

Transformation of Deepdene

By Jennifer J. Richardson

At last, the long-awaited rehabilitation of the Deepdene Promenade and Meade are under way. Georgia Power has buried utilities; the old phone poles will come down soon. Utilities were carefully “threaded” between the trolley rails to protect these historic artifacts. Asphalt at the east end of the Park was removed for the re-setting of granite curbing. New curbing will be high enough to help defray water run-off from Ponce de Leon Avenue into the Park. Also at the east end, the old soccer field, now known in Olmstedian terms as the “Meade” is being graded to provide a multi-purpose (including soccer!) playing field. Tree and shrub planting on the periphery of the field and the street will occur at the proper planting time in the autumn. These trees and shrubs will provide a quiet and safe buffer from street noise and vehicles. The new asphalt path, known as the Promenade, has been paved along Ponce and the Meade and will be ready for use soon. Finally, a miniature granite bridge similar to some of the interior bridges is visible in the Meade. This bridge is functional and will allow any water on the Meade to exit the field, making for a dryer playing surface. But perhaps photographs, here and on page three, tell the story better than words...

[Photos in this issue are courtesy of Spencer Tunnell, Jon Golden, and Connie Weimar.]



Historic trolley rails see the light o day for the first time in years as newly buried utilities are threaded between them. Crews worked with careful respect to preserve these artifacts that date from the time trolleys ran beside the linear park.



Bulldozers have graded the Promenade and gravel has been applied. Silt fencing protects the Park. Tulip poplars will replace the power poles between street and path. This view is looking west toward Atlanta.

OLPA Office Renovation

By Sally Sears

An historic mansion owned by Fernbank, Inc., on Ponce de Leon that has served as offices for OLPA is in the process of being restored. Board members renewing the McClatchey house are volunteering as they did to bring the park back to life. Jim Waits and George Ickes began the project by funding repair of the ceiling, prompting other board members to pitch in.

“We began with simple wall-washing,” said OLPA secretary Beth Grashof. “The dirt of a generation came off as we washed. Once we repainted, we could really appreciate the combined influence of Asia and Renaissance Italy meeting in the columns of the living room.”

Cleaning could not fix the ceiling cracks, though. Gary Biggs with Doing it Right Painting Services made careful repairs with sheet rock and added a medallion

above the chandelier over the dining table. Board member Connie Weimar, and her sons Robert and Theo, scrubbed each crystal bauble of the light, puzzling it back together again. “It was a fun challenge,” she recalled. “We found some ancient pine needles in the bowl of the chandelier from some long-ago holiday decorations. But the sparkle now lights up the room.”

Carpenter Michael Montgomery replaced a missing banister at the stairwell, and replaced decayed panels on the French doors. Board member Kevin Steward and Philip Thompson helped Beth Grashof choose the right paint colors to welcome the house to the 21st century. “We picked a quiet, rich brown, which of course we’re calling ‘Olmsted tan’. And a pale green for the ceiling? ‘Olmsted leaf.’” said Philip.

“We’ll use the spruced up space for offices, meetings and volunteer support,” said Board member Jim Waits. “I’m just so happy to see this fine home being restored.”

OLPA Board Members of the Future!



Theo Weimar, son of Connie and Walter, helps clean up the OLPA offices.



Taryn Bledsoe, daughter of Joni Winston, helps address party invitations at the OLPA Office.

Contributors to OLPA

Office Renovation:

- John and June Hemby
- Connie, Robert and Theo Weimar
- Martha Foster
- Marcia Abrams
- Lois Pippin
- Jennifer Richardson
- Aneli Nugteren
- Will Belcher
- Quigg and Jenny Fletcher
- Michael Montgomery, carpentry
- Gary Biggs, painting
- David Whitney, electrician
- Tom Gierhahn plumbing
- Laura Monk, Dogwood Fabrics
- George and Nancy Ickes
- Kevin Steward
- Philip Thompson
- Kirk Elifson and Claire Sterk
- Beth Grashof
- Sally Sears
- Joni Winston

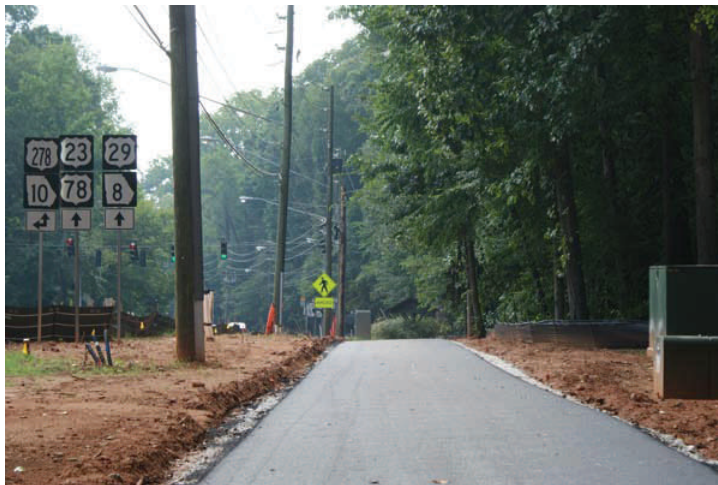
OLPA sadly reports the loss of one of its prime supporters: Dr. Marion Leathers Kuntz. Dr. Kuntz lived in a glorious Philip Shutze home across from Shady Side Park. A keen intellect, scholar, researcher, professor, author, and Southern Lady, she was beloved by many and loved her Olmsted Park. She will be missed. Often called a “Renaissance Woman”, Dr. Kuntz was that and more: she was a woman for all seasons. OLPA sends sympathy to her survivors.

SAVE THE DATE! The 2011 OLPA Gala will be held at Fernbank Museum of Natural History on Sunday evening, March 6, 2011.

Photos capture the Deepdene Renovation, continued from front page.



Equipment sits in the old soccer field, now with a gravel path surrounding it. The path connects to the Promenade along Ponce. The new granite bridge has not yet been built at the time of this photo.



The Promenade looking from east to west with paving under way. Street trees will go between the path and Ponce. Power poles will be eliminated.

In the photo to right, Board and friends gather to honor George Ickes at his bench in Springdale. Standing, L-R: Judi Shur, Kirk Elifson, Lynn Kerpel, Doug Grimm, Fentress & Jim Waits, Sally Sears, Connie Weimar, John & June Hemby, Gloria Seymour and "Bobby." Sitting: George Ickes, Simon & Isabelle Barnett, Nancy Ickes, Michael & Allison Barnett, and Jennifer Richardson.

OLPA Tributes



Family and friends of Mary Vansant Disney donated this wooden bench, pictured at left, which was unveiled at a reception in Deepdene in her memory.



Jim and Fentress Waits sit on a bench in Dellwood dedicated in honor of Fentress by her grandchildren, Crispin, Amelia and Harper Gambill.



OLPA

Olmsted Linear Park Alliance

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www.Atlantaolmstedpark.org

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- William L. Hall, *Vice President*
- Bethanie C. Grashof, *Secretary*
- G. Robert Kerr, *Treasurer*

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- Douglas Grimm
- Lynn Kerpel
- Julie Ralston
- Jennifer J. Richardson

- Sally Sears
- Gloria Seymour
- Judi Shur
- James L. Waits
- Connie Weimar
- Sam A. Williams
- Joni Winston

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William Talmadge

Brown & Marjorie Whittington

Individual:

Martha Abbot-Shim

Kevin Miller

Gifts since March,

2010

In memory of Lisa Tunnell:

Edward Frederickson

Jennifer Richardson

In memory of Dr. Marion Leathers Kuntz:

Sally and Norman Harbaugh

Jennifer Richardson

Stuart and Alida Silverman

Endowment:

A Bridge in Deepdene has been given by:

Billy & Carolyn Hall

A Bridge in Springdale has been given by:

Claire Sterk & Kirk Elifson

A bench in memory of James Loftis has been given by:

Lorraine Loftis

A bench has been given by:

Doug & Jari Grimm



Witnessing the Dream

I've lived 1/8 mile from the Olmsted Linear Park since 1970. Much has changed in the past 40 years. In 1970, the park—and the neighborhood— was a mess primarily because of the threat of a four lane highway bisecting both. The chain of green envisioned by Olmsted would have been cut in half by that road, ruining the genius of his creative landscape that respect-

ed the topography. In 1970, the park was full of litter, weeds and tall grass. The nearby broken sidewalk was more inviting.

Today, as a result of a public/private partnership with citizens, Fernbank, Inc., The City of Atlanta and DeKalb County, the park is a sparkling jewel. All who notice are invited to enter Olmsted's secret garden.

Last Sunday, the park was as buzzing as bees on clover. In Deepdene, an adolescent sat in quiet thought on a granite bridge; in Dellwood, joggers swished past; in Shady Side, dogs were walked and benches warmed by readers; In Oak Grove, mothers pushed strollers. In Virgilee, a mockingbird warned that passers by were too close to its nest. In Springdale, children played and adults tossed frisbees.

To all who have given time and money to make the renovation successful; for all who never gave up in that long 40 years; to everyone who made the dream come true, thank you! Now let's continue to raise the money to maintain the dream.

—Jennifer Richardson