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## Hidden Treasures of Druid Hills: Where history and botany hold hands

By Jennifer J. Richardson

The intersection of North Decatur Road and Clairmont Road throbs with energy, light and noise. Gas is pumped, food and books sold, Fed-Ex packages delivered, teeth are filled, and eyes examined. Automobiles and trucks clog the two streets or sit idling at traffic lights. Who would know that just a short crow's fly away is a place where history and botany hold hands?

The five acre property known as "The Falls" was assembled beginning in 1965 by attorney Dan and clinical psychologist Mary Emma McConaughy. It came about this way: One day, Mary Emma was walking with a friend and asked where the waterfall was that she'd heard about. The friend took her there. It was love at first sight—and



Mary Emma & Dan McConaughy

the place was for sale. The McConaughys initially purchased one lot overlooking Durand Falls and through the years added more land.

Today, The Falls is a wooded nature preserve that includes the 120 foot cascading Durand Falls on Peavine Creek. This was the site of historic Durand Mill, one of the places where the Civil War was fought during the battle of Atlanta in 1864. The mill buildings no longer exist but a 130 foot earthen dam that holds back the creek remains. A channel was dynamited from rock to create the millrace and divert the creek from its original course so that water could be used to operate the mill. Historians believe the mill was first used to grind corn and grain and later operated to make chairs using nearby trees.

In 1969, the McConaughys built a modern yet rustic two-story home designed by architect Herb Milky and based upon principles of Frank Lloyd Wright. The building materials are glass, stone and cypress. Each room has a spectacular view of the waterfall, and outdoor terraces and decks invite family and visitors to get a closer look at the wonders of nature. The interior is paneled in wormy chestnut, all of which came from the bounty of one downed tree found in Blood Mountain Cove in North Georgia.

*Continued on page 6*

## Miss Emily Pursues Her Own Education in Atlanta & New York (Part III)

By Claudia Keenan

In 1934 Emily Harrison's dream of establishing a progressive school in the Fernbank Forest suffered a setback. She had long hoped that the Lovett School would relocate to Druid Hills where it would merge with her proposed school. Now, when Lovett's trustees decided to move to the north side of Atlanta, Emily appealed once more to wealthy Druid Hills neighbors who had turned her down during the 1920s. But the timing was terrible, with the worst year of the Great Depression barely past. Further, family patriarch Colonel Harrison would die



The Harrison home, Fernbank, during the late 1930s

*Continued on page 7*



# NATALIE GREGORY

## WELCOME TO YOUR NEW HOME



### 176 PINECREST AVENUE, DECATUR

Setting the bar for Decatur living, the Glennwood Estates' friendly vibe, easy access to downtown, and award-winning schools are only the beginning of must-haves this 4 bedroom, 2 bathroom brick belle delivers. With fresh paint, shiny hardwoods, and an arsenal of 1930s historical charm, hearts will be stolen by the home's graceful arched doorways, picture molding, period tilework, and vintage fixtures. Conversations start in the sunny living room with fireplace and French-door access to a screened brick porch. The formal dining room connects to a cozy breakfast area and renovated kitchen, where old meets new in spectacular fashion with a farmhouse sink, windowed cabinets, and stainless appliances. Gatherings easily spill to the deck that overlooks a level, fenced yard. The private driveway leads to a carriage house/home office providing the perfect dose of separation and privacy. Upstairs, find a flex loft/bedroom and an attic prime for storage or expansion.

**\$679,000**



### 621 EAST PONCE DE LEON AVENUE, DECATUR

Across the street from Glennwood Elementary and on the cusp of sizzling hot downtown Decatur's east end with hip restaurants, shops, and easy access to MARTA, placement doesn't get better than this East Ponce prize with square footage to spare. Originally built as a duplex, the home's top floor parallels the bottom each with its own living room, dining room, kitchen, enclosed porch, 2 bedrooms, and bathroom. Consider it a roomy in-law suite, the perfect AirBNB/housemate set-up, or a blank canvas ready to transform to your customized floor plan. Either way, there's undeniable traditional Georgian character built in with a columned portico and four-side brick façade. The essential classic details continue inside with polished hardwood floors, sun-filled windows, French doors, and stately moldings. When you're ready to take living outdoors, make way for fun and games on the oversized backyard bordered by mature landscaping and fenced in back.

**\$675,000**

### 452 PRINCETON WAY NE, DRUID HILLS

Rooted in tradition and restyled with renovation, this Cape Cod classic delivers 5 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms of charmed, Druid Hills living. Privacy and intown connection come together inside and out in this brick beauty set on a quiet street with quick access to CDC, Emory Village, and the newly-rebuilt Fernbank Elementary. Inside, an open floorplan invites gatherings and conversation while pitched ceilings create cozy retreats. Command central begins in the modern kitchen with stainless appliances and bar-topped island. It opens to a dining room with vaulted ceilings and an oversized family room with fireplace. Backyard bliss awaits through French doors with a sunny deck, fenced grass, mature foliage, and a stand alone carport. The renovations continue upstairs where marbled double vanities deck both bathrooms and the master expansion includes a wall of windows and custom walk-in closet. Upgraded woodwork seals this deal with smart built-ins, hardwood floors, and exposed beams.

**\$649,000**



### 1711 RIDGEWOOD DRIVE NE, DRUID HILLS

Sunning on this home's super-sized back deck or screened porch, you'll hear the kull of a gentle stream under a canopy of trees and never guess Druid Hills and access to CDC/Emory is right out front. Endearing architectural details like high columns on the rocking chair porch and painted panel walls with built-ins lend a farmhouse chic touch. Step through the double red doors to a cozy formal living room with fireplace. Beyond the formal dining room, find the roomy kitchen, where a breakfast eating area, oodles of storage, and keeping room make for easy everyday living and entertaining. Gorgeous backyard views steal the scene from the den and master suite through walls of windows and French doors. The finished basement is primed for a teen/in-law suite with a kitchenette and deck of its own. Come home to a separate two car garage.

**\$579,000 SOLD**

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## President's Column

By Cathy Vandenberg

A warm hello to our Druid Hills neighbors! As the year winds down, the Druid Hills Civic Association faces perennial community challenges including residential and commercial development, traffic congestion, and public safety. Sometimes our patience has been sorely tried. Yet our wonderful neighborhood makes the work worthwhile. Please take the time to enjoy the radiant fall sunshine and overarching trees as you take a walk and tend your autumn garden.

Following the election of energetic new board members earlier this year, various initiatives have gained momentum. The committees concerned with transportation, state, local and county governance, the beautification of parks, yards, and islands, and the Tour of Homes & Gardens have been especially active.

The MARTA expansion along the Clifton Corridor has occupied transportation chair Kathy Oglesby, whose committee on mass transit met and worked with the MARTA project team. At the same time, the committee has generated plans for expanded biking, walking, and commuting options, most importantly with links to rail stations.

One year ago, the DHCA was deeply involved in evaluating cityhood and annexation options. While many were disappointed by the outcome of the legislative session, state, local and county governance chair Anne Wallace continues to analyze city and county

issues and remains an essential liaison to officials and community activists.

Our beautiful streetscape owes much to our neighbors' devotion to maintaining and expanding green space. Please note the islands along Harvard and Emory, Oxford and Clifton, Ridgewood and Durand, and other roads. Inside, you will find a story about Rutledge Park (p. 10).

The Tour Committee, under the ambitious leadership of Ryan Graham, continues to reimagine themes, public relations, sponsorship, logistics, and much more. The Druid Hills Tour of Homes & Gardens is the DHCA's sole fundraising event. We look forward to a terrific 2016 Tour and the event's 50th anniversary in 2017. Please volunteer!

On a more sober note, our neighborhood has been plagued this year by thieves who break into cars and steal property left inside by owners. A new Public Safety Committee led by Jim Boone and Jon Markham will devise long-term strategies to combat the problem. The committee recommended and the board approved funds for an anti-crime initiative that will substantially increase neighborhood surveillance. As always, we are working with the Druid Hills Patrol. We are strongly considering the reinstatement of a Neighborhood Watch program and will need your help in that effort.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or any DHCA board member with questions or concerns. Happy Autumn!

### THE DRUID HILLS NEWS

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**Editor:** Jennifer J. Richardson

**Managing Editor:** Claudia Keenan

**Writers:** Christopher Eisterhold, Friends of Rutledge Park, Stephanie Geigerich, Sandra Kruger, Perry Mitchell, Alida Silverman, Stuart Silverman, Ingrid Wilkerson.

*Your letters are welcome!*

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**First Vice President:** Justin Critz - (firstvp@druidhills.org)

**Admin. Vice President:** Frances Finegan - (adminvp@druidhills.org)

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Jennifer J. Richardson (editor@druidhills.org)

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#### HP Liaison for Atlanta Landmark District:

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## Remembering John C. Hemby, Jr.

By Sandra Kruger, OLPA Director

On October 1, family and friends gathered at the offices of the Olmsted Linear Park Alliance to celebrate the life and legacy of John C. Hemby, Jr., a loyal, kind man with many gifts. Friends recall the days when John and June would pick up trash in the Olmsted Linear Park and how he could sit down at a piano to play impromptu right on key. John dedicated his life to his family, friends, and many philanthropic organizations, especially the Olmsted Linear Park. He served on the OLPA board many years and continued to support the park after he retired. In remembrance and recognition of John's service to OLPA and Georgia Power, the Georgia Power Foundation awarded OLPA a grant to repair the trolley wait station in Deepdene Park. A bronze plaque will be installed in his memory.

## Jean Johnson Givens (1914-2015)

By Jennifer J. Richardson

Druid Hills luminary Jean Johnson Givens died at the age of 101 on June 1. She grew up on Oakdale Road property that had belonged to her family since the Civil War. She was a member of the first class to graduate from Druid Hills High School. A registered nurse, Mrs. Givens earned masters degrees in nursing and biology, and she taught biology at Georgia State University.



Mrs. Givens was a prolific writer of poetry, and articles and books on gardening and horticulture. She authored a regular horticulture column in the Garden Club of Georgia's *Garden Gateways* magazine, was a frequent speaker before many local garden clubs and plant societies, and was a specialist in herbs and perennials.

Mrs. Givens joined the Lullwater Garden Club in 1959, and later served as president of the club, and as president of the DeKalb Federation of Garden Clubs. Most recently the Garden Club of Georgia created a scholarship in Jean Givens' name, and last year in Druid Hills a Lullwater Conservation Garden bench was dedicated in honor of her 100th birthday by members of the Lullwater Garden Club.

Mrs. Givens was in the first Georgia Master Gardener class in 1979. She was a local Cub and Girl Scout leader, and for many years volunteered as a naturalist at a children's camp in North Carolina. She was a master flower show judge with the Garden Club of Georgia.

Jean Johnson Givens was a legend in Georgia gardening circles. Her roots ran deep in Druid Hills and she will be missed.

## Remembering Vera Hiller

By Jennifer J. Richardson

Long time Druid Hills resident Vera Mew Hiller died on April 18, 2015 at the age of 87. Ms. Hiller attended Druid Hills High School, The University of Georgia, and did post graduate work at George Washington University Law School. Ms. Hiller's family was long associated with Emory University, and the George Howell Mew Business School is named for Ms. Hiller's father.

Ms. Hiller was interested in genealogy, family history, and the history of the Druid Hills neighborhood and Emory Village. With her excellent memory, she was often the "go to" person when information or photographs about the community were needed for an article or research. She was also interested in preservation of woodlands and watersheds. Dell MacGregor recalls that, "I first met Vera when it became news that the Durand Farm—approximately 30 acres that had been owned by members of the same family for generations—had been sold for a subdivision. We bonded immediately over the subject of historic preservation, cultural resources, creeks, streams and floodplains." Alida Silverman remembers that Vera was a featured speaker on the "I Remember Druid Hills Hour" at the Jackson Hill Baptist Church, and was also instrumental in the effort to save the antebellum house on North Decatur Road. Allan Ballard, who ate breakfast with Ms. Hiller at Evan's for many years recalled that, "Vera was a part of the effort to put the Emory Circle section on the National Register. She had a wide-ranging intellect and a gift for friendship."

With the help of attorney Rob Benfield and the Druid Hills Civic Association, Dell MacGregor and Vera Hiller argued all the way to FEMA in Washington that the waterfall at Durand Mill was not a natural environmental occurrence, but was created as a mill race to provide energy to run Durand's Mill. Though they lost their case, allowing a narrower floodplain at Durand Mill—and thus more houses that could be built, current FEMA floodplain maps reflect that the dam was built to create the waterfall.

Vera Hiller saved everything, which meant she had a treasure trove of documents at her home. When I was researching the stores at Emory Village, she graciously met with me on several occasion and allowed me to copy some of her papers, including ads in several old Druid Hills and Emory yearbooks. By having access to the ads, I was able to piece together the names of stores in the Village that are now long gone. Vera did this with everyone—sharing her vast resources of knowledge and papers with all who asked.

Vera Mew Hiller stood for all that is good about Druid Hills: a sense of home and place; a sense of history and heritage; and a community worth fighting for. She will be missed.

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## Oakdale Maven: Mary (“Max”) Cook

By Stuart Silverman

One of Druid Hills’ longest term residents, Mary (“Max”) Cook, kindly consented to be interviewed for our readers. In 1959, she and her husband, Noel, moved to the four-bedroom house she still occupies on Oakdale Road, two-thirds of the way north of The By Way toward North Decatur Road.

Born in St. Joseph, Missouri, Max met her future husband, a native of Covington, Georgia, while he was stationed on a nearby Air Force base during World War II and she was working as a lifeguard. They dated for four years before marrying in 1947 and moving to Atlanta so that Noel could finish his studies at Georgia Tech and start what would be a very successful career as a land surveyor. Max had been trained as a medical technician. Early in her career, she assisted in physicians’ offices in the Georgia Baptist Hospital area.

The couple’s earliest home was a rental on Peachtree Street, but a dispute with the landlady over the proper placement of drying laundry led Max and Noel to move to Decatur. A rapid succession of three daughters and a fourth pregnancy made it clear that a larger home would be necessary. On her own, Max began to “cruise” various neighborhoods. She noticed the “closed down, locked-up” but large, sturdy, red brick house on Oakdale Road and knew immediately that she “had to have it.” The couple had budgeted \$25,000 for their purchase and the price of the house was just above their limit; further, Max wasn’t sure that her husband would like it. Cleverly, she asked a realtor to show her husband several houses in his price range which she knew would not please him. Finally, when Noel saw what Max had in mind, he was easily persuaded.

During the late 1950s, Druid Hills underwent a transitional period. While the neighborhood had maintained its “elite” reputation, banks were hesitant to make loans of more than \$15,000; they feared the spread of boarding houses, multifamily structures and a demographic shift in population. But Max was determined to live in the house regardless of the neighborhood’s projected downturn. They purchased the 1925 house from the daughter of the original owner and moved in. A coat of fresh paint and a kitchen renovation were the extent of their changes. Consequently, the house has remained virtually unchanged since the early sixties. The original much-loved radiators remain throughout the house and the kitchen is still dominated by an incredible pullout electric stove with two cabinet-like compartmental ovens which are still being used with remarkable results!

With Noel running his private practice out of their home, Max became his dependable secretary. She answered the phone and set up appointments. All four daughters attended Fernbank Elementary School and Druid Hills High School and led active social and athletic lives. Max cites the many enrichment programs offered to the community by Emory University and Callanwolde as having been especially enriching for the entire family.

Within walking distance, Emory Village was cherished as a place where one could find anything at the hardware store, grocery, shoe repair shop, jewelry shop, pharmacy, and more. At Horton’s, neighbors purchased newspapers and innumerable sundries or stopped by the ice cream and soda fountain.

Over the years, the Cooks enjoyed many close and colorful Oakdale Road neighbors. Gospel singer Hovie Lister was perhaps the best-



Mary “Max” Cook of Oakdale Road

known. His colorful personality, attire, and private tour bus were particularly memorable. Max also recalls summoning her daughters with a resounding dinner bell while nearby neighbors sounded off their large gong. She was acquainted with Mrs. Antoinette Johnson Matthews, founder of the progressive Out-of-Doors School and compiler of the famous “Oakdale Road Book.”

The ice storm of 1971 left the neighborhood without electricity for a week. Gas remained accessible but required electric igniters in order to fire up boilers. One imaginative neighbor used a Bunsen burner to heat soup and hot water for bathing.

Although Max no longer follows current events closely, she has many vivid memories – notably, the 1968 abduction of Barbara Jane Mackle, an Emory student and daughter of a Florida developer. The kidnappers took her from the Roadway Inn on Clairmont Road just past the VA Hospital and buried her alive in a wooden box in a remote area. They demanded a ransom from the Mackle family. After payment, Barbara Jane was released.

Across the years, Max – an exceptional homemaker – has proudly presented each of her four granddaughters and five great granddaughters with hand-crocheted quilts. Her family’s admiration of Max’s cooking abilities led to the creation of a book containing her 65 favorite recipes. Entitled “Max’s Magic,” the book is guarded closely.

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## Hidden Treasures ...continued from page 1

The property is a climax forest with oak, hickory, beech and more than 40 other species of trees.\* It contains a cornucopia of wildflowers including several varieties of Trillium, Solomon's Seal, Jack-in-the-Pulpit, Spiderworts, Rue Anemone, Blood Root, and May Apple. Native shrubs such as wild azaleas and Sweetshrub abound. Many species of birds and animals have been seen: the barred owl, pileated woodpeckers, a pair of mallard ducks, otters playing in the creek, the great blue heron fishing on top of the falls, a huge snapping turtle sliding down the rocks as well as many song birds such as the wood thrush. All of the specimen plants and trees may be viewed from  $\frac{3}{4}$  miles of mulched trails, a 36-foot bridge, and several meditation areas. The circular trail leads gently down a hillside, across the earthen dam, and then descends to the base of the falls where Peavine Creek can be crossed on strategically placed rocks. A short climb up a hill leads you back to the house. Other trails meander off of the main one, giving solitude, shade and opportunities to embrace nature.

For more than 50 years, the McConaughys have waged a campaign to remove non-native invasive plants such as Honeysuckle, Privet, English Ivy, Mahonia, Wisteria, and Kudzu from The Falls. This work has been accomplished in the acceptable conservation method of hand-removal — no chemicals involved! The work is ongoing and constant but necessary to enable the forest to be as natural as possible.

The McConaughys became involved in naturalist and conservation work through the Georgia Conservancy, founded in part by the late congressman Jamie Mackay. Dan practiced law in Decatur with Mackay and was Mackay's campaign manager when he was elected to Congress. Dan recalls Jamie MacKay's concern when development and cutting of forested lots was rampant in the 1970s, and creeks were clogged with trash and pollutants. Bill and Madeline Burbanck, for whom Burbanck Park is named, were also instrumental in setting an example of conservation and in cleaning up Peavine Creek. A group of like-minded neighbors banded together to bring environmental and conservation issues to the attention of Druid Hills residents.

The Falls is one of the few remaining privately owned undeveloped green spaces in the Atlanta Metro area. The property is not open to the general public — the opportunity for injury and destruction of historic artifacts from the mill era and of the plants themselves has become too great. However, organized conservation groups, garden clubs, and similar groups are invited for tours by reservation with the McConaughys. During the past several years, various groups such as the Audubon Society, GreenLaw, The Georgia Conservancy, historian Richard Sams' history class at Emory, and various home and garden tours have held events at The Falls and toured the property. The family recently brought a Conservation Easement with the Georgia Land Trust so that the property will be protected for generations to come.

With five lush acres in the heart of Druid Hills, what kept the McConaughys from subdividing their lots and building tract mansions overlooking the creek and waterfall? "Development never entered our minds," said Mary Emma. "We never considered it. We sought to protect and preserve the property as it was and is now."

The land is pristine and unspoiled. It has the feeling of deep woods far from any city or thoroughfare, a shady oasis of natural beauty in the midst of Druid Hills and seemingly miles away from the bustle of traffic and commerce on North Decatur and Clairmont. This spot of beauty — a place where history and botany hold hands — is an unselfish gift to all of us and to future generations of Druid Hills residents. The motto of The Falls property is: Where nature comes first.



*Man-made rock dam at The Falls.*

\*A climax forest is area that has not been extensively cut, developed or farmed. Although The Falls mill once operated on the McConaughys' property, the land has been essentially undisturbed for 85-100 years.

To arrange a tour for your organized group, contact the McConaughys at [maryemma.mcc@gmail.com](mailto:maryemma.mcc@gmail.com) or [dan.McConaughy@gmail.com](mailto:dan.McConaughy@gmail.com).

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**Rinnai**

## Miss Emily ...continued from page 1

in 1935, leaving her executrix of his estate. Emily's siblings gave her "two years to see if I could put the project over," she wrote to a friend, referring to the school.

Into the 1930s, Emily pursued her passion for education, organizing a conference about progressive education and a week-long demonstration school – both held at Emory with support from department chair Ralph Wager. Participants came from all over, including the Lincoln and Dalton Schools in New York City. Subsequently, Emily became friends with Alice Keliher (an NYU professor of education who conducted seminal research in child development), Caroline Pratt (founder of the City and Country School in Greenwich Village, often cited by John Dewey), Lois Mossman (Teachers College professor and creator of the "activity movement," which intended to introduce manual arts instruction to elementary school children), and other influential educators.

Perhaps because she was wrestling with her own faith, Emily wondered whether her proposed school should have a religious curriculum – even though most American progressive schools were conspicuously secular. In 1937 Emily suggested to Emory president Harvey W. Cox that her Fernbank Forest school might be "a place of working for God, working with God." Writing to the Very Reverend Nathaniel Rue High Moor, Dean of Trinity Cathedral of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh, she asked, "Would you be headmaster? Or have charge of religious education?" In her journal, Emily confided: "Am I calling sin sin and surrendering to it as it comes along? Or am I suppressing it and trying to live above it?"

The year 1938 opened with a blunt letter from Emily's brother Dan (who lived in Tennessee) declaring, "I am placing FernBank on the market through the Real Estate firm you mention, have it understood that while they may have exclusive rights to sell the property in-so-far as other Atlanta firms are concerned, we ensure the right to have the National Real Estate Clearing House work with them . . . [this firm deals with] the monied class with clients among the very wealthy." In April, Dan wrote more urgently, "We must dispose of FernBank this summer." Emily responded by renting the house and property for the month of July and went off to attend the University of Georgia's third annual Garden School. But the year was passing and time running out.

And then, miraculously, Emily persuaded her siblings to sell the land to a newly-formed trust called Fernbank, Inc., created on November 28, 1938. The trust's first president was business executive T. Guy Woolford and the other officers were Mrs. J.N. McEachern, Sr. (wife of an Atlanta insurance executive), J. Sam Guy (an Emory chemistry professor who was married to Asa Candler's niece Allie), and the social activist Eleanor Raoul Greene.

On February 13, 1939, the board of the Druid Hills Civic Association heard a presentation by Woolford and Emory biology professor Woolford Baker. The minutes stated:

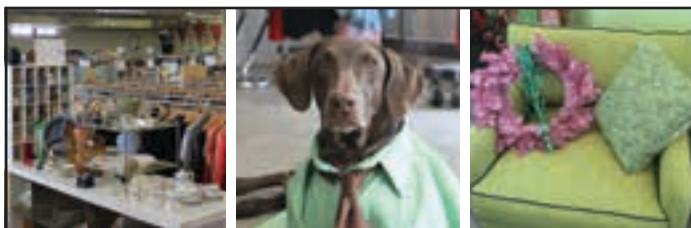
*Mr. Guy Woolford was introduced. He spoke of the opportunity to acquire about 100 acres of virgin forest near Clifton as a reserve by Druid Hills, calling on Dr. Baker to sing its praises. We then learned that \$35,000 was the price but someone had contributed \$20,000, so that only \$15,000 was needed. The name of the property is Fernbank. The DHCA board voted to raise the necessary \$15,000.*

After the creation of Fernbank, Inc., Emily traveled to New York City where she spent the rest of the year 1939. It was a thrilling time to be in the midst of debates about war, neutrality, and democracy while literature and the arts reflected modern movements and ideas. Emily recorded a multitude of activities in her diary. Her interest in education led her to spend time at the Rudolf Steiner School on the Upper East Side, an exemplar of

the Waldorf theory of education which embraces three childhood stages of developmental learning with equal emphasis on autonomy, inquiry, and creativity. The Waldorf curriculum also incorporated nondenominational spiritualism. During a visit to the Little Red Schoolhouse – New York City's first progressive school – Emily met with founder Elisabeth Irwin, a reformer who had swapped out recitation and drill for experiential learning. Emily also traveled to Vermont to see Bennington College, established in 1932 with an extensive curriculum in the performing and visual arts.

She attended lectures: Walter Damrosch on peace and tolerance in music; Pearl Buck on the family ("She sees an ideal where both husband and wife have their professions and the husband is as much a father as the wife is a mother," Emily reported); Eleanor Roosevelt on aid for prisons; Rabbi Stephen Wise on the prospect of war; and Richardson Wright, editor of *House and Garden* and chair of the Horticultural Society of New York on gardening. She saw Lewis Mumford and Norman Thomas debate U.S. entry into the war and attended a Broadway matinee of Georgia playwright Erskine Caldwell's "Tobacco Road." She visited several art exhibitions including Charles Sheeler at the Museum of Modern Art, Andrew Wyeth at the Macbeth Gallery, and Rockwell Kent's mural, "Man's Liberation through Electricity," at the 1939 New York World's Fair. Emily's 1939 diary reveals a wide-ranging intellect and openness to cultural and social change. Surely that year provided a welcome break after the creation of Fernbank, Inc.

*Part IV will appear in the Spring 2016 issue of the Druid Hills News.*



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## Druid Hills Vies for Community Habitat Certification

By Jennifer J. Richardson

The Druid Hills Civic Association has initiated a committee, chaired by Anne Wallace, to facilitate Druid Hills becoming a National Wildlife Federation (NWF) Community Habitat. As of 2013, there were only four other communities in the Metro area that enjoy this certification. We are seeking at least six Druid Hills residents with an interest in wildlife and conservation to serve as project team leaders under Anne's coordination. The goal is to certify individual properties and open spaces as wildlife conservation areas and to educate the community on the benefits of such certification.



National wildlife signs in the author's yard.

When certified, a community receives national recognition which helps raise community profile as a greener place for residents, organizations and businesses; it helps improve community health and builds community pride; and it certifies that the neighborhood is becoming a healthier place for wildlife and humans alike. The three goals of NWF Certification are to provide habitat for wildlife throughout the community; to engage the community in service projects; and to raise awareness and educate citizens about a healthy and balanced environment that benefits nature, wildlife, and humans.

Once project leaders have volunteered, an inquiry is made to the NWF which then sends full application materials. Druid Hills has already met some of the qualifications for the program, including having several individual yards already certified as wildlife habitats, a written history of the community, a list of common areas such as Fernbank, Inc, Frazer Center Woods, Olmsted Linear Park, Emory University, and Burbanck Park. This and other information, along with a \$75 one-time fee, will be forwarded to the NWF. If all goes well, Druid Hills will earn a Community Habitat Certification.

To support the NWF application, approximately 100 individual yards will need to be certified as wildlife habitats. There are four essential elements for certification:

- Food – foliage, nectar, pollen, berries, seeds, nuts & bird feeders
- Water – bird baths, ponds, water features, streams
- Cover – trees or shrubs that provide a sheltered habitat for wildlife
- Places to raise young – brush & thickets where nests are safe

There is no downside to having your yard certified: no restrictions on what you may grow or do with your property and no change in historic status. You may continue to use lawn services and chemical treatments on your property, although reduced use of pesticides and herbicides is encouraged.

If you choose to register your yard, please contact Anne Wallace at [AWallace@TLOffices.com](mailto:AWallace@TLOffices.com). Anne's committee will keep track of the certified yards and other application materials to present to the NWF for Community Habitat Certification. Druid Hills could become a National Wildlife Federation [NWF] Community Habitat if we neighbors join together to certify private property and open space as wildlife conservation areas.

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## Druid Hills Light

By Stuart Silverman

In the course of our recent downsizing, my wife and I lived for six months in a rental apartment. The windows faced south and east, but because of the ground floor location, bushes, fencing, and other surrounding structures, we were largely unaware of the time of day or weather. We knew that it was raining only after hearing it or upon our opening the door on the way outside. We saw the moon and stars only from the parking lot.

Light, therefore, played a significant role in our choice of a permanent residence. From the moment we entered our prospective condo, we were overwhelmed by the views of the sky: east, west and north; all from on high. Today, we can sit in our “family room,” watch the evening news, and contemplate the setting sun with its often gorgeous effects upon the eastern sky at the same time.

As someone who spent his entire professional life in ophthalmology, I am aware of the irony that I have come to an appreciation of light so late. I know my hobby of photography has furthered this appreciation. After all, isn't the mantra of every photography guidebook, “the light, the light, the light”?

I've found Oakland Cemetery to be an ideal place in which to experiment with new cameras, lenses or other photo equipment. Oakland offers wonderful landscape vistas and opportunities for close-ups of flowers, monuments, and statuary. However, a midday visit in the glaring, hazy summer sun had to be curtailed after ten minutes.

What a delight to return to the Linear Park and shady streets of Druid Hills! Here is the horizontal light of morning and evening. Here is luminescence through the Olmsted Park trees at noon. Here are the sunbursts through the tall branches. Here are the front lawns with bursts of color.

I don't pretend to think that this setting in the midst of a busy city is alone in providing such a wealth of photographic opportunity. However, I renew my gratitude to our planners, preservationists, and neighborhood guardians every time I wander through its Olmstedian landscape. I feel fortunate to have stumbled upon Druid Hills forty years ago and never to have left it.

## Clifton Ridge Update

By Perry Mitchell

Member, Steering Committee | Deny Clifton Ridge/Preserve Druid Hills

On September 21, 2015, the DeKalb County Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) voted four to one to deny the Clifton Ridge developers' COA Application to build a house on Lot 4 of the proposed subdivision.

During the past 12 years, the HPC has initially denied every COA Application regarding the Clifton Ridge property. We are deeply appreciative to its Commissioners for acting so consistently to preserve and protect the original Olmsted vision of Druid Hills.

Our neighborhood received even better news the next morning: the Georgia Court of Appeals gave notice that it had granted our request to hear our appeal of the Superior Court's July 23, 2015 adverse ruling on our “Planning Commission Decision Case.” This appeal is a two-step process and we have now cleared the first step. It is precisely what we wanted — because now the Court of Appeals will review and can reach in its decision the underlying substantive merits of our claims. These claims challenge the Planning Commission's April 11, 2011 decision approving the Subdivision Sketch Plat without a COA.

Based on the State and County law, we believe just as strongly today as we did four-and-a-half years ago that there should be no subdivision of lots within the Druid Hills Historic District without a COA from the HPC. Our legal team has done its absolute best to present those arguments clearly in the lawsuit and in additional briefs — all of which the Georgia Court of Appeals will be reviewing for the first time.

We don't expect the Georgia Court of Appeals to rule on our case until well into 2016. We need the continued support of all Druid Hills neighbors, because this fight isn't about just one piece of property. It's about saving our entire neighborhood from being turned into one cul-de-sac subdivision after another — including lots near or next to you.



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## Rutledge Park Opens in the Heart of the Forest

*Contributed by Friends of Rutledge Park*

Rutledge Park, Druid Hills' newest park at 1812 Ridgewood Drive, is now established as a neighborhood amenity. The park opened in early June and has seen much visitation this summer. It appeals especially to families with young children who enthusiastically use the playground and walking/tricycle path. The path is also used by strollers who want to enjoy the sylvan setting and responsible dog walkers who enjoy walking their pooches away from street traffic.

The Friends of Rutledge Park Executive Committee welcomes all users to the park. We also encourage visitors and community residents to attend the periodic Executive Committee meetings where current park issues and plans for improvement are discussed. Our roadmap is based on design guidelines developed through Park

Pride's Community Visioning process in partnership with DeKalb County. We anticipate two or three more phases of development in the near future and want to ensure full community participation.

We also plan community workdays in the park to help with maintenance and manage invasive plants (primarily bamboo, privet and wisteria). Our most recent workday occurred in September as part of the Glenn Memorial United Methodist Church Good Neighbor Day. Volunteers came from Glenn and the Friends of Rutledge Park.

Please stop by and visit this new park in a forest. It is truly an enchanting addition to our green neighborhood. Times and dates for meetings and workdays will be announced in email blasts from the park website which we encourage you to visit at [www.rutledgepark.org](http://www.rutledgepark.org).

## Update: Text Amendment

### Druid Hills / Atlanta Landmark District

*By Alida Silverman*

In 2010, the City of Atlanta Planning Department launched a project to clarify and simplify the regulations that protect Druid Hills. All of the City-designated neighborhood landmark and historic districts were part of this effort. Through numerous drafts and revisions, the DHCA's Landmark District Preservation Committee worked with the Urban Design Commission [UDC] staff to fulfill the goals of the effort.

A first draft executive summary was sent to all property owners/residents of the City portion of Druid Hills (all of which is in the Landmark District except for the east side of Briarcliff Road) in fall 2013 prior to DHCA board consideration and action. The final draft executive summary went to the DHCA board in July 2015 and, when the legislative schedule for the Text Amendment was set, the final draft executive summary was distributed to Druid Hills

City residents and posted on the DHCA website along with the full Text Amendment and links to the current regulations.

On September 24, the Text Amendment was taken up by NPU-N, which gave its approval. The vote was unanimous. At an October 5 hearing, the UDC voted to send a letter reflecting approval of the Druid Hills Landmark District Text Amendment to the Zoning Review Board. In the case of amendments to the zoning code that affect landmark and historic districts, the UDC has the power of "Review and Comment."

As the *Druid Hills News* went to press, the Zoning Review Board hearing was scheduled for October 22. This is the public hearing for the Council Zoning Committee, which forwards the legislation to the full Council. Check out [www.druidhills.org](http://www.druidhills.org) for the final outcome!

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## Surprising Artifacts Lost and Found at 1250 Fairview Road

By Stephanie Geigerich

We have renovated many homes in 18 years. Often, we were left to clean up items left behind by the previous owners.

Mostly it was junk, such as hundreds of wire hangers or a broken lawnmower. Rarely, if ever, did we find any treasures -- until we purchased 1250 Fairview Road.

A much-needed renovation is underway. We would have loved to save the original guest house but it was essentially condemned and dangerous to enter as the floor was caving in. A tree had fallen on it years before and the roof was never repaired. It was obvious there was some 'junk' in the guest house, but there were some treasures, too. As interesting as the guest house treasures turned out to be, the gems in the attic were remarkable.

### Guest House

We immediately retrieved some antique furniture -- all needing work. We 'saved' a cane chair, an embroidered stool, and an antique dining table. The antique embroidered stool will eventually be in our home.

What could very well have been acting as a support beam was a tall stack of magazines (*Gourmet*, *Bon Appétit*, *Architectural Digest*) from the 60's on. With the exception of 2 years of leather bound *Gourmet*, these magazines could not be saved because of the moisture.

Also salvaged (and cleaned) is a 1971 Williamsburg Reproduction book with price lists and paint chips. A sofa, much like the one that was in the house before we bought it, was \$975 and a gallon of paint was \$10, a six-piece place setting of sterling silver was \$86. A cold meat fork was \$28.50 and today, on EBay, there's one for \$159.99. We knew the previous owner loved Williamsburg antiques from an article that was in the Spring 2006 issue of *The Druid Hills News* entitled Hidden Treasures of Druid Hills and written by J. J. Williams. \*

A set of books (still in plastic wrap) entitled "My Secret Life" by an anonymous author was discovered. It was originally published in 1888 and was only published without censorship in 1966. (Note: It's not a book for everyone, hence the censorship.)

Several icons of Mary in wood, glass, gilt, ceramic and more were found -- and saved. Ironically, one of the first owners of the house was Rabbi David Marx, so these items are obviously from a more recent owner.

There were toys and souvenirs -- "Colleen's Dolls" (a miniature set of dolls known to my friends but not me), plastic Campbell's Soup trains, replicas of the plaque put on the moon in 1969, and more.

The two bottles of Saki from China are past their prime so we won't be opening those. Also from the "PR China" was a vase and several plates, brass bells and lotus bowls, six unused paper Chinese umbrellas -- and not the size that goes in your mai tai.

### The Attic

The attic held the real jewels and these were much older and clearly the possessions of an earlier owner. The first item found was a tiny bill (dated 1929) from the *Atlanta Journal and Constitution* to the homeowner, E.F. Kennedy, informing him he was getting a new delivery boy and owed the previous one twenty cents.

Deeper in the insulation was a letter written on July 29, 1945, from John (a soldier working in the Philippines in a Division Judge Advocate Office) to Lottie. He enclosed some stamps (found with the letter) from captured "Jap" mail. One is 5 yen from 1942 with Admiral Togo and the other is 2 yen from 1937 with General Marsuke Nogi. Here is an excerpt from the letter:

*The Pacific Islands are much alike and my life here is the same routine life it has been since I left the states 43 months. Before dinner we play volleyball and after dinner we play bridge, read, and twice a week attend movies. It's a life you can easily become bored with but after several years of this life you quit complaining and plan for the day when you can return home. It was a privilege to be able to walk in a store and purchase cigars, food and other articles that I care for but I would imagine if I returned today I would find that this privilege has been somewhat curtailed by the demands of the war.*

There were several old tins. Mr. Kennedy owned a tin manufacturing firm on Oakland. The most interesting was the tin of Plaster of Paris from the Cox Pharmacy on Highland Avenue at St. Charles. A pair of leather children's boots and a horse brush were also found.

Our architect's crew, from Moon Bros., continues to find items and save them for us. Many stories were told through these artifacts and we are continuing to research the history of the house. Some items will be cherished forever and others will be given away. And some items, of course, have already made it to the trash but not without wondering about the previous owners first!

We have kept much of the original house as it was (except kitchens and baths) and are adding a family room. We are 'restoring' the original courtyard. We will cherish the history of the house and are thrilled to be able to learn so much about the previous owners. Perhaps we will even hide a few things under the insulation for the next owner!

\*The previous owner collected Madonnas and antique artifacts with Mary on them. When I interviewed him, he had about a thousand Madonna-themed items in his collection.

- J.J. William

## Rising from the Ashes: A Dream Restored on Lullwater Road

By Christopher Eisterhold

It was just before ten o'clock on a cold and gusty March night when Dan and Honora Handley received an urgent call from their new next door neighbor on Lullwater Road.

Their house was on fire.

It was the Aronstam House. Long admired by local architecture aficionados, the house was designed in the 1920s by the eminent local architect Francis Palmer Smith. Arguably one of the finest examples of Georgian Revival in Druid Hills, it sat prominently on the heights above one of the more picturesque stretches of Lullwater Road, next door to where the Academy Award-winning film "Driving Mrs. Daisy" had been filmed.

"We loved it," recalled Honora recently, still at her old home in the Highlands, nearly a year and a half after the fire. "There were period details you wouldn't believe... The moldings, the panels in the library; and there were retractable copper screens in the sleeping porch.

"We were only the third owner," Dan observed. "The house hadn't been renovated... that's part of what really attracted us to it."

And therein lay a large part of the problem. The house lacked air conditioning. It needed to be entirely rewired to code. The kitchen was thoroughly dilapidated. Outside, the roof, gutters, and cornice required repair and restoration. For a relatively young family with three small children living in a bungalow in the Highlands, the asking price of more than \$2 million was seriously out of their range.

Yet, as gracious old homes in Druid Hills are known to do, it took hold of the Handleys. "You could picture yourself in it," Honora said. "I could picture our kids descending the grand staircase for prom, hunting for fairies in the rock wall; I knew where the Christmas tree would go ... it just felt like home."

The house may have started as a reach. But after nearly a year of negotiations, price reductions, rejections, and at least one unfavorable appraisal, it was finally theirs. The Handleys threw a housewarming party around the New Year so that friends and neighbors could get one last look at the house before the renovation began.

They hoped to be in the house by June.

The night of the fire was unseasonably cold and windy. Gusts buffeted Dan's truck as he sped down Ponce de Leon Avenue. The sky above the golf course was lit up as brilliantly as a baseball stadium. As he made his way down Lullwater Road, Dan no longer needed his headlights.

The house was a roaring inferno with flames shooting skyward through the roof. As Dan stood watching, the roof collapsed, spreading embers and brush fires as far away as Lullwater Parkway, covering firefighters and onlookers with ash.

Scores of firemen – some suffering from smoke inhalation and others trapped in the house for a time – battled the blaze throughout the night. But the fire, fanned by the winds, would burn well into the following day, taking the house down to its foundation and burning several surrounding trees.

After a few fitful hours of sleep, Dan and Honora returned to the house at 8:00 a.m. just in time to see the front façade collapse in a pile of smoking rubble. Nearly all of their personal belongings were inside.

Although the cause of the fire was never determined, the Handleys



*The Handleys' home on Lullwater Road continued to smoke the morning after the fire.*

soon discovered that their contractor (who had an otherwise stellar reputation), was uninsured. Soon enough the Handleys recognized that they were seriously underinsured themselves.

"We were in a state of shock," recalled Honora as she showed me a few possessions they were able to salvage from the fire: a singed and sooty cracked porcelain doll and a crystal bowl they received as a wedding present, which miraculously survived after falling two stories from the attic.

"Most of our belongings were over there. We were living back in our old house on Ralph McGill but it was empty. We had already put so much into the down payment and renovations. It was really depressing," she said.

"Toward the end of May we started to actually think about how we were going to fix this," added Dan. "No one hands you a guidebook."

Fixing a house with old wiring and busted gutters is one thing. Fixing a house that had basically ceased to exist (outside of a flooded basement and a couple of chimneys) is another. The job wasn't so much a renovation at this point as it was a resurrection.

They had an original set of blueprints, and that summer started shopping around for a contractor they thought was up to the task. They quickly settled on Jim Eiland of C&E Remodeling.

"Jim was by far the highest bidder, but the references were pretty amazing," recalled Dan. Whereas other builders advised the Handleys not to "get hung up on the moldings" (they would sit down with a catalog and come up with something close enough), Jim proposed creating exact reproductions from poplar. They hired him.

Conducting the demolition with the studied deliberation of an archeological dig, Jim and his crew spent the better part of three months carefully removing the brick, hand-cleaning and restoring it. In the process, they salvaged nearly three quarters of the brick. This



## Rising from the Ashes ...continued from page 12

would be sufficient to use the original brick for the front façade and much of the sides.

"We're going to be able to put it back the way it was," said Jim.

Also salvaged were quite a few windowsills and jack arches, which were painstakingly pieced together on pallets in the rear of the property. Several sections of exterior cornice were retrieved as well, along with virtually all of the interior trim profiles: casings, crowns, and baseboards from which exact replicas could be reproduced.

"We felt like this was our house," said Jim. "We don't cut corners."

Well into the second year of reconstruction, the house has finally begun to take shape. Buckingham slate covers the roof. River sand is mixed in the mortar. Cast iron wastewater lines are in the walls. It is a loving, faithful restoration.

While it is impossible to reproduce the patina of an old house, and the history that was lost that night can never be replaced, the view of the old Georgian Revival on the heights above Lullwater will be restored for the entire neighborhood to enjoy soon enough. The Handleys and the Druid Hills Tour of Homes & Gardens Committee are discussing the possibility of featuring it during the Tour's 50th Anniversary in 2017.

For their part the Handleys will finally be home, perhaps as early as this coming spring, when they hope to throw a housewarming party.

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## Restoration of an Historic Bathtub: *A Titanic Effort*

By Jennifer J. Richardson

Some years ago, I attended an exhibit of artifacts recovered from the RMS Titanic. In a photo of bathrooms on the Titanic, I spotted my own 1917 bathtub. I'd never seen another bathtub like it—but there it was in black and white—and now at the bottom of the ocean along with the rest of the ship.

When my bathtub was 97 years old, the porcelain handles that operated the cold and hot water ceased to work. Rather than turning the valve, they spun around freely, operating nothing, and sometimes fell off on the floor. Therefore, the bathtub was dead in the water.

Thus began a long search to either remove the old tub and renovate the entire bath, or repair the faucets. Let me add that the tub, weighing over 500 pounds when empty would have to be removed by cutting it in pieces with a torch. The rest of the bath would have to be demolished and remodeled. But none of this was a consideration for me. I wanted my huge, historic, unique 1917 tub to stay—if possible.

Having been told by a plumber that saving the tub was improbable, I began searching for new bath fixtures. None suited. Even the antique “inspired” replicas looked phony to me. I already had the mother of all bathtubs and wanted to rescue it. Still, as with the Titanic, I had a sinking feeling.

I did an internet search on antique plumbing. After days of looking, I found a photo of a tub and valves that looked reasonably like mine. Associated with the picture was an article about a man who repaired ancient plumbing. His name was Brian Marone of Washington State, and I soon forwarded photographs of my tub to him. He said he would look into replacement parts through his sources. But there were none. Aside from the bathtubs on the bottom of the North Atlantic, I must have the only tub like mine in the USA. Next, Brian said he could fabricate new parts to fit the old tub.

I'd have to remove my valves and send them to Brian. He would have new ones made and send them back to me. Jerome Sobol of Plumbworks came out to consult on the project. He stated that once we took the valves off, we'd have to turn off the water main to the house—and keep it off for weeks. Failure to turn the water off meant the old valves would squirt water into the bathroom, where it would drip into the rooms below. Jerome and Brian began consulting by phone on what to do.

I needed something to close the tub valves so the water to the rest of the house could remain on. It was determined I needed either a sweat



*Worn-out 1917 porcelain handles*



*Vann Chea of Plumbworks*

plug, or a dremel to work inside the pipes. Both were tried and failed. Jerome Sobol recommended something else—new plugs that would shut off the water. But they'd have to be made to exact specifications by a local machine shop. Dutton and Hall Machine Shop here in Atlanta made the plugs. Vann Chea, from Plumbworks, installed them. Both leaked. Both were sent back to the machine shop to be adjusted. One came back and worked fine, but the hot water valve failed. It was sent back to be fine-tuned. Vann, who seemed to be at my house more often than his own, came back to try again. This time, both valves worked. I think we both danced a gig and did high fives.

The next step was to send the old plumbing out to Brian in Washington State. Once he had them in his possession, he could decide the best way to proceed. We kept in regular communication by phone and e-mail. What follows is just one of the messages I tried to decipher:

“I had to decide how I wanted the handles to mount to the new stems. Because the old stems were abbreviated, I was on my own to compare the available “Standard” stems and make my best guess as to how the original attachments might have been engineered. When I was comfortable with the design, I conferred with the machinist to get us on the

same page. Then I sent your stems to him. I am using the large porcelain handle. It has a large hex-faced retainer that carries a porcelain index in its center. The retainer is the female thread so the stem ends in a male thread.” WHAT?

After several months in Washington State, the newly engineered plumbing handles and valves arrived back in Atlanta. Vann showed up to make the installation. The house water was turned off. The cold valve was attached in closed position. Vann turned the water back on and slowly released the pressure in the other household pipes so the new valve wouldn't be blown to the ceiling. Then, he slowly turned on the cold faucet at the old tub. It worked. There were many shouts of joy and the procedure was repeated for the hot side. The hot side leaked. It was that sinking feeling again. Vann turned the water back off. I wanted to walk out the front door of my house and never look back. But Vann continued to work at it, using plumbers' tape and other miracles and perhaps even Voodoo, and the hot water was tested and worked.

Only it didn't stay working. That evening, there was an ever-growing puddle of water just beneath the hot side handle. I placed a plastic bowl under the leak, and it filled to the top within 2 hours. I was no better off than when starting the whole project over a year before—an unusable 1917 tub that now had some very expensive parts. But Vann was not a quitter. He came back and made several adjustments. The hot side worked, and it is still working. I filled the tub (after Vann had gone) and enjoyed a celebratory bubble bath in my historic tub for the first time in nearly a year and a half.

You may be asking, “Why do all this to preserve an antique bathtub that will probably fail again?” And some may ask, “Was it worth it?” My answers are, “They don't make tubs like mine any more (or the parts for them) and I wanted to keep my original 1917 tub. Along the way, restoration became a challenge for several creative minds at Brian Marone's Plumbing Repair in Washington, and at Plumbworks here in Atlanta. Despite several failures, no one lost complete faith in the project. Brian Marone had this to say, “Progress is first an attitude and then a reality.” To the “was it worth it” question, my unequivocal answer is “YES!” and it sure makes a terrific story for preservationists.





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A 1929 gathering of the founders of the Garden Club of Georgia, including delegates from the Lullwater Garden Club.

## Lullwater Garden Club Announces New Officers

The Lullwater Garden Club is pleased to announce new officers for the years 2015-2017.

Jennie Richardson will serve as president. Also on board are Heather Ewing as presidential intern; Kim Storbeck as first vice president, fund-raising chair, and parliamentarian; and Judy Keenan and Lorraine Loftis as second vice president and third vice president, respectively. Paula Henderson will wear several hats as fourth vice president, conservation garden chair, and chair of the annual plant sale. Lynn Hart will chair homes and meals; Sally Clarke will serve as corresponding secretary; Heather Ewing will serve as recording secretary; Judy Clairmont will be treasurer, and Becky Bracewell will be club auditor. The club is delighted that Renie Faulkenberry is the new president of DeKalb Federation of Garden Clubs.

Former president, Kim Storbeck, was honored at the club's end-of-year luncheon held at the Druid Hills Golf Club. Kim was given a painting of the wishing well in Lullwater Conservation Garden painted by club member Vivian Moody. Kim and her husband, Scott, along with others, worked tirelessly to restore the wishing well, so it was a very fitting gift. Thanks to Kim for all she did in leading the club for the past two years.

The club welcomes new members Ann Critz, Gayle Hayes, Jennifer Waddy, and Jeanne Nichol. Jeanne is the granddaughter of Jean Givens. At the same time, the group says goodbye to Jane Kelly and Millie Hobbs Wright, who have moved from Atlanta; and Freda Hoffman and Jean Johnson Givens (see obituary this issue) who died this past year.

One of the goals of the club during 2015-2017 is the renovation of the Lullwater Conservation Garden. Lullwater was recently awarded a Historic Landscape Grant from the Garden Club of Georgia. It will be used to remove non-native exotic plants along a portion of the creek bank in a "demonstration area." Patrons may visit this area and gain a sense of how the garden will appear after it is entirely rehabilitated.

Renovation of the Conservation Garden will be based upon a master plan designed by noted landscape architect Spencer Tunnell,

***Lullwater was recently awarded a Historic Landscape Grant from the Garden Club of Georgia. It will be used to remove non-native exotic plants along a portion of the creek bank in a "demonstration area." Patrons may visit this area and gain a sense of how the garden will appear after it is entirely rehabilitated.***

who also did planning for the Olmsted Linear Park. According to Tunnell, the Conservation Garden was set aside by Frederick Law Olmsted, Sr. as park land in his master plans for Druid Hills. The garden was featured in the book, *Garden History of Georgia 1733-1933* by the Peachtree Garden Club and will be featured in an upcoming expansion and reprint of this seminal work.

The Lullwater Club is one of Georgia's few garden clubs that actually owns a garden. If

you have not seen this historic 6.5 acre garden, please come to visit. It's located between main Lullwater and Lullwater Parkway. There are mulched paths, bridges across Lullwater Creek, abundant birds and wildlife, and champion trees and shrubs. The public is welcome during daylight hours, and the garden is available by appointment for weddings, receptions, and special occasions. Or just bring your family and enjoy a picnic lunch—no reservation required! (Please note that visitors are requested to park on the side of the street and not on the grass.) One of the wooden bridges across Lullwater Creek, damaged in spring 2015, has been completely repaired and strengthened by local contractor Edward Dudley and is safe to cross.

You can help the Lullwater Garden Club keep the conservation garden in pristine condition by not leaving trash or dog waste when you use the area. You can help even more by picking up trash you see while you're enjoying your stroll, jogging through the park, bird watching or exercising your dog.

A gentle reminder to neighbors: it is illegal to dump yard waste, contractor materials, or trash in the garden. Please inform your yard service or contractors of this rule and request that they also not park anywhere inside the garden. If you see a person or company dumping waste, try and get any name of the company on the vehicle and report it to Jennie Richardson at JJRichar@bellsouth.net or, as the City of Atlanta has requested of dumping in any park, call 9-11.

For more information on Lullwater Garden Club, email Jennie Richardson or visit the club's website at [www.lullwatergardenclub.org](http://www.lullwatergardenclub.org)





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## The Stores of Emory Village

By Jennifer J. Richardson

In 1915, Emory University came to Atlanta. The Coca-Cola magnate Asa Candler, a Druid Hills resident, donated considerable land for an expansive college campus. He envisioned a university with a four-year undergraduate program, divinity school, medical school, nursing school, and law school. His biggest dream, the Candler School of Theology and library, eventually was created along with the other schools. The university descended from the Emory at Oxford College, still located in Oxford, Georgia.

Until the 1920s, the roads surrounding Emory Village were unpaved and the nearest market was a small country store located on the west side of Clifton Road just before the railroad overpass. As Emory University and the Druid Hills neighborhood grew, a shopping area known first as "The Stores" and later as "The Village" or "Emory Village" was built. Presumably the land, which Asa Candler gave to Emory, was sold by the university to individual shop owners.

The first stores, on the southeast corner of North Decatur and Oxford Roads, had elegant facades built of special imported yellow bricks. Two of the stores faced North Decatur Road and one faced Oxford (but had a North Decatur address). These store buildings date from the late 1920s.

### North Decatur & Oxford

In 1935, Tom Burns opened his Gulf Filling Station at the corner of Oxford and North Decatur (the Gulf Station was later the original building of Everybody's Pizza.) Known simply as "Burns," the station was also home to a taxi operator named Claude Jones. In his History of Druid Hills High School, Dr. Richard Sams wrote, "Remember the cigar chewing Mr. Claude Jones and his taxi service? Or Mr. Tom Burns who owned the Gulf Station and would fill your bicycle tires for free?" As the Gulf business grew, Burns moved it to a new building in a triangle formed by North Decatur and Oxford Roads across the street from the original location. Eventually Burns sold the station to Jones who subsequently sold it to Kenneth Vickery. Though still known as "Burns," the station was called

"Vickery's" by newcomers. Gulf Oil Company, which owned both the station and the land it sat on, later required Vickery to undertake costly repairs to make the station meet company standards. He declined and the station became a B.P., owned by British Petroleum. The B.P. station was demolished in 2009 as part of the Alliance to Improve Emory Village's Master Plan. (The group is now known as the Emory Village Alliance) Today, the site remains a vacant lot.

### 1883 North Decatur Road

Jeffares Drugstore occupied the property to the right of the original Gulf Station. It was owned by Dr. Clarence E. "Doc" Jeffares, who opened the drugstore in 1926. "The after-the-theatre crowd always hung out [at Jeffares] on Saturdays," wrote Dr. Richard Sams. A twelve-foot wooden bench, located just inside of the drugstore, accommodated teenagers and children who could sit and read comic books for free, George Quillian remembered. At the drugstore's long marble counter, soda jerks mixed Cherry Cokes, ice cream floats, and milkshakes.

Jeffares offered a delivery service for prescription drugs to the neighborhood. The delivery person, a black man, drove a white motorcycle very slowly through the streets of Druid Hills., Jeffares became Jefaïres-Long Drugs, and later still Giles Drugstore. The last drugstore on the site was Oliver's Emory Drugs, owned by the father of State Representative Mary Margaret Oliver.

### 1877 North Decatur Road

During the early 1950s, Ward's Radio Shop occupied the property to the right of the drugstore. Ward's was on the cutting edge of radio sales and repairs before the advent of television. After Ward's closed, Emory Hardware opened in the same space. The proprietor, Mr. Johnson, played a part in one of George Quillian's seminal memories. As a child, Quillian purchased a cap pistol for thirty cents. Shortly after he returned home with his new treasure, it broke. Young George went back to the hardware store where Mr. Johnson



Tom Burns fills a boy's bicycle tire



Emory Village, 1940s (Photos courtesy of Emory University)



## “The Stores” ...continued from page 18

spent more than an hour taking apart the pistol and repairing it. It was a “wonderful experience,” recalled Quillian.

### 2088 North Decatur Road

During World War II, the stores along North Decatur Road included Weather’s Grocery Store, Druid Hills Jewelers, the Druid Hills Beauty Shop, and a bowling alley that ran perpendicular to the fronts of the buildings facing North Decatur Road.

### The Oxford Road Line of Shops

A row of stores faced Oxford Road. During the 1920s and 30s, Kamper’s Grocery Store with its sawdust laden floors (located on the site of the parking lot and Pizza Hut), operated a home delivery service to Druid Hills residents of Druid Hills; thus, its prices were higher than other grocery stores in the village. Mrs. Kamper, who ran the store, lived near the intersection of North Decatur Road and Springdale Road. A small service alley ran between Kamper’s and the Gulf Station; this space was later enclosed by a building and Morgan Laundry and Dry Cleaning occupied the store.

During World War II, Rogers Brothers Grocery occupied the property east of Kamper’s. Druid Hills mothers lined up at Rogers’ meat counter with their ration stamps. Many tried to get on a first-name basis with the butchers in hopes of getting better cuts of meat but that was unlikely as the butchers often apologized and explained that the best cuts of meat had already been sent to the soldiers fighting the war. By 1950, Rogers had been bought out by the chain, Colonial Stores. Soon enough, Kroger arrived to compete with Colonial with Piggly Wiggly on its heels. Around 1950, Colonial moved to North Decatur Plaza Shopping Center at the corner of North Decatur and Clairmont Roads. Subsequently, Piggly Wiggly moved to a building at the other end of Oxford (which would house the infamous Horton’s) and later still to the site of the old “Kroger at Emory,” now CVS Drugstore and Shield’s Meat Market. Morgan Cleaners eventually moved into the Piggly Wiggly space.

Also during World War II, Oxford Road was home to Druid Hills Laundry and Dry Cleaning, an A. & P. Supermarket, and the Emory Theatre (later Emory Cinema) which was featured in the last edition of the Druid Hills News.

On the other side of the theatre, Mrs. Bagwell’s Dance Studio occupied a concrete block building where ballroom dancing was taught to many Druid Hills children, teenagers, and adults. Around 1950, the white Dutch Colonial house with a rock foundation was constructed. In the basement of this duplex, Mrs. Arlene Worth Bagley started the private Ar’Lyn Worth School for students with mild disabilities. Later, as more women worked outside the home, and with DeKalb County not providing after school care, Ar’Lyn Worth became a child care center in addition to the school.

In 1979, the Emory Village fire destroyed the buildings that housed the original businesses: Kamper’s, Morgan Cleaners, Roger’s, Colonial, Piggly Wiggly, and Druid Hills Laundry and Dry Cleaning, as well as the Emory Theatre. The Ar’lyn Worth School buildings were saved, as was the site of the original Gulf Station (later Everybody’s Pizza).

In the next edition of the Druid Hills News, other stores in Emory Village will be highlighted.



Two Emory students inspect the trolley car (Photos courtesy of Emory University)

## LETTER OF APPRECIATION

To the Editor. I want to express my appreciation for Al Tate’s article in the April edition of *The Druid Hills News*.

The forest used to be a refuge for me when I had a stressful day at work. The quiet and stately presence of the old-growth forest was so comforting. Early morning Saturday birding walks with Georgeanne Schmalz were another treat and benefit. Of course, our children all spent time at the Science Center and planetarium. These were free.

One day in 2012, I tried again to go to the forest, and there was a chain across the entrance. I had to dig deeply to find out what happened, and I’m still not sure exactly how the lease with DeKalb County was ended, but it is a huge loss to this community. The maintenance issues and return of invasive plants are also disturbing.

I went on an evening walk once last year arranged by the Fernbank Museum of Natural History. I had to pay \$10 for an hour-long guided tour. Now I hear that a portion of the forest will be turned into a nature playground, which will also involve money, for sure.

Emily Harrison would be disappointed.

**Priscilla H. Padrón**

*priscatran@gmail.com*

## Spotlight on Robert Morgan: *Teacher of Generations of Druid Hills Youth*

By Jennifer J. Richardson

For thirty-one years, Robert Morgan taught American history and government courses at Druid Hills High School. For those privileged to have had him as a teacher, he left an indelible mark on their lives and careers. He didn't just teach; he also advised the senior class play and *The Saga* (the Druid Hills yearbook) for most of those thirty-one years.

Robert Morgan was born in LaGrange, Georgia, and attended Emory at Oxford College and Emory University in Atlanta, earning a BA and an MAT in history. In 1959, Mr. Morgan joined Druid Hills High School as a student teacher; one year later he joined the faculty. He was thrilled to be assigned to Druid Hills. "At the time, the DeKalb School System was the best in the state," said Mr. Morgan. "And Druid Hills and Lakeside were the two best schools in the county."



"I loved teaching from the day I got there until the day [I retired]. I wanted my students to love history as much as I did, and to respect themselves," Morgan reflected recently. He shared a story that illuminated his wishes for his students. Although he was a college graduate, "I looked like a ten-year-old," said Morgan – and he was just a few years older than some of his students. Another teacher inquired of Morgan how he intended to gain the respect of the students. "The only way to get respect," said Morgan, "is to give it first." Therefore, he learned all the students' names, and consistently called the students in his classes 'mister' and 'miss' followed by their last names.

One year Morgan was assigned a burly student who had been expelled from another school for attacking a teacher. "This student came to class 30 seconds late every day," he recalled. "He sauntered across the floor in front of me and flopped in a seat by the window. One day, I'd had enough. I went over to him and said, 'If you ever do that again, I'll [fill in the blank here.]' I thought to myself, this student is big enough to hoist me and toss me out of the window. Instead, the student said, 'Yes, sir' and that ended the trouble."

His inspiration to study history and government came from his own talented, dedicated high school and college teachers. He loved the U.S. Constitution ("You may not always agree with it or with interpretations of it, but it's a brilliant document and worth studying."), the Supreme Court, and history: "because it's the story of people and events," he said. Particular interests include World War II, the Civil War, the 1960s, and Modern European History. "And movies," he added with a smile.

During Morgan's early years of teaching, American society underwent tumultuous change. "We had the voting rights movement and we changed the horrible county unit system in Georgia. We had Civil Rights, Viet Nam, counterculture issues and drugs, riots at the 1968 Democratic Convention, and the deaths of President Kennedy, Dr. King, and Robert Kennedy." Finally, in the late 1960s, Druid Hills School faced racial integration. "Druid Hills did very well during integration," said Morgan. "The school handled it beautifully."

In Morgan's classes in American history, Constitutional Law, and Government, he taught the basics of American citizenship. And he

took his students on educational field trips. "When John Kennedy was running for president in 1960, we took three busloads of students down to hear him speak at a campaign event. Kennedy was not president for long, but when he said, 'the torch has been passed' – that was my generation he was talking about – the torch was passed to us." Another time, his senior students wanted to invite Justice William O. Douglas to be the keynote graduation speaker. Morgan encouraged the students to write the justice although privately he didn't believe the invitation would pan out. To the amazement of all, Douglas accepted and was the 1963 graduation speaker.

Today, Morgan continues to pursue his interest in politics and the presidency. His favorite presidents include Lincoln, Washington, FDR, Theodore Roosevelt, and JFK. He also closely follows current events. "The extreme Islam of ISIS is scary," he remarked, "and I worry about Putin and Russia and the Middle East situation. I still follow the Supreme Court decisions. And of course, the polarization of Congress right now is a scandal!"

Though retired from teaching, Mr. Morgan has not quite "retired." He worked for the Close-Up Foundation, a group that seeks to inspire youth about politics and government. He has volunteer-taught at Emory Continuing Education and has volunteered at Fernbank Museum of Natural History for 18 years. His health remains good, and he keeps up with many of his former students with his uncanny ability to recall names, siblings, marriages, and where students lived and what they're doing now.

One of my only regrets in my five years at Druid Hills High is that I did not have Robert Morgan as a teacher. But sitting with him during the interview was like being enveloped by a warm light. Ideas and thoughts flowed from the man; inspiration abounded; he made me want to read the books he mentioned and go back and study the U.S. Constitution. And above all, to be a life-long learner.

Mr. Morgan asked this writer why I wanted to interview him. My answer was that he was a "legend in his own time." Nearly every one of my peer group whom he taught, and the children of my peer group, say he was the best teacher they had at Druid Hills or elsewhere. In addition, many tell stories about how he changed their lives or inspired them to follow a career.

One such student is my brother, Dr. Allan T. Williams, DHHS Class of 1965, whose doctorate is in government administration. When he heard I was interviewing Mr. Morgan, he wrote, "Robert Morgan's class was my first exposure to politics and government. The class has caused me unending trouble and anguish for others, for I came to adhere to constitutional principles of equal protection, due process, et cetera. I measured ideas and people with those concepts and with the rest of the great ideas of American History. I drew stubborn—even foolhardy—courage from what affected my thoughts and personality as a result of that class. My university teaching, state lobbying, regional governance and career in city and county management has been like that. Now Zachary [his son] is adhering to similar principles."

So, to Robert Morgan, stellar teacher, Druid Hills luminary, and influencer of many Druid Hills students, that explains why I wanted to interview you. And thank you.





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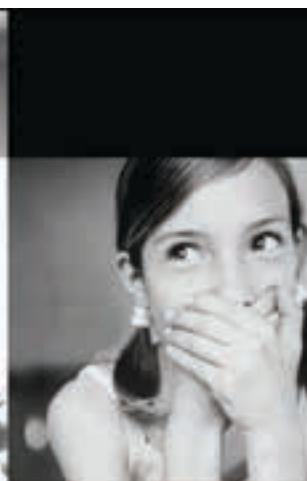
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## School News

By Ingrid Wilkerson



The new Fernbank Elementary School. Photo by Stuart Silverman

There are lots of things happening in the Atlanta Public Schools (APS) system, including the move to a Charter System next school year. Check out this information, along with the \$90 million plan to expand Grady High School, reopen and transition Howard High School into a new middle school, renovate Morningside Elementary, and more. The funding of these plans depends on the outcome of the next SPLOST referendum. Check out APS' website: <http://www.atlanta.k12.ga.us/Page/1>

### Springdale Park (SPARK) Elementary School

<http://www.atlantapublicschools.us/Page/8674>

### Inman Middle School

<http://www.atlanta.k12.ga.us/Domain/1740>

<http://inmanmiddleschool.org/>

### Grady High School

<http://www.atlanta.k12.ga.us/Domain/3087>

### The Dekalb County Schools

<http://www.dekalb.k12.ga.us/>

What's going on at Fernbank Elementary School? Per the PTA's website, the school is planning to move into their new building over the Thanksgiving Break! For more information:

<http://www.fernbankes.dekalb.k12.ga.us/default.aspx>

<http://www.fernbankelementary.com/>

### Druid Hills Middle School

<http://www.druidhillsms.dekalb.k12.ga.us/>

### Druid Hills High School

<http://www.druidhillshs.dekalb.k12.ga.us/>

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*Niki & Kevin*

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