



History



PICB 11162, Austin History Center, Austin Public Library

Zilker Park is known as the crown jewel of the Austin parks system. It is named for Andrew Jackson Zilker. Mr. Zilker came to Austin in 1876 to become a business man and a banker. He operated one of Austin's first ice factories and was elected an Alderman. He also ranched a 40 acre spread with good water southwest of town.

In three separate gifts in 1918, 1923, and 1931, Mr. Zilker gave his ranch, which included what is now known as Barton Springs, to the city in a way that benefitted the community and the schools. Zilker made a final gift to the city in 1934, the site of what is now the Girl Scout Clubhouse. That same year the park was officially named Zilker Park.