



MONTFORD

THE NEWSLETTER OF ASHEVILLE'S MOST HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD
Vol. 26 No. 02
FEBRUARY '21

FEBRUARY “purification”

The Roman month Februarius was named after the Latin term februum, which means “purification”. Want to know more February history? Visit: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/February>

When you think of the month of February, what comes to mind? Most likely **Black History Month**, **Valentines Day**, and maybe **Super Bowl Sunday**. But, did you know, February probably has more official and unofficial holidays than any other month. Here are some familiar ones; **Purim**, **Ash Wednesday**, **Groundhog’s Day**, **Feed the Birds Day**, **Lincoln’s Birthday**, **Chinese New Years**, **President’s Day**, **Singles Awareness Day**, **Mardi Gras** (Fat Tuesday), **Washington’s Birthday**, **Oscar Night**, **Leap Day** (2024), and the **Winter Olympics** (2022). There are lots of lesser-known holidays—too numerous to list all here—such as **National Sticky Bun Day**, **National Drink Wine Day**, and my favorite, **Hoodie-Hoo Day**.

Learn about more: <https://www.thespruce.com/special-days-and-observances-in-february-1448885>.



INSIDE



Tempie Avery Montford Center....2	Tree Grant.....7	Resource Directory.....15
Featured Home.....4	Filmmakers in Asheville.....12	Green Corner.....16
HRC.....6	Montford Park Players.....14	Music & Arts Festival.....16

TEMPIE AVERY MONTFORD CENTER

Center Update

Manager Change: Shana Kriewall has moved to another center, The Harvest House. Seth Jackson will be your new contact for the center.

At this time, we are continuing to provide Monday-Friday all-day programming in partnership with Asheville City Schools (ACS). ACS provides teaching assistants in the morning as well as breakfast and lunch for the kids. We (Parks and Recreation) provide activities focusing on physical movement and socialization in the afternoons.

PODS: Pandemic's virtual learning students get much-needed help

<https://www.citizen-times.com/story/news/local/2020/10/20/pods-pandemics-virtual-learning-students-get-much-needed-help/3711013001/>



Photo Credit: Asheville Citizens-Times

Seth Jackson
Manager, Tempie Avery Montford Center
253-3714, sjackson@ashevillenc.gov.



Mark your calendar—for June 5, 2021 for the **Annual Historic Montford Garden Tour**. Stay tuned for details!



The New Montford Listserve

We have replaced it with a **New Google Group**. Membership in the original Listserve will not carry over—You must join the new Listserve. Visit <https://groups.google.com/g/montford> to join.

Also helpful: <http://montford.org/montford-listserve> .

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Cate





Editor's Note: This home was featured in the 2019 Montford Holiday Tour of Homes.

FEATURED HOME

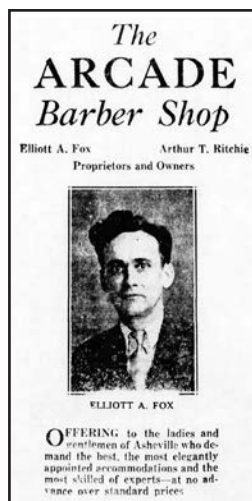
The history of 194 Flint Street

The brick bungalow at 194 Flint Street has been described both as “a rare and important bungalow” and as “*the finest bungalow in the neighborhood*”.

In 1919, Elliott A. Fox and his wife Estelle, purchased part of “Lot 2” on the west side of Flint Street, just south of Magnolia Avenue. Elliott Alexander Fox, a young barber, and Estelle Stikeleather, daughter of Fergus G. Stikeleather, had married a few years earlier, in 1916.

The Foxes were still living at 30 Monroe Place in July of 1922, when Elliott was granted a building permit to build a dwelling of “seven rooms, west side of Flint Street” for “\$7,000”. The Foxes chose to build a “California Bungalow”, styled after those being built in California.

Specifically, their house was built as a California “Airplane-bungalow”, with its second story popping up in the middle of the house. When this style first began to be built, in the early twentieth century, airplanes often had a cockpit sitting on top of the fuselage. Since this second story resembled a cockpit, they started calling these “Airplane” Bungalows. Usually these “cockpits” were only large enough to contain one or two rooms. Often the walls



were lined with banks of windows, adding to the resemblance. The low-pitched roofs with their broad overhangs on the 194 Flint Street bungalow are very characteristic of the “California-bungalow”.

Although we do not yet know if the house at 194 Flint Street was built from a published house plan or designed by a local architect, we can say that

it was certainly inspired by the published plan books coming out of California and the Northwest. The most prolific and popular plan books were being published by E. W. Stillwell of California, and Yoho & Merritt (billed as “The Bungalow Craftsmen”) out of Seattle, Washington. Both published numerous books during the early to mid-1920s. Although I cannot authenticate it, my suspicion is that the Foxes’ architect may have been designed by Richard Sharp Smith, as numerous details resemble the house at 87 Kenilworth Road, which was designed by Smith for Jake Childs in 1913. Smith used California proto-types for both designs.

Estelle Fox was an accomplished musician and noted soprano soloist. In addition to singing in the church choir, Estelle hosted and sang for a radio program, “Songs of Yesterday”, which aired on Fridays on WWNC for many years.

The Fox family lived in the house until 1931 when due to foreclosure, they moved out of the house. From 1932-1945 the house was rented out. In 1945, Joseph and Rose



Pelle purchased the home from Prudential Insurance Company. Joseph & Rose operated Pelle Grocery which was on Asheland Avenue, and later at 241 Broadway. However, the Pelles only lived in the house for two years, when in 1947 they moved out and leased out the house to numerous tenants until 1959 when they again moved back into the house.

In the Spring of 1964, the Pelles sold the house along with an assumed mortgage to Rueben J. Daley. A few days later Daley sold the property to William & Emma S. Carson. William Carson passed away in 1972, but Emma continued to live in the home until her death in 1981. Emma's brother Enoch Suter was also living in the house at her death, but he died just a few months later in the same year.

In 1985, Emma's heirs sold the home to Melvin Clemmons of Knoxville, TN. Sadly, Clemmons was the first of a series of landlords who owned the house from 1985 through 2001. During these years the house became derelict, despite being occupied by various tenants. The situation was so bad that tenant William Murphy reported that from May 1986 to May 1987 was "pure torture". Apparently, when they moved into the home in 1986, which had already become derelict, the landlord had promised to fix the deficiencies. "Rainwater leaked into the living room and closets. The bathroom floor was rotting, the ceilings were moldy, and the wiring was exposed", complained Murphy. The heat would fail in winter. Finally, Murphy and his family moved into a motel, and contacted Pisgah Legal Services for legal aid. Murphy won his case in District Court and was awarded \$9,200 (which included triple damages, attorney fees, and reimbursement for motel bills).

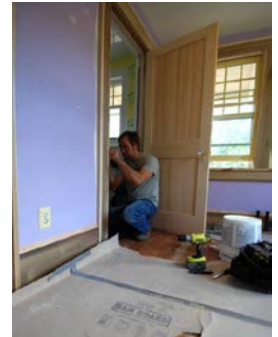


Long Gone From Here
William Murphy stands outside the house on Flint Street he and his wife rented for a year. Murphy, through Pisgah Legal Services, successfully sued his former landlord for damages. His case and two others pursued by Pisgah Legal Services may create a new atmosphere for rental relations in Western North Carolina.

Clemmons sold the property in 1988 to Christopher and Pamela McGrayne. The McGrayne's also used the property as a rental, along with their other 19 properties. The McGrayne's owned the property until 2001 at which time they sold it to the current owner Timothy Owen.

Tim began a long rehabilitation, converting the house back to single-family and replacing all systems. He stripped all the woodwork and removed 7-8 layers of paint himself, re-did the kitchen and bathrooms, and replaced the crumbling front wall. The house was brought back to its original charm, and in 2012 won the Preservation Society's Griffin Award.

Tim's brother, Samuel Owen, is an artist who carved the quote from Dickens over the living room fireplace and painted the sunroom fresco of the four seasons. Cross stitch pieces in the dining room are by Tim's grandmother, and Tim himself created the stained glass hangings.



Compiled by: Dale Wayne Slusser, October 2019

1. National Register of Historic Places Inventory-Nomination Form, "Montford Area Historic District", Research by Sara G. Upchurch, Description and Significance prepared by McKelden Smith, Survey Specialist, Division of Archives and History, March 10, 1977.
2. Asheville Citizen Times, July 22, 1922, page 19.
3. "Airplane Bungalow", By Joffre Essley, <https://www.house-design-coffee.com/airplane-bungalow.html>
4. 08/27/1964 Rueben J & Ethel P Dailey to Emma Suter Carson FLINT STREET Db. 907/270. Buncombe Register of Deeds.
5. Asheville Citizen Times, May 9, 1988, page 1.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Asheville Citizen Times, September 13, 1993 page 9.



Historic Resources Commission of Asheville and Buncombe County

Montford Action Agenda 12/09/20

Members present: Chair Emily Kite, Valeria Watson, Sara Gardner, James Vaughn, William Eakins, Will Hornaday, Emily Spreng, Maggie Broussides, James Coman, Benjamin Mitchell, Stephanie West

Staff present: Alex Cole, Shannon Tuch, Jannice Ashley

Item, Summary and Action

122 West Chestnut Street (PIN 9649124598)—Construct a new 968 square foot, one-and-a-half story accessory structure and parking area in rear yard.

Action—Continued

77 Magnolia Avenue (PIN 9649134381)—Replace non-original 6/1 double-hung window on east elevation with new 6-lite wood awning window.

Action—Approved

Please refer to the website (www.ashevillenc.gov) for the full approved minutes after the following month's meeting.

HRC Application Portal

The city is now accepting HRC applications digitally via the Development Portal at this address:

<https://develop.ashevillenc.gov/>



Historic Resources Commission of Asheville and Buncombe County

Montford Action Agenda 01/13/21

Present: Chair Emily Kite, William Eakins, Sara Gardner, Will Hornaday, James Vaughn, Maggie Broussides, Benjamin Mitchell, Stephanie West, Gail Lazaras

Absent: Emily Spreng, Valeria Watson, Jim Coman

Staff present: Alex Cole, Shannon Tuch, Jannice Ashley

Item, Summary and Action

122 West Chestnut Street (PIN 9649124598)—Construct a new 968 square foot, one-and-a-half story accessory structure and parking area in rear yard.

Action—Continued

250 Montford Avenue (PIN 9649033561)—Modify existing window and door openings on side and rear elevations; install new wood windows and doors.

Action—Withdrawn

81 Courtland Ave (PIN 9649015935)—Construction of a 2-story, 2,765 square foot primary structure. Applicant: Aaron Wilson.

Action—Continued

Please refer to the website (www.ashevillenc.gov) for the full approved minutes after the following month's meeting.

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Any Montford property owner, renter, or local organization may apply. Applications will be processed on a first-come, first-serve basis. Award of grants is at the discretion and funding availability of the MNA.

Remember, fall is for planting!

Find additional information and the grant application at Montford.org. Click "Links" then "Tree Grant"

or go to this link: http://montford.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/TreeGrant_2019_1209.pdf



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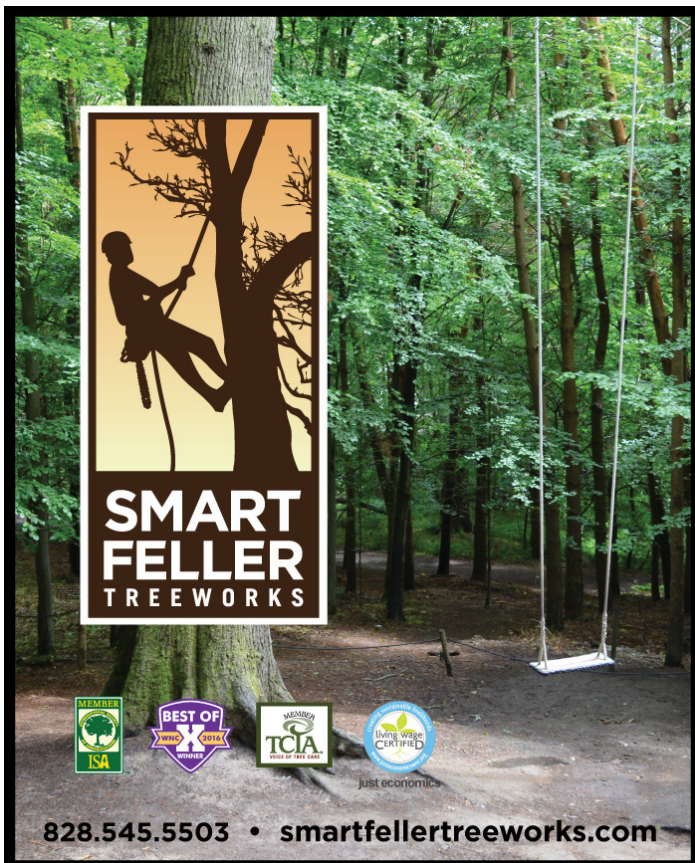


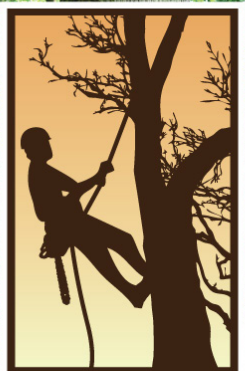
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Documentary filmmakers, based in L.A., look to set up shop in Asheville

Editor's note: This article appeared in 'The Asheville Citizen-Times', January 25, 2021. Ellen's Parents live in Montford—their house was part of the 2019 Holiday Tour of Homes..



Ellen Farmer working with an editor in Havana, Cuba to pull footage for their PBS show "The Fidel Castro Tapes." Photo Courtesy The Asheville Citizen-Times.

An award-winning documentary filmmaker based in Los Angeles is putting one foot down in Asheville after a year upended by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Tom Jennings and Ellen Farmer own 1895 Films, which makes documentaries for networks like National Geographic and streaming services like Netflix and Disney+.

After moving to Asheville last year and working remotely in the midst of the pandemic, they're now weighing making the move permanent and putting out feelers for a potential Asheville satellite office.

Jennings says luckily, the company got a jump on pandemic-related restrictions, and since much of their work can be done remotely, he hasn't lost any of his 20 employees throughout the almost year-long pandemic.



Tom Jennings and Ellen Farmer in Scotland during work on a show about scientists tracking the Loch Ness monster. Photo Courtesy The Asheville Citizen-Times.

A homecoming of sorts

The family's move to Asheville was the combination of several factors, and in a sense, it's a homecoming.

The pair married in 2009 at the Cathedral of All Souls in Biltmore Village. Farmer grew up in Charlotte but visited her grandparents' small ranch house in Biltmore Forest for Thanksgiving and Christmas and several weeks in the summer. Today, her sister and parents live in town, too.

Her family dates back a century in the area, and her grandfather, Woodard Farmer, was a doctor based in Biltmore Village but traveled the mountains making house calls.

"It always felt magical to come to my grandparents' house," Farmer said, where they'd take walks and visit a nearby park.

After her grandparents passed about 10 years ago, Jennings said, the family kept the house for several years but eventually sold it. It went back on the market about two years ago and caught Farmer's attention.

"And I thought then, 'Maybe I'll just go see it,'" Farmer said.

She visited for an open house, and after it hadn't sold for a few months, she couldn't stop thinking about it and purchased the house about a year and a half ago.

"It was sort of a spontaneous thing," she said.

Then, in the midst of the pandemic, her father needed heart surgery, so Farmer moved in the house to be nearby in what was initially a temporary plan.

It soon started feeling like the move could be permanent, and Farmer says once they can be, they see themselves being “bi-coastal.”

“The more we stayed here, the more we thought ‘you know we could just stay here,’” Jennings said.

Making the move from Los Angeles

Last September, they did move to Asheville, along with their two young sons.

“The longer we’re here it makes it pretty tough to look at life in the big city again,” Farmer said.

Especially given the state of COVID-19 in LA. Jennings and Farmer said their pediatrician told them if they didn’t have to come back to LA, not to.

“The longer we stayed, we thought ‘You know what, (it’s) time to plant the flag in Asheville,’” Jennings said. “That’s how we did it.”

What Jennings hopes to do is establish a satellite office in Asheville and return to LA for work once a month or so. He sees potential in the area, saying Western North Carolina is steeped in history and noting the production community that already exists here.

“I love telling great stories, especially if you can find a way to make people feel like they’re hearing a familiar story for the first time,” said Jennings, who was a journalist before he turned filmmaker. “I’m curious to see what I can find and tell stories from this part of the world that the rest of the world can see.”

Some of their projects include a profile on Princess Diana, called “Diana: In Her Own Words,” which aired on National Geographic in 2017 and recently blew up again, Jennings said, after Netflix acquired it and married it to season four of its hit show “The Crown.”

They also produced “The Real Right Stuff” for Disney+, as well as award-winning shows on the Martin Luther King, Jr. assassination, the Challenger disaster, and more.

“We always try to find new archival material lost to time or never heard or seen,” Jennings said.

Locally, Jennings sees several options, like the history of Asheville, the Blue Ridge Parkway and the story behind it, noting big topics like the Vanderbilt family and Biltmore Estate.

“There’s always one more stone that can be turned,” Jennings said. “When the libraries are open, I’m going to be doing a lot more work there.”

Farmer noted a show they did on log house builders based in Johnson City, Tennessee, that aired on a Discovery network, and floated the idea of a reality show about brewmasters.

“Even if it’s not a local idea, just having it made here would be great,” Farmer said.

The biggest difference is Asheville’s quality of life, she said. They can spend more time in creative thought instead of being stuck in traffic or dealing with the headaches of LA.

They may not have to turn over too many stones to find a winning idea, either.

Checking out at Lowe’s on Tunnel Road, Jennings started a conversation with a woman who had seen and enjoyed the Princess Diana biography on Netflix. Turns out, she used to be a university archivist and told him she knew where to find all sorts of interesting local archival material.

“That kind of serendipity doesn’t happen often in Los Angeles,” he said. “But it happened here pretty quickly, so I was thrilled.”



Katherine Williams, Tom Jennings and David Tillman, after winning an Emmy for Outstanding Research on “Challenger Disaster: Lost Tapes” in 2017. Photo Courtesy The Asheville Citizen-Times.

Reaching out to local colleges and universities is also on the to-do list for the Asheville office of 1895 Films, Jennings said, a continuation of a similar program recently kicked off in their LA office.

Just before the pandemic set in, Jennings interviewed potential candidates for an internship program that planned to bring students from his alma mater Kent State University in Ohio to Los Angeles.

Pandemic travel restrictions moved the internship online instead and since, the students have worked on several projects with the company, something Jennings hopes to replicate locally.

He said breaks like that “brought me to where I’m at today, and so I’m more than willing to help people that are genuinely interested in doing the work and enjoy the work. I want to give back as people gave back to me.”

They’re looking for more than interns, too.

The pandemic may have changed the way the company operates, but it hasn’t slowed business much. Jennings says he plans on keeping everyone working, with assignments booked through the next two years.

He stepped on the accelerator when the pandemic really started getting bad in late summer and early fall, he said, as 95% of the company’s work comes from ideas they generate and pitch to networks.

“So I really put the pedal to the metal and secured us a lot of work,” Jennings said.

Starting out on a project, they just need researchers and writers, he said, but once they get into filming, they’ll need camera operators and editors.

Farmer said it’s hard to make solid plans during the pandemic, but if there were no pandemic, she thinks they’d already have been building a team.

And for Jennings and Farmer, the city is more than just a good business opportunity, it’s a chance to take a deep breath away from the big city.

“I spent the first month just clearing weeds in the woods, it was fabulous for my mindset,” Farmer said. “It’s a magical place. Asheville is something special.”



MONTFORD PARK PLAYERS

Montford Park Players is gearing up for a new season. The news is hopeful and we’d love to fill the hill with rapt audiences once more, very soon. We are re-staffing positions and hiring directors and creative teams for our productions. We’ll be holding auditions for the season very soon (most likely virtually), and be on the lookout for those work days to hang with old friends while we prepare the stage and grounds.



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Green Corner

Mitch Russell



Let me say that I've been dubbed the Rabbit Hole King by my family due to going online & hours later being asked if I found what I initially was asked to find, so... I have a friend who recently had solar added after a renovation. He also bought a new Subaru Crosstrek a few years ago knowing that they'd renovate & decided the solar would outweigh the pollution from driving the Crosstrek vs buying an electric or hybrid vehicle.

So I was going to write my article on the environmental savings of his decision but got thrown off once I started my research. What threw me off was the mix of sources of power in NC. Keep in mind this isn't for Asheville unfortunately since we're 100% natural gas at Lake Julian now, said with a sinister 50's/60's horror film voice.

This mix was very surprising in that almost 32% is nuclear, 31% natural gas, 23.5% coal, 5.75 solar & the remaining tied up in hydro, biomass, wind, oil, other fossil fuels & geothermal. At the national level the top four are: natural gas-38%, coal-23.5%, nuclear-19.75% & wind-7.25%. This info was gleaned from,

https://afdc.energy.gov/vehicles/electric_emissions.html

I would have thought that given our proximity to the coalfields of KY, WV, PA & OH that coal would be the top source. I'm also surprised that solar isn't a little higher up, but since there aren't as many industrial-scale solar farms vs residential or commercial applications then it's still a small percentage of the overall. I anticipate that will be changing somewhat rapidly in the next 5-10 years. One of the reasons is NC ranks 2nd in the nation for growth in solar energy production since 2010 per an Oct 2020 report from Environment North Carolina Research & Policy Center. The state offers low interest-loans for solar panels, Duke provides rebates of .60/watt up to 10kW systems = \$6,000, solar systems aren't included in the

value of your home & net metering when you get credit for the energy that your panels produce, but don't use immediately. There are other incentives, but these are the most applicable to Montford.

So at the end of this rabbit hole may you find a pot of solar gold!

Music & Arts Festival Postponed

Our committee has made the decision to postpone the 2021 Festival. We hope to have one in the late summer/early fall. We will keep you posted.



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