed.¹

Inside, apart from the post-1986 additions of central air conditioning, a new vinyl countertop for the bar, and the installation of a few televisions and an electronic jukebox, the interior appears as it did after its remodeling in the mid-1950s. The wooden lanes date from the

¹ The circa 1990 awning shown stretching across the first story of the building's main elevation in photographs 1 and 2 has since been removed.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5

**Saratoga Lanes Building
St. Louis County, MO**

1930s or 1940s when the poor condition of the alley's original lanes necessitated their replacement.

The Saratoga Lanes Building retains integrity of location, setting, materials, feeling, workmanship and association.

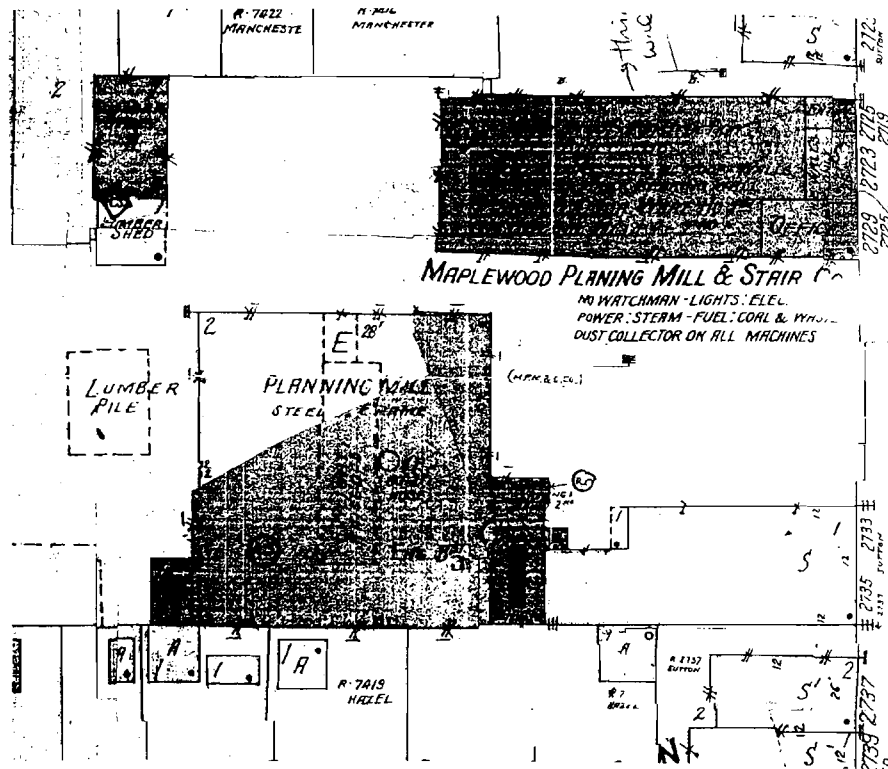
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 6

Saratoga Lanes Building
St. Louis County, MO

Figure 1: Maplewood Planing Mill & Stair Complex (Sanborn Map, 1926, updated 1949).



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 7

Saratoga Lanes Building
St. Louis County, MO

Figure 2: First Story Floor Plan of Saratoga Lanes Building at 2725 Sutton (not drawn to scale).

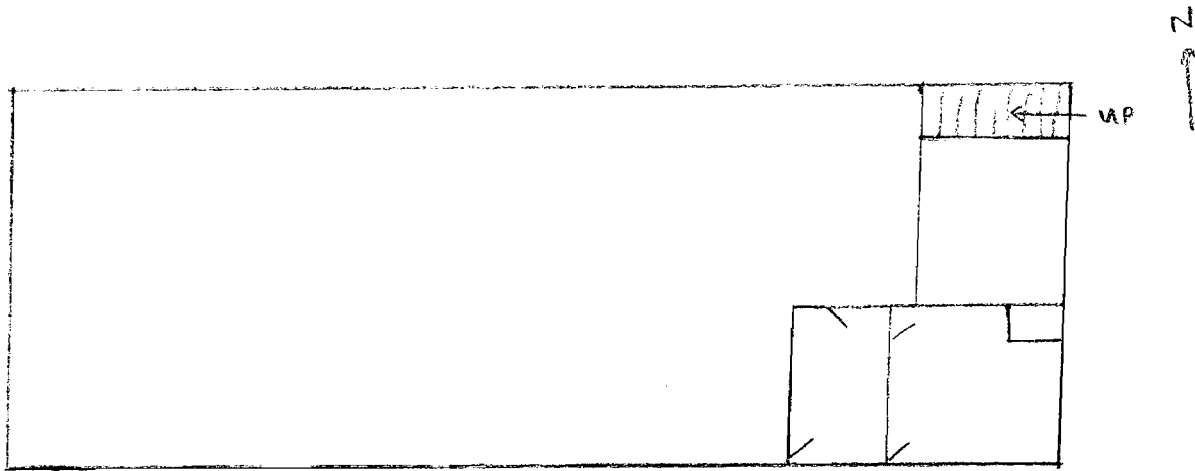
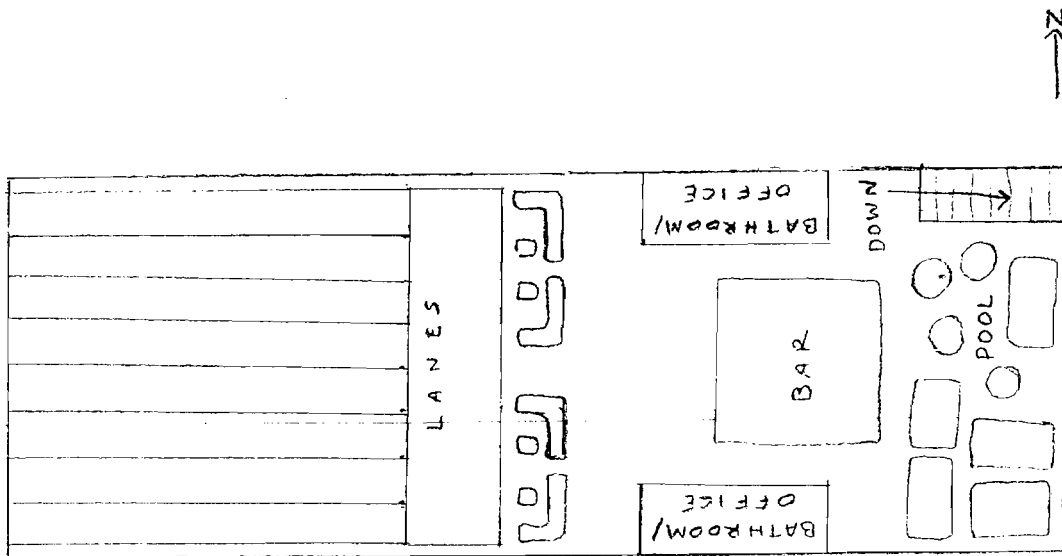


Figure 3: Second Story Floor Plan of Saratoga Lanes Building (not drawn to scale).



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 8

**Saratoga Lanes Building
St. Louis County, MO**

Summary

The Saratoga Lanes Building at 2725 Sutton Boulevard in Maplewood, Saint Louis County, Missouri, is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION. Built in 1916 by the Maplewood Planing Mill & Stair Company to house its office and warehouse, the building's second story is home to the eight-lane Saratoga Lanes bowling alley. Opened the year of the building's construction, the Saratoga is emblematic of the early glory days of the game when a thriving, working-class immigrant culture embraced bowling and propelled it to the height of popularity in urban communities. The sport took root in dense, industrial Midwestern cities, and in Saint Louis dozens of similar establishments dotted city neighborhoods as well as those of inner-ring suburbs such as Maplewood. While the Saratoga typified the early upstairs alley, it was exceptional during the first part of the 20th century for attracting players of national status to its lanes. Bolstered by the strongly working-class community of Maplewood, Saratoga Lanes was able to survive the development of expansive, free-standing bowling centers in newer suburbs during the 1950s, the popularity of which led to the downfall of most urban alleys. Today it is both the oldest bowling alley in the Saint Louis metropolitan region as well as its only remaining upstairs bowling alley. Remodeled between 1954 and 1956, the still-operating alley boasts highly stylized Modern features and has been little changed since this time period. The period of significance for the Saratoga Lanes Building begins in 1916 with its opening and ends in 1957, the arbitrary fifty-year cutoff date.

Development of Maplewood

The Pacific, later the Missouri Pacific, Railroad opened its first division of tracks running from Fourteenth Street in downtown Saint Louis to Franklin, now Pacific, Missouri in July 1853, cutting southwest through the open countryside in the hopes of eventually reaching Jefferson City.¹ Its course within fifteen miles of Saint Louis soon led to the growth of a number of communities fostered by developers who recognized the potential of marketing these suburban areas to Saint Louisans desiring to establish homes away from the grime of the city while still maintaining easy access to transportation. Kirkwood, Webster Groves, Glendale, Oakland, and Maplewood all saw marked growth beginning in the late 1800s and by the early 1900s were attracting a steady number of Saint Louisans away from the city's core with their spacious lots and more affordable land values.

Maplewood, the innermost of these railroad communities, is today bordered by Saint Louis' southwest limits to the east, Richmond Heights to the north, Brentwood to the west, and Webster Groves to the south. The land upon which the city now stands was granted to Swiss immigrant Charles Gratiot by the Spanish governor in 1785 as part of a nearly three mile-square parcel. The 5,712 acres, stretching from modern-day Kingshighway on the east to Big Bend on

¹ "MoPac's First 125 Years." *Missouri Pacific Historical Society*. <http://www.mopac.org/history_mp.asp>.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 9

**Saratoga Lanes Building
St. Louis County, MO**

the west and from Chippewa on the south to about three-fourths of the way into Forest Park on the north, was the largest Spanish land grant given during the colonial period. One of the city's most important merchants and fur traders, Gratiot maintained a country home as well as a mill and distillery on the property. Upon his death in 1817 Gratiot left his land to his nine children. The heirs put much of it up for public sale in 1826,² at which time blacksmith James C. Sutton purchased 334 acres near the southwest end of the Square.³

Sutton had migrated to Saint Louis from New Jersey in 1819 to work in his brother's blacksmith shop on Second and Spruce Streets near the riverfront. Upon the acquisition of the Gratiot land Sutton built a wooden residence and moved his family and shop to the country to what would become known throughout the area as "Sutton's Farm." The farm's immediate proximity to Saint Louis made it a natural site for a station along the Pacific and, on the orders of railroad engineer James Pugh Kirkwood, one was built at the modern-day intersection of Flora and Arbor Avenues the year the line opened.⁴ While welcoming the railroad, Sutton had no intention of parceling off his holdings and presided over the entirety of his estate until his death in 1877. His nine heirs began subdividing the majority of the property starting in 1886,⁵ and the subdivision that would come to bear most heavily on the Saratoga Lanes Building was Maple Lawn, sold to developers by daughter Sarah W. Harrison in 1895.⁶ The development comprised the land to the west of Sutton and east of Pennsylvania Road, now Big Bend, bounded on the north by the southern half of the block between Manchester and Hazel Avenue and on the south by Elm Avenue.

While much of Sutton's land had been platted, there were only four structures actually standing upon it by 1893. Sutton's own home at 7453 Manchester Road remained as did his blacksmith shop, while the Harrison home, built in 1891, stood on a large lot comprising the southwest corner of the intersection of Manchester and Sutton just north of Maple Lawn. Mary Marshall, another Sutton daughter, resided with her family on the southeast corner of the intersection at the northwest end of her Maplewood subdivision while daughter Kate Thomas lived with her family to the south on what is now Roseland Terrace.⁷ Development quickly accelerated though in May 1896 when the extension of the Manchester Line brought the electric streetcar into the fledgling community and directly connected it with downtown Saint Louis. Running southwest along Manchester and turning south at Sutton, the line presented the option of continuing on to the southwest to Kirkwood or returning to Saint Louis via the Sutton Loop on the west side of the street between Hazel and Maple Avenues.⁸ The line, coupled with the as of

² James Neal Primm. *The Lion of the Valley*. p.54.

³ Rosemary Davidson. *Survey of the Maplewood Subdivision: City of Maplewood*. (St. Louis, for the St. Louis County Historic Buildings Commission, 1982). pp. 4-6.

⁴ Robert A. Hereford, "Know Your County: Maplewood," *St. Louis Star-Times* 19 February 1946.; J. R. Dunham, *Outline Map of St. Louis County*. 1909. p.54-55.

⁵ Platbook information, Maplewood Public Library archives.

⁶ "City of Maplewood: History." *City of Maplewood*. <<http://www.cityofmaplewood.com/History.aspx>>. Platbook information. Maplewood Public Library archives.

⁷ William Lyman Thomas. *History of St. Louis County*. p.320.

⁸ "Maplewood To-Day: Incorporated as Fourth Class City in 1908 – Adopted the Commission Form in 1917." *The*

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 10

**Saratoga Lanes Building
St. Louis County, MO**

yet undeveloped remaining lands of the Harrison and Marshall estates, thus insured that Sutton would join Manchester as part of the area's commercial center.

Advertised as an easily accessible yet healthy and spacious suburb, the area witnessed a residential building boom prior to 1910.⁹ As opposed to its sister suburbs of Webster Groves and Kirkwood though, both of whom still bill themselves as the "Queen of the Suburbs," from early on the enclave that would become Maplewood proudly earned a reputation as a solid working class community as the Sutton children's subdivisions rapidly filled with those employed in Saint Louis' thriving industries. Nestled just outside one of the nation's most powerful manufacturing centers with an industrial workforce of almost 100,000,¹⁰ the area attracted a host of stenographers, bookkeepers, printers, machinists and clerks drawn by its reasonably-priced, often frame homes that were just a streetcar's ride away from their places of employment.¹¹ With a population nearing 5,000, the community adopted the name of the Marshall subdivision and incorporated as the City of Maplewood in 1908.¹²

One of the many who migrated to the area during this time was Albert Carl Blood. Born on February 26, 1852 near Lewistown in Fulton County, Illinois, he left his family's farm and saw mill near Henry in Marshall County in 1870 to work with the United States Express Company running messages between Saint Louis and Chicago. Blood married in 1877 and the couple settled in Peoria where he found work as a shipping clerk for various manufacturers of farm machinery. He and wife Mary went on to have five children during their stay there with Edith, Wylie, Albert Lyle, Walter, and Dorothy coming in quick succession between 1878 and 1887.¹³ Blood had secured work as a patternmaker by 1896 and by 1904 was working as a machine hand¹⁴ when he opted to move the family to the Saint Louis area so that he might "learn the cabinet-maker's trade."

As Saint Louis at this time was particularly important as a distributor and manufacturer of raw lumber, Blood's decision to settle here was natural. By river and rail, the city's saw and planing mills were major repositories for wood coming from seventeen states across the north, northwest, and south. While local trade amounted to 500 million feet of wood in 1901, the city's lumber merchants did an even greater amount of business shipping lumber elsewhere.¹⁵ As for custom wood pieces, most, but not all, Saint Louis mills were busy sating the enormous need locally as construction levels boomed.¹⁶ By 1902 Saint Louis could boast of being "the center of

Watchman-Advocate, 22 July 1938.; J. R. Durham. *Outline Map of St. Louis County*, 1909, p.54-55.; Andrew Young, *Streets and Streetcars of St. Louis: A Sentimental Journey*.

⁹ "Maplewood To-Day: Incorporated as Fourth Class City in 1908 – Adopted the Commission Form in 1917." *The Watchman-Advocate*, 22 July 1938.; J. R. Durham. *Outline Map of St. Louis County*, 1909, p.54-55.

¹⁰ Lawrence O. Christensen and Gary R. Kremer. *A History of Missouri, 1875-1919*, p.89

¹¹ United States Census, 1910.

¹² *St. Louis Commerce*, May 1983, p.42-43.

¹³ United States Census, 1900.

¹⁴ D. D. March. *The History of Missouri: Family and Personal History*, Vol. IV, p.893.

¹⁵ Ernest D. Kargau. *Mercantile, Industrial and Professional Saint Louis*, p.232.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, p.245

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 11

**Saratoga Lanes Building
St. Louis County, MO**

the world's lumber trade" with millions invested and millions made in the industry.¹⁷

Saratoga Lanes Building

With the demand for new construction high, Maplewood was particularly inviting for one desiring to enter into the building trades. By 1906 the Bloods had settled there, and that year Albert capitalized on this demand with the establishment of the Maplewood Planing Mill, soon known as the Maplewood Planing Mill & Stair Company.¹⁸ Successful from its start, the mill furnished clients throughout the region with custom wood pieces ranging from window sashes to floors to mantles.¹⁹ As one of the earliest major industrial interests in the area, Blood had his pick of locations and chose to rent a plot of land on the southeast end of the Harrison estate. Facing Sutton Boulevard just north of the Sutton Loop and in close proximity to the Flora Avenue railway station, the situation was ideal. In 1909 Blood solidified his company's hold on the land with the extension of his lease. James C. Sutton's son-in-law Merritt H. Marshall brokered the deal under the aegis of the Mary C. Marshall Realty Company. The leasing agreement dictated that the Maplewood Planing Mill would rent a nearly square plot of land running 130 feet along Sutton and 134 feet west into the block from 1911 to 1916, during which time the company would have the option of buying the property at the set cost of \$5,630.²⁰ While mill structures existed on the site at this time,²¹ their exact building dates are uncertain. What is certain is that by the end of his lease Blood had constructed a simple two story, pitched-roof, tar paper-covered frame mill building set back from Sutton towards the center of the land as well as a two story brick stable for the mill's work animals on the northwest corner of the plot.²²

In 1916 Blood commissioned the Saratoga Lanes Building. Its construction coincided with the end of Blood's lease with the Marshalls, possibly as a result of his purchase of the land, and occurred at the onset of a much-welcomed second wave of new development hitting Maplewood after several years of stagnation. While residential development had hit full speed between 1900 and 1910, it slowed soon thereafter. As for commercial development, Manchester and Sutton had slowly been building up with various businesses mostly meant to serve the immediate community. Beginning in the mid-1910s, interest in the area began to pick up once more. As one 1916 editorial to the *Maplewood News-Champion* described,

It is said there has been more development in Maplewood the past two years than during the previous five. This is evidence that the lethargy has been broken and that we can look forward to better things to come ... Everyone knows that until two years ago it was as quiet in Maplewood as Mark Twain said about the Grand Canyon of Colorado [sic] - so quiet there that one could hear the

¹⁷ Ibid, p.232

¹⁸ D. D. March, *The History of Missouri: Family and Personal History*, Vol. IV. p.893.; *Maplewood Directory*, 1915.

¹⁹ Interview. Alan Carlyle Blood. 3 June 2007.

²⁰ St. Louis County Recorder of Deeds.

²¹ J. R. Durham. *Outline Map of St. Louis County*. 1909. p.54-55.

²² Photographs circa 1920 courtesy of Alan Carlyle Blood.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 12

**Saratoga Lanes Building
St. Louis County, MO**

microbes gnawing.²³

While a renewed interest in residential development contributed to this wave, it was distinguishable from the earlier boom with its heavier emphasis on the commercial. Sleepy Maplewood was beginning to attract the business and industrial interests for which it became known during the 1920s and 1930s.²⁴ The Saratoga Lanes Building is an early example of this trend along Sutton as the overwhelming majority of the extant buildings there date from the 1920s.²⁵ At the cost of \$10,000, in June 1916 the *Maplewood News-Champion* considered it the most impressive of the twenty-eight building permits issued thus far that year.²⁶

Standing at 2725 Sutton Boulevard, the Saratoga Lanes Building was completed in September 1916 with Fred Smith serving as contractor.²⁷ The fireproof two-story brick and concrete Craftsman style building stands eight bays wide and nine bays deep. As the only building of the mill complex built at the street line, it became the new face of the Maplewood Planing Mill & Stair Company. In keeping with the general character of the community, it was a simple but solid addition to the streetscape as well as a major anchor for the commercial district's extension down Sutton. The first floor housed the mill's offices and one additional street front retail space. In back of these, open warehouse space for storing finished wood pieces awaiting distribution extended the width and the remaining length of the building.²⁸ For the second story, Blood created an altogether different money-making venture with the installation of an eight-lane bowling alley.

Bowling in Saint Louis

While the origins of bowling date back to ancient Egypt, the game was popularized in various forms in Europe throughout the Middle Ages and the Renaissance and made its way to the United States with the earliest English settlers during the seventeenth century. Without the standardization of rules or equipment, different incarnations of the game were popular throughout the country from early on.²⁹ As noted by one disapproving observer, the precursor of modern bowling was played in Saint Louis as early as 1838:

On the outskirts of the City at convenient distances (none being allowed within the City Limits) are the Ten Pin Alleys; there are a great number of these places around the City, say upwards of 20. in every one of whiche [sic] there is as much playing done on Sabbath days as any other ... [One] would think there were Thunder Clouds rising all around, by hearing the rolling sound of the balls on the Alleys.

In his opinion, as drinking accompanied the game it was just one more activity crying out to be

²³ Letter to the Editor. *Maplewood News-Champion*. 29 December 1916.

²⁴ *St. Louis Commerce*. May 1983. p.42-43.

²⁵ Rosemary Davidson. *Survey of the Maplewood Subdivision: City of Maplewood*. (St. Louis, for the St. Louis County Historic Buildings Commission, 1982), Appendix.

²⁶ "Maplewood Popular as Bungalow Town." *Maplewood News-Champion*, 23 June 1916

²⁷ *Ibid.*; *St. Louis Daily Record*. 10 June 1916.

²⁸ Sanborn Map. 1926 (Updated 1949); Interview. Alan Carlyle Blood. 3 June 2007.

²⁹ Andrew Hurley. *Diners, Bowling Alleys, and Trailer Parks: Chasing the American Dream in Postwar Consumer Culture*. p. 110.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 13

**Saratoga Lanes Building
St. Louis County, MO**

denounced in order to “check the growing evil” in the burgeoning town.³⁰ Those sentiments would soon be rendered hopeless with the onset of the massive influx of German-speaking immigrants to this country during the 1840s and 1850s. As the game had been commonly popular in the German states for hundreds of years (even Martin Luther had his own lane), hundreds of thousands of avid “keglers” brought their culture’s affinity for the sport with them. Naturally then, bowling became most deeply ingrained in the culture of Midwestern industrial cities such as Saint Louis, Milwaukee, Chicago, Cleveland, and Detroit as these saw the greatest numbers of German settlers.³¹

During the latter part of the nineteenth century the game maintained a close association with the consumption of alcohol and as a result earned a reputation for seediness. Bowlers were most often found playing on simple lanes in saloons installed by proprietors wishing to increase their patronage. As saloons were often the cornerstone of dense, working class neighborhoods, the game became a favorite among incoming immigrants as one of the only affordable leisure activities available to them. While women were known to bowl, the sport was overwhelmingly dominated by men, and,

Like cockfighting, billiards, dice and other recreational activities associated with the saloon, bowling became an important element in an emerging bachelor subculture. Bowling halls earned a reputation as places where outcasts and criminals congregated.³²

During the late 1800s bowling was overwhelmingly associated with alcohol, dirty saloon culture, and men. In the mind of a mainstream society that tended to look down upon the working class and upon immigrants, it was a raucous game rather than a legitimate sport.

Despite this reputation, enthusiasm for bowling gave rise to a large number of sportsmen desirous of turning it into something more. In 1895 a group of bowlers in New York banded together for the foundation of the American Bowling Congress. Apart from elevating the game’s status through organization, the group finally standardized both the rules of play and the dimensions of the game’s equipment. Bowling became a proper sport, and with uniform rules the ABC began holding national tournaments beginning in 1901.³³

Players in Saint Louis adopted ABC standards starting in 1899. The St. Louis Tenpin League organized that year at the Court House Alleys for the 1899-1900 season with six teams, and by 1904, the year of Albert Blood’s arrival to the community, the city could boast of “thousands playing, crowding the galleries and applauding the performances of numerous experts of the lignum vitae.” Bowling culture hit full swing as the number of “tenpin knights” battling nightly in front of enthusiastic spectators throughout the city began to grow.³⁴ While still a game of the working class, organized bowling was quickly entering a new era as it actively sought to distinguish itself from saloon culture. This shift in image is perhaps illustrated most clearly in the

³⁰ *Missouri Historical Society Collections*. “The Journal of Henry B. Miller.” Vol. 6 No. 3. p. 271.

³¹ Andrew Hurley. *Diners, Bowling Alleys, and Trailer Parks: Chasing the American Dream in Postwar Consumer Culture*. p. 110, 118.

³² *Ibid.* p. 112-120.

³³ “History of Bowling.” *International Bowling Museum and Hall of Fame*.

<<http://www.bowlingmuseum.com/history.asp>>.

³⁴ Jake Pflueger. “Progress of Ten-Pins in World’s Fair City.” *St. Louis Star*. 13 March 1904.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 14

**Saratoga Lanes Building
St. Louis County, MO**

city directories: In 1895, the listing for the sport reads “Bowling Alleys. (See Saloons)” while Brunswick-Balke-Collender, today still one of the largest manufacturers of bowling equipment, is listed only under “Saloon Fixtures” though the firm had been installing lanes along with its other products since 1890.³⁵ By 1909, bowling alleys have their own section of listings while Brunswick is listed under “Bowling Alley Manufacturers.”³⁶ Bowling had become a legitimate sport in its own right and finally become acceptable to mainstream culture. In this new phase in its history, successful bowlers became citywide celebrities and the number of well-respected bowling establishments proliferated.

The Saratoga Billiards & Bowling Alley and Upstairs Lanes

The Blood alley was part of this wave of enthusiasm that prompted the opening of over twenty new alleys in the Saint Louis area between 1909 and 1920.³⁷ Listed as the Saratoga Billiards & Bowling Alley, it offered eight wooden lanes manufactured next door in the planing mill.³⁸ The establishment was accessible through a street-facing door at the north end of the building giving access to a flight of stairs. Upon reaching the top of these, a visitor would take a short turn to the left and have, to his left, an open space at the front end of the building with billiards and pool tables. To his right were the open lanes of the alley to the rear of the building. At its opening in 1916, the Saratoga was one of only two saloon-exclusive bowling alleys in the county.³⁹ the other one being constructed at almost the same time across the street at 2708-2710 Sutton.⁴⁰ Built by the William M. Stites Realty Company and headed by Edward Lightstone (who had operated a pool parlor on the site since at least 1912), the one story Maplewood Bowling Alley & Billiard Hall had six lanes.⁴¹ While the proximity of the two alleys now seems somewhat of an oddity, that the sport would be popular in the Maplewood community does not, filled as it was with those of the working and lower middle classes who typically fueled the sport’s ranks both as players and spectators.

Desirous of entering the bowling business and possibly spurred on by son Wylie who would come to play on the alley’s earliest league,⁴² Blood’s decision to place the Saratoga on the second floor of his new building was in keeping with a national trend. Upstairs lanes presented an inexpensive way of utilizing space if first floor rents were too high or if, in Blood’s case, that

³⁵ City Directory.; “Corporation History: 1890.” *Brunswick: Genuine Ingenuity*.
<<http://www.brunswick.com/company/history/index.php#>>.

³⁶ City Directory.

³⁷ City Directory.; County Directory.

³⁸ Interview. Alan Carlyle Blood. 10 July 2007.

³⁹ While not listed in the County Directory, the *Maplewood News-Champion* mentions lanes in a billiards hall under the ownership of man named Harlan; mostly likely these were along the lines of those found in saloons, installed as an afterthought to increase patronage.

⁴⁰ “Maplewood Popular as Bungalow Town.” *Maplewood News-Champion*. 23 June 1916.; Boos’ County Directory.

⁴¹ United States Census 1910.; *Maplewood News-Champion*. 29 September 1916.; Maplewood directory listings, 1912. Maplewood Public Library archives.

⁴² Interview. Alan Carlyle Blood. 10 July 2007.; *Maplewood News-Champion*, 26 January 1917.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 15

**Saratoga Lanes Building
St. Louis County, MO**

space was needed for more important or more lucrative uses.⁴³ While this is an early example of an “upstair-zer,” such alleys grew in number prior to 1950. By 1917 there were three in the city of Saint Louis, with the DeSoto-Pine Bowling Alleys on the second floor of 708 Pine, the Congress Bowling Alley on the third floor of 902 Washington Avenue, and the Washington Bowling Alleys (run by the Hygienic Amusement Company) on the fourth, fifth, and six floors of 720 (later 718) Washington Avenue.⁴⁴ By 1946, of the forty alleys in Saint Louis city, eight were located on upper levels as were three of the nine alleys in the county.⁴⁵

According to grandson Alan Blood, apart from wanting to maximize the profitability of his new building Albert Blood placed the lanes upstairs in order to “elevate the game of bowling, to get it out of the basement and attract more women” as players.⁴⁶ Built during the height of the movement to professionalize the sport and to improve its image, the Saratoga was exemplary of the new era of bowling. During the saloon age of the game alleys were often found in dark, unsanitary basements.⁴⁷ Upstairs alleys then presented both literal and figurative departures from this unsavory past as clean, professional arenas for play. While others throughout the Saint Louis area ran basement alleys into the 1940s,⁴⁸ they continued to bear quite an unfavorable stigma while upstairs alleys were considered far more respectable and saw far more organized competitions and league play.

Under the ownership of the Blood family and the proprietorship of former piano salesman Edward “Bud” Rice,⁴⁹ early league play at the Saratoga followed along the path of bowling alleys across the rest of the country. Throughout the 1910s, ‘20s and ‘30s,

Most bowlers held blue-collar jobs and a great many of them bowled regularly with their co-workers under the auspices of industrial leagues. Thousands of industrial firms sponsored bowling teams for their workers; leagues that carried these teams were the bread and butter of most bowling businesses.⁵⁰

In working class Maplewood, such leagues were quick to form. The Maplewood Bowling League organized in the summer of 1916 with the intent of playing on Blood’s lanes months before they were even completed;⁵¹ by August the Manchester-Sutton League had organized with the intent of playing at the Maplewood Bowling Alley and Billiard Hall under construction across the street.⁵² On the Maplewood League could be found teams such as Maplewood Laundry, County Gas, and Dolan Bros. (of Dolan Realty Company), while the Donley Coal Co., Wilson Hardware

⁴³ John M. McGuire. “Only a Few ‘Upstair-zers’ Survive in St. Louis.” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. 24 November 1996.

⁴⁴ City Directory.

⁴⁵ City Directory.; County Directory.

⁴⁶ Interview. Alan Carlyle Blood. 10 July 2007.

⁴⁷ Andrew Hurley. *Diners, Bowling Alleys, and Trailer Parks: Chasing the American Dream in Postwar Consumer Culture*. p. 113.

⁴⁸ The Community Bowling Alleys at 6310 West Florissant were in operation at least until 1944.

⁴⁹ County Directories.

⁵⁰ Andrew Hurley. *Diners, Bowling Alleys, and Trailer Parks: Chasing the American Dream in Postwar Consumer Culture*. p. 122.

⁵¹ “Bowlers Getting Busy.” *Maplewood News-Champion*. 21 July 1916.; “Bowling League Organizes.” *Maplewood News-Champion*. 18 August 1916.

⁵² “New Bowling League Organized.” *Maplewood News-Champion*. 25 August 1916.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 16

**Saratoga Lanes Building
St. Louis County, MO**

Co., and Western Power & Light Co. all had teams in the Manchester-Sutton League.⁵³ The game was wildly popular. League scores and updates made the front page of the *Maplewood News-Champion* almost without fail into the early 1930s to the point of sharing space with coverage of events in Europe during World War I. Bowling scores were a weekly standard along with a column reporting on the progress of the public schools, and it was the only sport to receive such notice until the construction of a local softball field in the mid-1930s. Bowling was so popular that Maplewood's mayor, Milton G. Fink, served as the Maplewood League's first president while numerous other community leaders, including members of the powerful businessmen's association known as the Fats & Leans, bowled as well.⁵⁴ Again, in a community dominated by the working class, the sport was a favorite universally and the Saratoga served as an important social gathering center.

In a region that saw the birth of organized bowling for women, the Saratoga Billiards & Bowling Alley was also an early promoter of female leagues. Prior to World War II the sport was overwhelmingly dominated by men as they constituted two of three bowlers and four of five league players during this period.⁵⁵ Through the efforts of bowling promoter and writer Dennis J. Sweeney though, women in the Saint Louis area were the first in the country to officially assert their right to bowl. Sweeney had actively sought to put Saint Louis on the map as a bowling center since almost single-handedly bringing the ABC national tournament here in 1907 and 1911.⁵⁶ A strong supporter of women's right to share lanes with their male counterparts, he had shocked the nation by staging a surprise women's tournament on the ABC lanes in 1907.⁵⁷ After the ABC totally banned female bowlers in 1909, Sweeney doubled his efforts to encourage women to form their own association. In 1916, the year of the Saratoga's opening, he succeeded with the foundation of what would soon be known as the Women's International Bowling Congress at the Washington Bowling Alleys (of which he would soon become the proprietor).⁵⁸ By 1928 the organization had 7,757 members nationwide, and this number continued to grow until 50,000 women bowlers counted themselves among those in the WIBC in 1939. Sweeney went on to be inducted into the ABC Hall of Fame for his work.⁵⁹

Though the WIBC had laid the framework for the organization of women bowlers, the majority of women felt uncomfortable entering such an overtly male arena and it was up to bowling alley proprietors to recruit them.⁶⁰ While this recruitment mostly took place much later

⁵³ "Saratoga Alleys." *Maplewood News-Champion*. 19 January 1917.

⁵⁴ "First Big Match Game of Season at Saratoga Alleys." *Maplewood News-Champion*. 3 November 1916.

⁵⁵ Andrew Hurley. *Diners, Bowling Alleys, and Trailer Parks: Chasing the American Dream in Postwar Consumer Culture*. p. 118.

⁵⁶ John J. Archibald. "Dennis Sweeney, 85 Today, Carrying On Lost Bowling Cause." *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. 3 October 1958.

⁵⁷ *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. 16 February 1964.

⁵⁸ "Origins: WIBC Pioneers." *WIBC History Hub*.

<<http://www.wibchistoryhub.com/display.asp?ID=2158507222003413085216556>>.

⁵⁹ "ABC Meritorious Hall of Fame." *Official Website of the United States Bowling Congress*.

<http://www.bowl.com/aboutUSBC/history/abchof_meritorious.aspx>.

⁶⁰ Andrew Hurley. *Diners, Bowling Alleys, and Trailer Parks: Chasing the American Dream in Postwar Consumer*

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 17

**Saratoga Lanes Building
St. Louis County, MO**

with the advent of suburban bowling culture in the 1950s,⁶¹ as early as 1917 the Saratoga was encouraging ladies to play on its lanes through the *News-Advocate*: “Ladies are respectfully invited to join or attend the Saratoga Bowling club for ladies. This club bowls every Thursday afternoon, beginning at 2 o’clock.”⁶² Such entreaties were not entirely altruistic as most proprietors who deigned to court women did so in order to fill the dead time left open during the day when most male bowlers were at work. Yet those who did actively welcome lady players during this period seem to have been rare, and that the Saratoga persistently welcomed them from so early on put it ahead of most. Successful in its endeavor, soon the weekly invitations came to reassure as well as welcome: “The Thursday Afternoon Ladies Club is increasing every week. Everybody seems to enjoy the pastime and the scores are getting better.”⁶³

Prohibition

As the Saratoga entered the 1920s, Maplewood’s enthusiasm for bowling as well as the tone of the alley itself managed to keep it alive during Prohibition. In the absence of legal alcohol the number of alleys across the country dropped sharply,⁶⁴ and despite a continued enthusiasm for the game, the number of alleys in Saint Louis fluctuated dramatically. In 1918 there were thirty alleys in the city but that number dropped precipitously to eighteen in 1919. This sudden decrease in the number of bowling establishments possibly resulted from proprietors’ wishing to cut their losses early in anticipation of ruinous failure once the Eighteenth Amendment took effect the following year. While the local bowling industry had somewhat recouped by 1920 with twenty-six alleys, by 1925 this number dropped down to twenty while only six of these establishments had been open five years earlier.⁶⁵ So while new proprietors continued to try their hand at running “dry” alleys, their rate of turnover was high and the bowling industry was incredibly unstable. That the Saratoga survived this turbulent period is quite exceptional and likely attributable to how engrained the sport was in the Maplewood community. The Saratoga was never conceived of as a place where bowling would serve as an ancillary activity to drinking. It follows that it, as well as the other “modern” alleys of its time, fared far better during Prohibition than their saloon counterparts. The Saratoga’s heavy emphasis on sportsmanship and league play kept the establishment a deeply engrained, viable part of Maplewood’s culture. Bowling was such an important facet of community life that, during a time of so much instability, Maplewood bowlers were able to support not only the Saratoga but the Maplewood Bowling Alley and Billiard Hall until 1929 when Edward Lightstone closed the latter in order to open a billiards hall elsewhere.⁶⁶ Thus by 1930, the Saratoga Billiards & Bowling Alley was one of four

Culture. p. 136.

⁶¹ Ibid. 150-151.

⁶² “Saratoga Alleys.” *Maplewood News-Champion*. 19 January 1917.

⁶³ *Maplewood News-Champion*. 16 February 1917.

⁶⁴ Andrew Hurley. *Diners, Bowling Alleys, and Trailer Parks: Chasing the American Dream in Postwar Consumer Culture*. p. 116.

⁶⁵ City Directories.

⁶⁶ Obituary. Edward Lightstone. *Maplewood News-Champion*. 15 May 1931.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 18

**Saratoga Lanes Building
St. Louis County, MO**

alleys in Saint Louis County and the only one dating from the pre-Prohibition era. In the entire metropolitan region, it was one of only five to survive the decade, four of which were upstairs.⁶⁷

Edward B. Rice's managerial skills also would have been crucial as the perpetual burden of organizing, scheduling, and recruiting players for leagues lay on his shoulders. By 1932, a year before Prohibition's repeal, the establishment was so busy with both men and women's league play that Rice could offer open lanes only on Wednesday evenings.⁶⁸ Yet after sixteen years of keeping the Saratoga alive, he opted out of the business. By this time Albert Blood, now eighty years old, had moved to Santa Clara, California to enjoy his retirement with his wife.⁶⁹ His sons Albert Lyle, Walter, and Wylie, all of whom had been involved with the mill since the 1910s, continued to operate the still thriving business out of the Saratoga Lanes Building's first floor and to them went the task of finding a new proprietor for their alley.

The Stein Family

Thinking big, the Bloods tapped into one of the Saint Louis area's most prominent bowling families, the Steins. Residing nearby at 7344 Manchester,⁷⁰ Otto Stein, Sr., the patriarch of "a family of bowlers,"⁷¹ was a first generation German immigrant whose family had immigrated to Saint Louis County during the early part of the 1860s, settling near Creve Coeur where Otto was born in 1866. His father, two uncles, and grandfather worked there as coal miners,⁷² making a decent enough living to allow Stein to attend the local public schools and eventually the Bryant & Stratton Business College in the city.⁷³ Like Albert Blood though, he went through a series of jobs before establishing himself as a leading citizen of Maplewood during the first part of the 20th century. In 1900 he was employed as a day laborer in Saint Louis with his wife of eleven years and their six children; by 1910 he had moved the family to Maplewood where they lived near the train tracks while he worked as a bartender in a saloon.⁷⁴ Somewhere between that time and 1920 Stein crossed over the line from blue collar to white and established himself as a successful real estate dealer and Justice of the Peace.⁷⁵ As was the tendency in Maplewood, he seems to have led a dual life in which he was Judge Stein, civic leader, by day, and "Pop" Stein, popular bowler, by night. He served as the first manager and promoter of the Maplewood Bowling Alley & Billiard Hall before quickly switching alliances to play at the Saratoga on the new Saratoga League by January 1917.⁷⁶ The relationship between his

⁶⁷ City Directory.

⁶⁸ Regularly advertised in the *Maplewood News-Champion*; "Daughters of Isabella Close Bowling Season." *Maplewood News-Champion*. 13 May 1932.

⁶⁹ United States Census, 1930.

⁷⁰ Watchman-Advocate. *History of St. Louis County, Missouri*. Clayton, Missouri. p.57.

⁷¹ "Stein Bros. Lease Saratoga Alleys." 3 June 1932.

⁷² United States Census, 1870.

⁷³ Watchman-Advocate. *History of St. Louis County, Missouri*. Clayton, Missouri. p.57.

⁷⁴ United States Census, 1900; United States Census, 1910.

⁷⁵ Watchman-Advocate. *History of St. Louis County, Missouri*. Clayton, Missouri. p.57.

⁷⁶ "New Bowling League Organized." *Maplewood News-Champion*. 25 August 1916.; "Saratoga League."

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 19

**Saratoga Lanes Building
St. Louis County, MO**

family and the alley would last for another seventy years.

Stein's eldest son Otto, Jr. was the first of his siblings to make a name for himself in the game. Born in 1893, Otto first bowled on slipshod lanes in Harlan's billiards parlor in Maplewood.⁷⁷ By 1916 he had moved back into Saint Louis where he operated lanes at 3200 Park Avenue. The next year Stein secured one of the most prized positions in the city's bowling community as manager of the twenty-four upstairs lanes of the Washington Bowling Alleys for the Hygienic Amusement Company.⁷⁸ The job put him at the forefront of the sport, placing him in direct association with Dennis J. Sweeney and, because of its location, putting him in contact with the finest bowlers the city could offer. By 1925 Stein was vice-president of the Hygienic Amusement Company with Sweeney serving under him as the alley's manager; by 1930 he had become president of the company and general manager of the alley with his youngest brother Melvin serving as his assistant.⁷⁹ During this rise to the height of his profession, Stein was also rising to great heights as one of the greatest bowling stars in the nation. Inducted into the American Bowling Congress' Hall of Fame in 1971,

Stein compiled an outstanding record in Saint Louis, where few challenged his supremacy as a match game bowler in the late 1920s and '30s. He was one of the first to roll three 1,900 all-events totals in the ABC Tournament, winning the 1929 crown with 1,974. Stein won the National Match Game title in 1934 by defeating Joe Miller in Buffalo, then lost it the following year to Hank Marino.⁸⁰

While much of this terminology would escape those not familiar with the game, that Marino was named the "Bowler of the Half Century" by the National Bowling Writers Association in 1951⁸¹ gives some indication of the status Stein enjoyed on the national bowling scene during his prime.

Back in Maplewood, during the 1920s Stein's other younger brother Clarence (born in 1899) maintained an interest in the sport while pursuing other careers. A teammate of his father's on the Saratoga League in 1917,⁸² Clarence Stein served abroad in World War I before returning to Maplewood where he worked first as a railroad clerk and later as a credit man for the Herkert & Meisel Trunk Company.⁸³ In 1930 Clarence was serving as the vice president of a light fixtures company, a position he still held in 1932 when the opportunity to lease the Saratoga presented itself.⁸⁴

With sights set on Otto, Jr.,⁸⁵ the Bloods signed a lease with both him and Clarence in June. In true form, the *News-Champion* happily announced the deal on its front page, stating that

Maplewood News-Champion. 26 January 1917.

⁷⁷ United States Census, 1910.; "Stein Bros. Lease Saratoga Alleys." *Maplewood News-Champion*. 3 June 1932.

⁷⁸ City Directory.

⁷⁹ City Directory.

⁸⁰ "ABC Performance Hall of Fame: Otto Stein Jr." *The Official Website of the United States Bowling Congress*. <http://www.bowl.com/aboutUSBC/history/abchof_performanceck_z.aspx>.

⁸¹ Andrew Hurley. *Diners, Bowling Alleys, and Trailer Parks: Chasing the American Dream in Postwar Consumer Culture*. p. 119.

⁸² "Saratoga League." *Maplewood News-Champion*. 19 January 1917.

⁸³ United States Census, 1920; County Directory.

⁸⁴ United States Census, 1920; City Directories.

⁸⁵ Interview. Alan Carlyle Blood. 10 July 2007.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 20

**Saratoga Lanes Building
St. Louis County, MO**

the Steins would entirely redecorate the establishment, resurface the lanes, and make improvements to its four pool tables, one billiard table, and one snooker table. The billiard parlor would reopen June 10 followed by the bowling alley on August 1. But while Maplewood and the Bloods joyfully anticipated the return of their hometown superstar who, at the time, held the world's record for league bowling and had rolled eight perfect games,⁸⁶ Otto, Jr. was still first and foremost the president and manager of his own alley downtown. Rather unexpectedly, Clarence would soon dominate the alley, and it was he who would be indelibly associated with it for the rest of his life.

The Saratoga Recreation Parlor Under Clarence Stein

Only two months after reopening the alley as the Saratoga Recreation Parlor, Clarence Stein brought in a three-game scratch classic open to all applicants but prestigious enough to draw the best from the Major City and the ABC Scratch Leagues of Saint Louis. That Maplewood could play host to such an event lent the working class community some status in the metropolitan region, and as reported in the *News-Champion*, Stein was "giving ... local fans the opportunity of seeing some of the greatest bowling stars in the country on [their] local alleys." And stars they were, for aside from a host of Maplewood celebrities including Otto Stein, Jr., there was Cone Hermann, future ABC Hall of Famer who was the first in the nation to organize all-star teams and elevate them to national status.⁸⁷ At the time of this event his famous Hermann Undertakers had just bowled a world record match game score. Five years later they would go on to set the highest league score in the game's history, a record that would stand until broken by another Saint Louis team until 1958.⁸⁸ The famous Undertakers returned to the Saratoga again in 1933 to play a three game match against a Maplewood team specially chosen for the occasion, soon known as the Saratoga Five. With Clarence Stein among them, the Five made waves in the bowling world by unexpectedly becoming the first to beat the "world's match game champions" in two full years.⁸⁹ Soon after this Stein staged yet another Five Man Scratch Bowling Team Classic, and if the usual celebrities weren't enough, he made the event appealing to women with a twenty-piece set of china locked in a chest, only to be opened by the spectator lucky enough to be given the right key upon entering the alley.⁹⁰ In 1935 the Saratoga was chosen to host elimination rounds for the area's entry to the Match Game Championship of America, the winner of which eventually would play the defending national champion, Otto, Jr.⁹¹ By the mid-1930s Stein had succeeded in making his Saratoga Lanes Recreation Parlor a major component of the Saint Louis sporting circuit.

⁸⁶ "Stein Bros. Lease Saratoga Alleys." *Maplewood News-Champion*. 3 June 1932.

⁸⁷ "ABC Meritorious Hall of Fame: Cone Hermann." *The Official Website of the United States Bowling Congress*. <http://www.bowl.com/aboutUSBC/history/abchof_meritorious.aspx>.

⁸⁸ "Three-Game Scratch Team Classic Saturday." *Maplewood News-Champion*. October 1932.; *Saint Louis Post-Dispatch*. 16 February 1964, courtesy of the Saint Louis Public Library.

⁸⁹ "Saratoga Five- Surprise Victory Over Undertakers." *Maplewood News-Champion*. 6 October 1933.

⁹⁰ "Bowling News from Saratoga Parlors." *Maplewood News-Champion*. 29 September 1933.

⁹¹ "Bowling Stars at the Saratoga Saturday Night." *Maplewood News-Champion*. 18 January 1935.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 21

**Saratoga Lanes Building
St. Louis County, MO**

At a time when most league play and competitions in the county's four or so alleys consisted of local teams, in drawing in the area's top sportsmen Stein was not only enhancing the gaming experience of Maplewood's bowling enthusiasts but was turning the Saratoga into a major bowling venue in its own right. Whereas the *Watchman-Advocate*, the main weekly paper of Saint Louis County, solely reported on the weekly progress of the Knights of Columbus teams from Webster Groves, Kirkwood, Clayton, and others during this time, there is no mention of any activity even nearing the quality of competitions the Saratoga was showcasing. Through his brother's connections and his own skill as a promoter, Stein drew bowling's finest from Saint Louis that they might showcase their art in a tiny community of less than thirteen thousand. For a city that had always embraced the game yet one that had always been viewed as a little rougher and lower-classed, such celebrity activity, especially during the worst slump of the Great Depression, would have meant an incredible amount. That Stein staged games pitting Maplewood celebrities against national ones would also have been hugely validating for those who had spent years cheering on their relatives and neighbors.

Stein also continued the Saratoga tradition of welcoming female players and was ahead of many in organizing a mixed doubles league wherein multi-gendered pairs would compete. This practice was slow to take off even after the Second World War and only became widely accepted in the 1950s when suburban alleys started trying to attract more women.⁹² But at the Saratoga, as early as 1933 couples comprised of men and their wives, brothers and sisters, and single men and women were bowling in a regular league. Clarence Stein's own wife participated, albeit with another man (though Stein did continue to play on his own quite successfully).⁹³ That women were so encouraged to play from early on is yet another indication of how wholly immersed the community was in the sport.

Between the 1930s and 1950s the Saratoga continued to thrive under Stein's management. Be it through the staging of major tournaments, thriving league play, or cash prizes for winners of local competitions, the alley made it through yet another trying decade. The sport, if now more popular than ever, was witnessing the rise of national bowling superstars yet still retained its working class flavor. The major stars still tended to be industrial workers of German descent or, more commonly in this later period, industrial workers of Eastern or Southern European origins.⁹⁴ At the Saratoga, leagues still bore the names of local businesses and industries such as Wolf Department Store and Schenk Furniture Co. for the men and Rosann Beauty Shop and Shoppe Taverns for the ladies.⁹⁵

Sometime during the mid- to late 1940s the previous thirty-years' worth of constant activity on the Saratoga's lanes had worn the wood down to the metal straps which held them together, necessitating their replacement. Stein enlisted father and son carpenters Emil and

⁹² Andrew Hurley. *Diners, Bowling Alleys, and Trailer Parks: Chasing the American Dream in Postwar Consumer Culture*. p. 176-177.

⁹³ "Bowling News From Saratoga Parlors." *Maplewood News-Champion*. 29 September 1933.

⁹⁴ Andrew Hurley. *Diners, Bowling Alleys, and Trailer Parks: Chasing the American Dream in Postwar Consumer Culture*. p. 119.

⁹⁵ *Maplewood News-Champion*. 19 October 1933 and 23 January 1935.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 22

**Saratoga Lanes Building
St. Louis County, MO**

Eugene Struckhoff to lay new wooden lanes which remain to this day.⁹⁶ While Clarence Stein maintained his close relationship with the Saratoga, he and Otto opened Stein Bros. Bowling in 1941 at 3911 Hampton in Saint Louis which Otto managed until his death in 1949.⁹⁷ Clarence was to see both alleys in the 1950s alone, and the decade was to prove most troubling to upstairs alleys nationwide.

Automatic Pinsetters and the End of the Upstairs Alley

While the technology had been germinating since the early 1910s, the evolution of the automatic pinsetter quickly accelerated in the 1940s until the American Machine Foundry Company released its AMF Pinspotter in 1952. The new machinery had an incredible impact upon bowling for a number of reasons. It eliminated the need for live pinboys who, paid almost nothing, tended either to be adolescent boys or substance-abusing itinerants pulled off the street by alley proprietors. As a result, games tended to run on the rougher side as abrasive interchanges and heckling between bowlers and pinboys were common. Despite having elevated itself to new levels of sportsmanship, the game had maintained this “edge” which reinforced alleys as hard, masculine domains into the 1940s. As would be expected, the presence of pinboys had proved off-putting to many females and those of the middle classes. Eliminating this major barrier to universal participation in the game and coinciding with the postwar growth of the suburbs, the Pinspotter changed this all. Reinventing itself once more, bowling in the age of automation took on a completely different tone as free-standing, single-story alleys outfitted with the latest technologies and dozens of lanes began springing up outside of city centers. Upon automation the game immediately started attracting a broader base of players as those previously repelled by traditional bowling culture began frequenting these “clean” new mega-centers. No longer bound to urban neighborhoods either by patrons or the need for pinboy labor, bowling in streamlined form wholly embraced the suburbs.⁹⁸

League play and formal competitions continued to grow in popularity but in a manner which reflected the game’s new demographics. Leagues were increasingly less affiliated with industrial or commercial interests as team names such as the Sad Sacks, Misfits, and Orphan Annie’s became the norm.⁹⁹ Because of an increased presence of the middle class in the game and possibly as a result of those of the working class wishing to shed their identity as such upon emigrating to the suburbs, the days of the Grueber Service Station and Carondelet Brewery teams were passing. Teams such as the superstar Budweisers and Falstaffs remained, but these were comprised of recruited professionals paid thousands of dollars by major interests rather than teams of employees playing with their co-workers and neighbors. Saint Louis continued to be a bowling mecca during the 1950s with 43,000 men and 23,000 women as members of the Greater

⁹⁶ Interview. Alan Carlyle Blood. 10 July 2007.; City Directory.

⁹⁷ “Otto Stein Jr., Dies; Well-Known Bowler.” *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*. 17 March 1949.

⁹⁸ Andrew Hurley. *Diners, Bowling Alleys, and Trailer Parks: Chasing the American Dream in Postwar Consumer Culture*. p. 133-136. 152-153.

⁹⁹ “Bowling Notes.” *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*. 17 March 1949.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 23

**Saratoga Lanes Building
St. Louis County, MO**

St. Louis Bowling Association by the end of the decade,¹⁰⁰ but the game was markedly different from what it had been.

For upstairs alleys, the automatic pinsetter spelled not only cultural changes within the sport itself but death. The new machinery weighed over a ton and a half and stood nearly eight feet tall, proving difficult, if not impossible, for most upstairs proprietors to install and support.¹⁰¹ While Saint Louis saw a general decline in its number of alleys, the upstairs ones were often the first to go. Longtime institutions of the sport such as Rogers Recreation on the second through fourth floors of 918 Washington Avenue, founded in the early 1920s, closed in the early 1950s, and the former Peterson Billiards & Bowling Inc., opened prior to 1925 on the third floor of 218 North Seventh Street, closed around 1958.¹⁰² An article from that same year by ABC Hall of Fame bowling writer John J. Archibald acknowledged the passing of the pre-war era of bowling in an article entitled, "Dennis Sweeney, 85 Today, Carrying On Lost Bowling Cause." Managing the establishment under his own name, Sweeney held on tightly to the former Washington Bowling Alleys until a bad fall finally induced him to retire.¹⁰³ The alley that had seen so much history play out on its lanes closed four years later.¹⁰⁴ That the Budweisers team beat the Hermann Undertakers' highest league score in 1958 at the upstairs Floriss Lanes on the north side seems an odd tribute to the dying breed of alley.

In Maplewood, Clarence Stein confronted these rapid changes head-on. Between 1954 and 1956 he installed an automatic pinsetter leased from the Brunswick-Balke-Collender Corporation. That he was able to do so likely stemmed from the Saratoga Lane Building's sturdiness as a result of fireproofing, making it physically capable of supporting the new machinery. Stein also remodeled the Saratoga's interior during this time, installing new, highly stylized Moderne Brunswick-Balke-Collender ball returns with hand-dryers, scoring tables, pinsetter screens, lockers, and seats for the players.¹⁰⁵ He updated the pool tables as well to complete his still extant remodeling of the alley. Modernized as such with stylish new trappings and the latest pinsetting technologies, Stein had outfitted the Saratoga to compete with the increasingly alluring newer alleys being built further away. He was one of the few proprietors successful in doing so.

Clarence Stein managed the Saratoga Recreation Parlor until his death in 1965. During his management he served as president of the Missouri State Bowling Proprietors Association and of the St. Louis Men's Bowling Association, and at his death was considered one the game's

¹⁰⁰ "'Sport of Kings,' and Bowling." *St. Louis Commerce*. May 1960.

¹⁰¹ John M. McGuire. "Only a Few 'Up-Stair-zers' Survive in St. Louis." *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. 24 November 1996.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*: City Directory.

¹⁰³ John J. Archibald. "Dennis Sweeney, 85 Today, Carrying On Lost Bowling Cause." *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. 3 October 1958.; Joe Whittington. "Downtown Was Once Bowled Over." *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. 21 June 2007.

¹⁰⁴ John M. McGuire. "Only a Few 'Up-Stair-zers' Survive in St. Louis." *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. 24 November 1996.

¹⁰⁵ Interview. Alan Carlyle Blood. 10 July 2007.; Martha Bellisle. "Young Bowlers Discover the Saratoga Lanes." *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. 24 November 1996.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 24

**Saratoga Lanes Building
St. Louis County, MO**

most prominent figures in the Saint Louis region.¹⁰⁶ For his decades of work at the Saratoga and for his enhancement of the game, he was inducted into the Greater St. Louis Bowling Association's Hall of Fame in 1972.¹⁰⁷ In keeping with their family's heritage, his sons ran the Saratoga for another twenty years, ending their lease in 1986.¹⁰⁸ The lanes continue in operation under different management today.

While the bowling alley's history played out upstairs, the Blood family continued to maintain an office on the building's first floor. Walter eventually became the Maplewood Planing Mill's president and in 1958 passed that distinction on to his son Alan Carlyle, born in 1925.¹⁰⁹ Alan ran the mill until its close in the early 1970s but continued to operate a different company in his own name out of the mill's offices. In March 2007 he opted to sell the entire complex, which by this time consisted of the Saratoga Lanes Building, a two-story brick millworks building built circa 1928, and the original stable constructed circa 1910. A building constructed circa 1935 which once served as a grocery store and laundromat, not related to the mill but part of the property, was located on the southeast corner of the parcel. At the time of the sale Blood still occupied the mill office while renting the bowling alley to proprietor Jim Barton and the mill building to a separate company for offices and storage. The retail space in the Saratoga Lanes Building, which from the early 1920s into the 1940s was home to the Maplewood Café and in the 1950s and 1960s served as an office for the St. Louis County Welfare Department, was empty.¹¹⁰ The laundromat stood vacant as well while the stable was used for storage.

On March 7, 2007 Alan Blood sold the property to Saratoga Lanes Properties, LLC, a company created for the occasion and operated by Barton. On May 22 Saratoga Lanes Properties sold the first floor of the Saratoga Lanes Building to an engineering firm, Frontenac Partners, LLC, which is looking to rehabilitate it into modern office space. On June 5, 2007 Saratoga Lanes Properties severed the historic parcel and sold the stable, millworks, and laundromat to Creve Coeur Development, LLC which is pursuing an altogether separate course from the Saratoga Lanes Building and its owners.¹¹¹

The Saratoga Lanes Building today remains the last upstairs bowling alley in the Saint Louis metropolitan region. One other existed into the twenty-first century, but the Arcade Lanes, opened in 1944 at 7579 Olive Boulevard in University City, burned in 2003.¹¹² The Saratoga is also the oldest alley in either the city of Saint Louis or Saint Louis County, being the only one now in existence to have survived Prohibition. It stands as a relic of a great bowling culture that flourished prior to World War II when the game was fueled by the urban, immigrant working-class as well as by the aspirations of early 20th century proprietors and players seeking to elevate

¹⁰⁶ "Clarence Stein Dies; Prominent in Bowling." *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. 27 February 1965.

¹⁰⁷ *Hall of Fame*. Greater St. Louis Bowling Association

¹⁰⁸ County Directories; Martha Bellisle. "Young Bowlers Discover the Saratoga Lanes." *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. 24 November 1996.

¹⁰⁹ D. D. March, *The History of Missouri: Family and Personal History*, Vol. IV p.893.

¹¹⁰ Interview with Alan Blood; County Directories.

¹¹¹ St. Louis County Recorder of Deeds.

¹¹² Heather Ratcliffe. "Fire Claimed Irreplaceable Memorabilia." *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. 19 July 2003.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 25

**Saratoga Lanes Building
St. Louis County, MO**

bowling to a high level of sportsmanship. The Saratoga Lanes Building also stands as a testament to Maplewood's working class community whose enthusiasm supported the alley during two world wars, Prohibition, the Great Depression, and the transformation of the game into a suburban, middle-class pastime. From 1916 when the Saratoga opened to 1957, the first year after Clarence Stein had recently completed his renovations, the Saratoga Lanes Building was an important piece of this distinctive era of the sport.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 26

**Saratoga Lanes Building
St. Louis County, MO**

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 27

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St. Louis County, MO**

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National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 28

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St. Louis County, MO**

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 29

**Saratoga Lanes Building
St. Louis County, MO**

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number photos Page 30

**Saratoga Lanes Building
St. Louis County, MO**

Unless otherwise indicated, the following is true for all photographs submitted with this nomination:

Saratoga Lanes Building
2725 Sutton Boulevard
Maplewood, St. Louis County, Missouri
Photographer: Lindsey Derrington
July-September 2007
Negative on file at: Landmarks Association of St. Louis

The descriptions of each photograph number are:

1. Looking northwest at building from Sutton Avenue.
2. Looking southwest at building from Sutton Avenue.
3. Looking northwest at detail of ornamental brackets under eaves.
4. Looking southwest at detail of first floor of main elevation.
5. Looking northeast at west (rear) elevation.
6. Looking southeast at pool hall at front of building.
7. Looking north at bowling alley fixtures.
8. Looking northwest at bowling lanes.
9. Looking northeast towards the east (main) elevation in the front room of the first-story office space.
10. Looking northeast towards Sutton Boulevard from the west (rear) end of the first-story warehouse.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 31

**Saratoga Lanes Building
St. Louis County, MO**

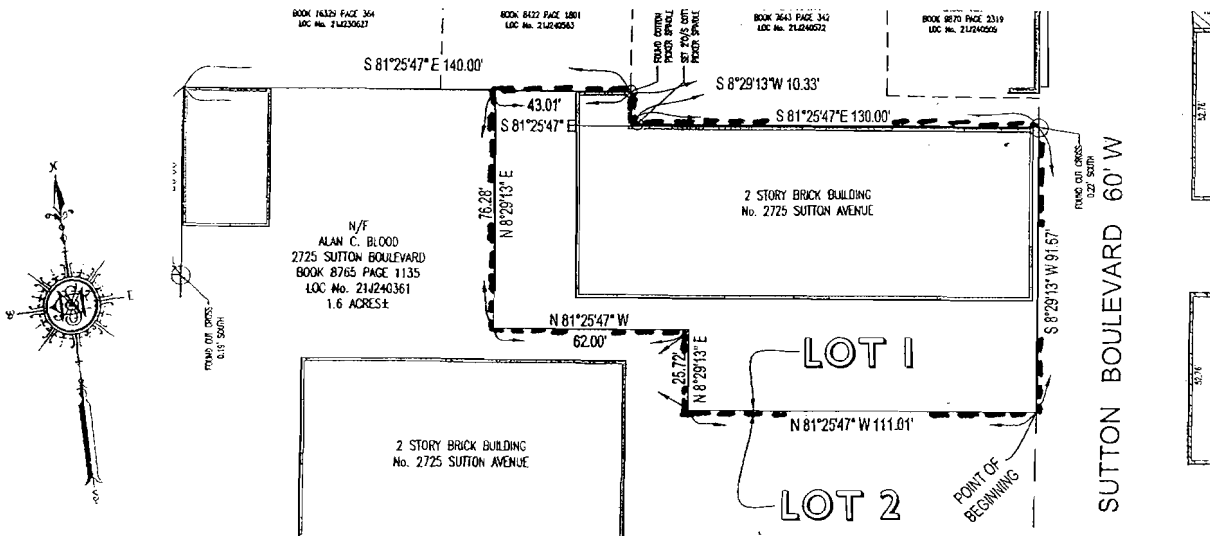
Boundary Description

The Saratoga Lanes Building is located at 2725 Sutton Boulevard in the City of Maplewood, St. Louis County, Missouri. The building is located in Township 45, Range 6 East and is part of lot 7 of the partition of the J.C. Sutton Home Farm. The nominated property is identified by the St. Louis County Assessor's Office as Lot One of the parcel with locator number 21J240361. The boundaries of the nominated building are indicated with a broken line on the accompanying map entitled "Saratoga Lanes Building Boundary Map."

Boundary Justification

Until June 5, 2007 the Saratoga Lanes Building was part of a larger, 1.6 acre parcel that encompassed all of the area historically associated with the Maplewood Planing Mill & Stair Company. Upon that date the property's owner, Saratoga Lanes Properties, LLC, partitioned it into two lots, Lot 1 which included the Saratoga Lanes Building and part of its surrounding land and Lot 2 which contained the complex's remaining three buildings (the former millworks, stable, and laundromat) and land. Saratoga Lanes Properties sold the latter to Creve Coeur Development, LLC whose plans to convert the former millworks building into offices will result in its loss of integrity. Thus a historic district for the Maplewood Planing Mill & Stair Company comprised of the millworks, stable, and Saratoga Lanes Building was rendered impossible. The current boundaries of the nominated property follow those of its recent subdivision and entail all of the property included in Lot 1.

Saratoga Lanes Building Boundary Map. Source: St. Louis County Assessor's Office.



United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number owners Page 32

**Saratoga Lanes Building
St. Louis County, MO**

Saratoga Lanes Properties, LLC
2725 Sutton Boulevard
Maplewood, MO 63143

Frontenac Partners, LLC
16 Sunnen Drive Suite 165
Maplewood, MO 63143



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY



Saratoga Lanes Building
2725 Sutton Avenue
Maplewood, St. Louis County, MO
Zone 15
Easting: 733 320
Northing: 4277 080







Chimney

2735

Jeep

Advertisement sign for a business, possibly a restaurant or cafe, with a logo and text.





Laundromat

Santitas
EST. 1978
SANTITAS
EST. 1978
SANTITAS
EST. 1978









