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*Keeping DeKalb's History
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Pine Lake: At The Heart of DeKalb County



Pine Lake's 1930s Club House

By Nikki Hettinger & Cherie Bennett

There's a town just 13 miles from Atlanta that exemplifies the true meaning of the word "neighborhood." Here the residents greet each other by their first names, meet regularly at the local community gathering place known as the Beach House, and provide assistance to their elderly and needy neighbors.

Resort to Residences — Pine Lake, a 1.1-square-mile oasis boasting a 12-acre lake that is its namesake, is DeKalb's smallest city, with a population of about 750. It was established in 1935 as a weekend and summer resort for overheated and overcrowded Atlantans by Carl W. Schaub, owner of the Pine Woods Company.

The concept was well received, and the community was chartered as a city in 1938 with approximately 150 homes and 49 families in permanent residence. Schaub designed each of the town's 1,800 lots to measure exactly 20 feet wide and 100 feet deep (20 feet was the usual width for lake-front properties at that time).

The town was laid out in a basic grid pattern on either side of the lake, with the streets on one side named after trees and those on the other side named after flowers. An advertisement for the lots, which originally sold for \$69.50 each, touted, "A summer home at Pine is your best investment in Health, Happiness and Comfort. Grasp this opportunity."

With a buffer of forestland on three sides as well as its own mayor, city council, police force, and trash collection service, Pine Lake enjoys a sheltered existence that has enabled it to preserve a small-town quality of life long forgotten in many Georgia cities. It has been called "bucolic" and "charming" by the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, and *Atlanta Magazine* included Pine Lake in its 2003 "Best Places to Call Home" issue.

Growing Pains — Isolation, however, can sometimes lead to discord. The increased growth of DeKalb County during the 1960s and '70s prompted Pine Lake to restrict access to its lake and beach to residents only. In addition, the city's

Continued on page 6

Save the Goodwin House

The DeKalb History Center recently nominated The Solomon Goodwin House for the Georgia Trust's Places in Peril. This significant house was built in two major phases, circa 1834 and 1841. It began as a log cabin which developed and

changed to suit the needs of the family. Under the porch, the house is covered with wide hand-planed boards while the rest is clad in clapboard, with no ornamentation. This vernacular structure is sometimes called a Plantation

Plain farmhouse. The front porch does not include any original decorative materials, but has plain square columns and a jig sawn handrail. The current handrail was reproduced in 1961 by Dr. Elizabeth Martin.

Continued on page 2

Inside this issue

- Book Festival, page 3
- Heritage Festival, page 3
- Parkwood's History, page 4
- New Staff Members, page 7

Goodwin House (cont.)

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Cherie Bennett, Melissa Forgey,
Nikki Hettinger, Karen Kopanezos
and Leslie Stumpff.



The log cabin portion (the eastern side) is built of 12” wide hand-hewn logs. Its floor joists are large log puncheons. It appears that the western side was built all at one time, with access to the sleeping loft probably by a ladder or some other temporary stair. The main stairs in that portion were added later. The 1841 addition is framed with mortise and tenon joinery.

Many original or early features are retained, including hand-planed boards on walls and ceilings, face-nailed pine floors and a fire-place mantel. There are several original doors, including board and batten and two-panel doors.

Solomon Goodwin, the youngest of five boys, was born in Fredericksburg, Virginia in 1764. The Goodwin Farm is believed to have been started by one of Solomon’s sons, Harris Goodwin, about 1832. He may have been a tenant to the former owner, John Dobbs. In 1838, Solomon purchased about 500 acres including a portion of Land Lots 200 & 238 and all of Lot 239. This is the land where the house is located and is believed to be the land farmed by Harris Goodwin since 1832.

The original property straddled what is now Peachtree Road. While the Civil War was as hard on this family as it was on others around Atlanta, the Goodwin House survived the destruction

of the war and Sherman’s March through Atlanta. Sherman’s troops marched right by the house on what is now North Druid Hills Road and some of them stayed there while Sherman was down the road at the House Plantation.

In 1961, it was moved approximately 500 feet by Dr. Elizabeth Martin to its current location as commercial development began on the surrounding land. The house is unique in its ability to document and interpret the earliest of DeKalb’s history along Peachtree Road through the eyes of seven generations of a middle-class farming family. The house and its 1.4 acres are all that remain of the family farm and a rare view into the early DeKalb farming community. The farmland that used to surround it has been heavily developed and the house itself is hemmed in by Peachtree Road and the MARTA tracks.

The house was nominated because it is threatened by development pressures and rising property taxes. It is located in unincorporated DeKalb County in the Brookhaven-Peachtree area. This area includes dense commercial development along Peachtree Road. Like much of metro Atlanta, the area has changed tremendously since the 1970s and 1980s. The History Center is working with the family to save this important house. If you are interested in participating, please call 404-373-1088 ext 22.



Continued from page 1

History Center Welcomes New Staff

Leslie Stumpff recently joined the DeKalb History Center as the Heritage Education and Rental Coordinator. Leslie is an Atlanta native who attended the University of Georgia for her Bachelor’s in Sociology and Master’s in Historic Preservation. She comes to DHC from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs where she worked in comprehensive planning and community development throughout the state. Leslie also worked as a Cultural Resource Surveyor for the FindIT program and as Program Coordinator for the New York City Parks Department of Art and Antiquities.

In addition to coordinating the rentals at the Old Courthouse on the Square, Leslie will reinvigorate our Heritage Education initiatives. Our ongoing programs of the Heritage Festival and Log Cabin Storytelling will continue and Ms. Stumpff will work with the DeKalb County and Decatur schools to bring history programs, such as Box City, into the classrooms. DHC will also offer a summer workshop for educators called “Talking Walls” in conjunction with the Georgia Trust.

Karen Kopanezos is our new archivist. A native of Georgia, she has lived in DeKalb County for over ten years. Ms. Kopanezos recently received her Bachelor of Arts in History

with a minor in Political Science. Last year, Karen gained invaluable experience as the assistant for public programs at the National Archives and Records Administration in Morrow, Georgia.

In addition to her daily archival responsibilities, her most notable accomplishment was the production of *Stories from the Great Depression*, a short documentary based on the NARA traveling exhibit, “*This Great Nation Will Endure*”-*Photographs of the Great Depression*” for which she won the National Archives Special Spot Award. It was based on oral history interviews conducted at an annual family history fair that combined personal reflections with historic events related to the Great Depression. In a very short time, Karen has already made positive changes in our Archives and we look forward to her creative and innovative projects.

Correction!

In a previous issue, we incorrectly stated that Shepard B. Ansley was the son of Judge Shepard Bryan. Judge Bryan, one of the founders of the DeKalb County Federal Savings and Loan Association, was Shepard’s **grandfather**. We apologize for the error!

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All funds received through memberships directly support the preservation of DeKalb County history and are tax-deductible as allowed by law. Your generous contribution to the DeKalb History Center will provide you with a year-long membership that includes our quarterly newsletter to keep you informed on all our activities. We hope that you will join our team by either renewing your membership or joining as a first-time supporter.

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The History of Pine Lake (cont.)

police force began cracking down on traffic violations along the stretch of Rockbridge Road adjacent to the town.

According to an article published in the May 23, 1999 issue of the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, 76% of the city's revenue during 1998 was generated by traffic citations. In the surrounding areas public protests ensued, as well as allegations of abuse of power and even racism, and by March of 1999, state lawmakers were calling for an investigation. Pine Lake's policing practices were reviewed and ultimately altered, and as a result, the city found itself in financial straits.

The town's leadership then embarked on a new and highly effective course of action focusing on business development and grants, and today, the Pine Lake Web site states that this city "where your neighbors become your best friends" is also a "candidate for auditing city of excellence."

Sign of the Times, Past and Present — Although in recent years Pine Lake has begun annexing some nearby property, much of the original town remains, including the clubhouse, the Boy Scout hut (now a private residence), and the Pine Lake Chapel, all of which date back to the 1930s. Historic details abound, such as granite chimneys, door surrounds, and foundations; clapboard siding; gabled rooflines; and exposed rafter tails that were common in Craftsman-style architecture. One building no longer in existence is the Walley Smith Oddity Museum and the only knowledge we have of it comes from a photograph found in our Archives.

If you have any information to contribute about the history of Pine Lake, contact the Archivist at (404) 373-1088, ext 23.



The 1950s Beach House at Pine Lake

Continued from page 1

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WORLD'S ODDDEST CURIOS and pictures can be seen at Wally Smith's Oddity Museum at Pine Lake. Above, Mr. Smith examines a float from a Japanese fishnet which drifted across the Pacific Ocean. By his side is a covered wagon made of salt crystals from Great Salt Lake in Utah.

Upcoming Events

AJC Decatur Book Festival— Saturday & Sunday, August 30 & 31. The History Center will have a booth at the Book Market Street Fair. Please stop by to meet the staff and Board Members and purchase books on the history of DeKalb County. We will offer discounts on some of our most popular titles and have order forms for *Historic DeKalb County*, scheduled to be released in September 2008. You can also participate in a special Scavenger Hunt to find historic objects around the DeKalb County Courthouse.

Old House Fair — Saturday, October 25, 10:00 am—5:00 pm. The City of Decatur, in partnership with the DeKalb History Center and the Decatur Preservation Alliance, will hold the first Decatur Old House Fair. Owners of old houses can attend how-to seminars with topics to include: restoring old windows, creating a maintenance plan, tax credits for rehabilitation, historic landscapes, creating a square foot garden, researching an old house, and building a sensitive addition to an old house. You can also shop the exhibit hall of professionals, retailers, and suppliers that have expertise and products for rehabilitation. The Fair will be held at the Holiday Inn Conference Plaza at 130 Clairemont Avenue in Decatur. For more information or tickets, contact Preservation Planner Regina Brewer at regina.brewer@decaturga.com.

Heritage Festival for Fifth Graders

The 2008 DeKalb Heritage Festival will take place on September 26th at the historic buildings at Adair Park.

Fifth grade students from DeKalb County and the City of Decatur will be transported back to the 1800s as they watch performers bring characters from the civil war era to life.

Students will have a chance to meet and hear the stories of Benjamin Swanton who moved to Decatur in the 1840s and whose home is the oldest building in the City; African American teacher Charlotte Forten who recalls the civil rights struggles she encountered in 1853 and Confederate Scout and Spy Nancy who will cook up fresh cornbread over an open hearth. The students will also have hands-on fun making old-fashioned toys.



New this year is Hannalee Reed, a fictional character from the novel *Turn Homeward*, Hannalee by Patricia Beatty, who worked as a bobbin girl at the Roswell Mill and was later held captive by the Yankee Army. As a special gift, each student will receive a copy of the novel *Turn Homeward*, Hannalee.

The 2008 DeKalb Heritage Festival would not be possible without the sponsorship of the Decatur Downtown Development Authority and our Partners: DeKalb County Schools, City of Decatur Schools, Decatur Recreation Department, Little Shop of Stories, the Junior League of DeKalb County, Chick-fil-A of Downtown Decatur and Harry Stillwell.

Volunteers

Many thanks to our recent volunteers:

Justine Fletcher
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Betty Busbee
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Thanks to **SunTrust Bank** for providing occasional parking.

Archives Intern

John Woodley is a student at Kennesaw State University as a History major and our intern for the summer. He previously helped in the Archives as a volunteer. John has been going through our records to make sure all donor files are recorded in the computer.

He also organized and revamped our processing area and part of the storage area for new archival donations. Funding for this internship came from Joyce Cohrs, a long-time supporter of the archives.

Parkwood Neighborhood's

The Parkwood Neighborhood, located on the edge of Decatur, is an unusual suburb for Decatur **and** Atlanta. It includes: Upland Road, East Parkwood Road, West Parkwood Road and Parkwood Lane. Some houses on West Ponce de Leon were also developed at the same time.

The Parkwood Neighborhood was part of the original Druid Hills plan, but the streets originally had a different layout. The redesigned streets were probably built by 1928. Overall, this neighborhood reflects the Olmsted design principles. The neighborhood straddles a creek and ravine and it includes fairly large and randomly sized lots, some of which are very deep. On East Parkwood Road and part of Upland Road, the houses back up to the Lenox Place Neighborhood which has a traditional layout of small lots and grid-iron streets.

Although the neighborhood was platted as a whole, the easternmost portion is in Decatur with the remainder in DeKalb County. Decatur annexed its portion of the Parkwood Neighborhood in 1914. This was part of a much larger annexation which included Lenox Place and crossed the railroad to take in a significant part of Oakhurst. The DeKalb County portion is part of the Druid Hills Local Historic district.

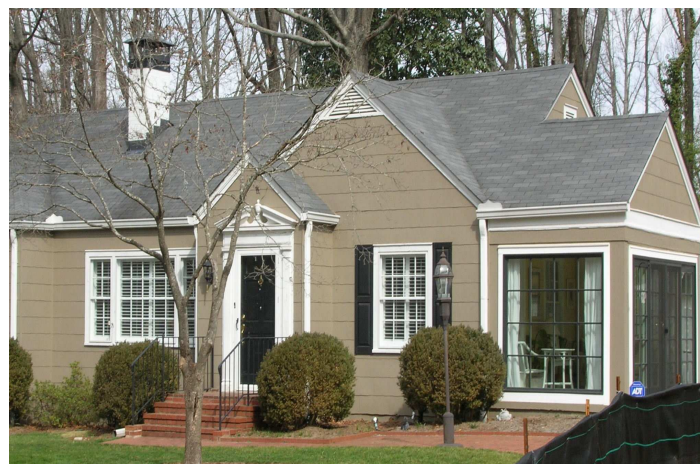
The neighborhood was designed as an early suburb; built in response to changes brought about by the automobile. As Americans began their love affair with the car, automobile suburbs sprang up on the peripheries of cities. Newly developed neighborhoods looked different from their predecessors: streets became curvilinear; lots became bigger to accommodate the car, driveway and perhaps a garage; and houses were set back further from the streets. By the mid 1920s, Ponce de Leon was one

of the main automobile routes between Atlanta and Decatur, making Parkwood ideal for residents of both cities and DeKalb was already becoming a "bedroom community" for Atlanta.

Five houses from the mid 1920s building period are located on Upland Road. But housing construction nearly stopped in Decatur, and across the country, with the economic downturn of the Great Depression. Although it was ready for development, Parkwood was nearly vacant from the 1920s through the 1940s; but the large lots made it ripe for the housing boom that followed World War II.

By 1949, the Parkwood Neighborhood had approximately nine houses. 35 houses were added to the existing neighborhood in 1950, with 43 added by the end on 1952 before development slowed. In less than ten years, the area went from nine to a total of ninety-one single family homes. What had occurred was a housing boom that paralleled the 1920s (prior to the crash). Economic circumstances and government assistance with housing for returning veterans helped to fuel the boom. World War II ended in 1945. By 1946, 10 million men and women were discharged from the armed forces and housing was scarce everywhere.

The Federal Housing Administration, created in 1934, instituted a 10% down, 25-year mortgage. This made homeownership possible for many people who were previously shut-out of the mortgage market. Another major change was the creation of a Veterans' Mortgage Guarantee program that allowed veterans to borrow 100% value of a new home without a down payment.



An American Small House featuring an optional side porch and a Neo-Colonial door surround. With minimal ornamentation, this house might be considered to be Cape Cod in style.



A 1920s Renaissance Revival house on Upland. Also called Italian Renaissance, this two-story brick home has arched windows on the first floor and overhanging eaves with large brackets under the roof.

Unique Development History

The houses built in Parkwood, following national trends, were what the market demanded. They are small and efficient, made with mass-produced materials, low ceilings, modern floor plans and large back yards. Across the nation, this new building boom often resulted in modern house styles as well, but in the south, the architectural preference was for what people considered to be "Classical" rather than contemporary.

The predominant house types in the neighborhood are the American Small House (1935 – 1955) and the Inline Ranch (1935 – 1975). Georgia's Historic Preservation Division has just released a document that defines the American Small House. Called various names in the past, the state office has identified this house type which fits between the Bungalow and the Ranch in terms of construction dates.

The American Small House is a small single-family home, built in large numbers, all across the state from the mid 1930s to the early 1950s. It is compact, one-story and tightly massed. They usually contain 4 - 6 major rooms plus bathrooms and closets and usually do not have hallways. The houses may include small porches, stoops, dormers or garages. They may have an identifiable architectural style or be very plain.

The American Small House occurred as infill in older neighborhoods where other architectural styles predominated. They were also commonly built as entire neighborhoods by themselves, or they may be mixed in with later development including Ranch and Split level houses — this is seen in the Parkwood Neighborhood.

The Inline Ranch house is typically one-story with a long low-

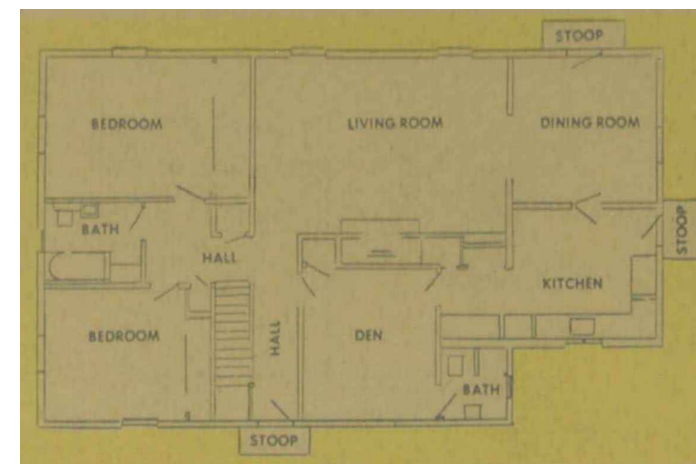
pitched roof. The emphasis is on the horizontal and this can be reinforced with bands of windows. Many feature a large picture window in the living room. It offered a modern open plan with informal living spaces. They often include an outdoor living space and an attached garage or carport.

The change between the American Small House and the Ranch Houses was to a great degree one of size. The Small House was usually on a small lot and about 1,000 square feet. Ranches tend to be located on larger lots, and began increasing in size with the overall economic prosperity of the country.

The landscaping for this neighborhood bridges the divide between the 1920s and 1950s, but clearly reflects the 1950s. Natural characteristics of the sites were not retained. The lots feature large grassy lawns, with distinctive beds placed around prominent trees, and foundation plantings. This type of landscaping was common in the 1950s, when most neighbors tried to outdo each other with their lush green, well-trimmed lawns.

The front yard served as the public space, while the back yards were usually separated with fences or hedges. In the back, outdoor living with a patio or deck was almost a requirement, and might feature a grill. Cars were also factored into the landscaping with curving paved driveways leading to a garage or carport.

This neighborhood is not on the National Register of Historic Places, but may be eligible as most of the houses are more than 50 years old. It is significant because it reflects modern history, including early city planning, the Depression, World War II and post-war prosperity. The American Small House and the Ranch show historic development patterns across the country, and having a distinct place in American history.



The original floor plan for 127 Parkwood Lane as published in the Atlanta Journal & Constitution's Dixie Living; a great example of the American Small House. Image provided by Alice & Harry Demille.



The American Small House in the Neo-Tudor or English Cottage Style. Often built of red brick, this example includes patterned stonework and steeply pitched overlapping gables emphasizing the front door.