

History

The Fatted Calf was created in 1966 by Vince and Tony Bommarito, St. Louis's own famous restaurateurs of 5 Star Award winning Tony's Restaurant. The first location was Tenth and Locust Street in downtown St. Louis. The limited menu had Calfburger, Cheddarburger, and Bleuburger served with CornChips. To drink was Coke, Draft Beer, or Milk. Picadilly, Buckingham and Canterbury Sauces were the only condiments. The Fatted Calf was an immediate success. The Second location was Grand and Lindell Boulevard in the heart of SLU's territory. In 1969 the Clayton Store was built when Vince and Tony sold the name and concept to American Snacks of Boston. American Snacks quickly built 20 Fatted Calfs from coast to coast including prime real estate in San Francisco, Boston, Chicago, Cleveland, Washington D.C., and Maryland. Two additional St. Louis stores were added at Northwest Plaza and downtown at Fifth and Locust.

Former owner Kathy Sellenriek worked at the Clayton Fatted Calf all the way through Fontbonne University and then managed the Tenth and Locust store for two years after graduation. In 1976, she left to work with Bill and Christine Saigh on the opening of the new restaurant concept; The Lettuce Leaf. In 1987 American Snacks sold the last remaining Fatted Calf to Kathy. Kathy decided to hand the reigns over to current owners Jason & Kathleen Portman on July 1, 2008.

The Portmans certainly have long ties to The Fatted Calf as well as to Clayton & the restaurant business. Jason grew up and was reared in Clayton all his childhood. As a Clayton High School graduate he often jaunted over to catch a cheddar burger & fries at lunch. Jason cut his restaurant experience at another venerable Clayton eatery, The Leather Bottle. That's where Jason met Kathleen as Kathleen and her first husband owned & operated The Leather Bottle. Jason left St. Louis to attend & graduate from The Colorado College in Colorado Springs. Jason returned to St. Louis and has been involved with the management of Dierdorf & Hart's Steakhouse in West Port Plaza for the past 18 years. He is currently the Director of Operations as well as helping to keep things running at The Fatted Calf. Kathleen grew up in Brentwood as well as in the heart of Hollywood in the mid-60's! Kathleen has been active in so many different ventures it is hard to list them all. In the early mornings Kathleen finds herself part of the Nationally Syndicated morning radio show, DC & the Family. You can listen to her live at their website: dcandthefamily.com The Portmans look forward to many great years at the helm of the esteemed Clayton Eatery!

Unlike many institutions, The Fatted Calf has remained unchanged. Customers from all over the country reminisce about the FattedCalf. We hear stories about how their father used to bring them, romantic stories about first dates (Oh yeah?!? Then how come no one ever named their kid "Fatted???"); We hear from people who used to work here; and folks who always seem to associate a great experience and tradition with the FattedCalf.

The Fatted Calf has had its brushes with celebrity too. Nationally famous estate lawyer Clary Redd worked his way through SLU law school at Fatted Calf, met his sweetheart at Fatted Calf, and all four of their children have worked at Fatted Calf. Joe "Mama" Mason got his start in Radio while working for Fatted Calf. He was delivering burgers to a radio station in Clayton (KSLQ was located 1 block south on Bemiston). The first manager of the original Fatted Calf (downtown) was Alex Dooley. One year after Tenth and Locust opened, Alex branched out with his own version named "Dooleys" at 8th and Olive. Next came Dave Weber who moved to San Francisco and then Chicago to open 3 new Fatted Calf restaurants. Dave came back to St. Louis in 1977 and opened The First Federal Frank and Crust restaurant on Forsyth - 1 block from the Clayton Fatted Calf (at the site of the former "Re-elect Richard Nixon" headquarters, also the former "St. Louis Stereo") Another former manager, Saleem, opened his own Lebanese restaurant in the U-City Loop named "Saleem's".

What's your story? If you have a favorite Fatted Calf story, please share it with us by joining this site as a member and submitting a story. (Navigate to our Home Page and join; then Submit a Story!)

