



# MONTFORD

THE NEWSLETTER OF ASHEVILLE'S MOST HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD  
Vol. 28 No. 6

JUNE/JULY '23

# Welcome Summer



★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ *And* ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

*happy 4th*  *of july*

INDEPENDENCE DAY

TEMPIE AVERY MONTFORD CENTER

Summer Camps Have Begun!

Summer Youth and Teen Camps

Monday-Friday from 8:30-6:00pm - Camp runs through August 18

Fresh Start Kindergarten Camp

August 28-September 1 from 9:00-2:00pm - Fee: \$25

Let's Get Messy

Tuesdays, July 11, 18, and 25 from 4:00-4:30pm - Fee: \$5 per class - Ages: 3-5 yrs w/ parent or guardian

Montford Story Time

Tuesdays, June 13, 20, and 27 from 4:00-4:30pm - Fee: \$5 per class - Ages: 3-5 w/ parent or guardian

Montford Toddler Water Day

Saturdays, July 1 and August 5 from 10:00-12:00 noon - Ages: 3-5 w/parent or guardian

Montford Glow Nights

Fridays, June 30, July 28, and August 25 from 6:00-8:00pm

Open Basketball

June 29-August 27 Sundays from 3:00-5:00pm - Thursdays from 6:00-9:00pm

For more Information Contact:

Seth Jackson, Recreation Facility Manager  
Tempie Avery Montford Center - Asheville Parks and Recreation

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## SEEKING A PERFECT MATCH

I have clients who are enchanted by Montford and are searching for a spacious home (or ability to add-on). Please contact me for a confidential conversation if you are considering selling your home. These folks are willing to wait for the right place, so a lease-back is also possible!



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*Thanks* to the volunteers who contributed to the success of the **2023 Montford Garden Tour**.

A special *Thanks* goes to the homeowners who opened their beautiful gardens to visitors!





Asheville Citizen-Times (Asheville, North Carolina)  
26 March 1930, Wednesday, Page 7

## C Of C Needs Volunteers To Get Fish Here And Feed This Summer

Plans to stock streams near Asheville with trout and open them to tourists were advanced yesterday by the Chamber of Commerce and a call was

which will be released in streams this fall. The fish must be transported to Asheville and fed all summer. This will require the use of four one-ton trucks next week and a certain amount of food, mainly chopped beef hearts, until the fish reach sizes where they can care for themselves.

Last year W. M. Smathers, now president of the Chamber of Commerce, sponsored the rearing of fingerlings in the Pack Square pool. This experiment proved successful as to actually rearing the fish, as well as offering an unusual attraction downtown. It was announced the Montford Park pool will care for three times as many fish as the Pack Square fountain pool. The park caretaker will feed and guard the fish in Montford Park. The city has granted permission to use the pool for this purpose.

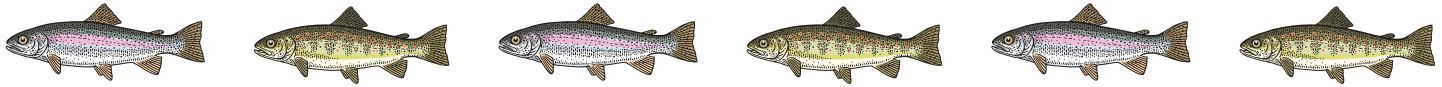


Buncombe County Special Collections, Pack Memorial Library,  
Postcard 1915-1930

issued to business men and sportsmen of the city to aid in the project. Four trucks will be needed next week to bring several thousand small fish to Asheville from the Marion hatchery to place in the Pack Square and Montford Park rearing pools.

The Chamber of Commerce fishing committee, with Francis Bourne as chairman, has asked assistance in the securing and rearing of these fish,

It is the plan of the Chamber of Commerce fishing committee to emphasize Asheville and Western North Carolina's actual resources and natural attributes in the fishing sport. Asheville business men and sportsmen have been asked to volunteer their cooperation in this plan, only transportation and food being needed, since the fish will be supplied by the Marion hatchery. Any person interested in this plan may call the Chamber of commerce, telephone 1172, for any further



information. Members of the fishing committee believe that there are enough sportsmen and business men in the city interested to insure food for the fish, since this will not mean very much money as a total fund for the summer months. The fish thus reared have proven hardy and very few are lost after they are placed into the streams.

It was described as both a business and a sporting proposition, since the stressing of the mountain streams here as the best in the country for fishing can easily be made possible. Restocking is the answer to the problem and a great amount of this work is being done, both publicly and privately. It was found last summer by a number of persons who owned a few miles of fishing water to be a most profitable business, renting space or charging fees for fishing privileges.

The fish will be transferred from Marion next week, the day being selected to accommodate those who offer trucks for the purpose of transporting the fish. The committee is composed of Francis Bourne, chairman, G. Lyle Jones, W. K. Belchler, J. G. K. McClure Jr, F. J. Fanning and W. J. Fitzgerald.

*OK. Let me explain. There was a splash pool complete with a fountain in Montford Park. Children enjoyed the park playground swings, sandbox, slide, and other fun equipment. In warmer weather they splashed in the thigh deep pool. Little did they know that in 1930 this pool and others were used to raise fish to stock local streams—all part of the effort to restore the local economy with tourism.*

*Some of you may know more about this fish story. I'm dying to know the fate of the Chamber's fishing committee plan and the fish (trout). So...consider this Part 1.*

*Ross Terry, editor.*



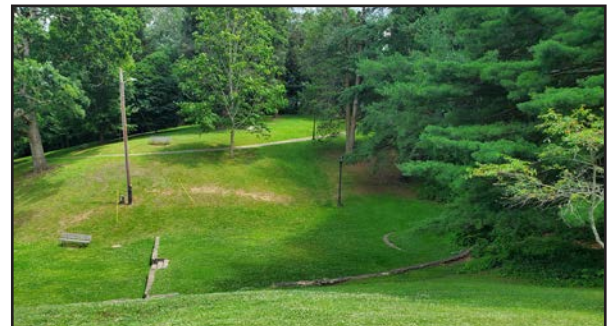
Asheville Citizen-Times (Asheville, North Carolina) · 26 Jul 1959, Sun · Page 21

Larry, Steven, and Don Lawson sons of Mrs. Ruby Mae Cohen of 89 Cumberland Ave - Alan Denzine, son of Mr. and Mrs. John Denzine of 63 1/2 Cumberland Ave. - Roy Taylor, son of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Taylor or 357 Broadway, Joseph Harris, son of Mr. and Mrs. Harley Harris of 476 Broadway.

## The Montford Park Pool (aka Splash Pool, Wading Pool)



My future bothers-in-law Ronnie and Gary Redmon in the empty pool. The pool was drained periodically to remove sand and leaves. 1959.

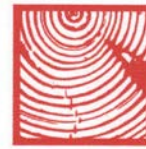


In 1973 the Montford Park Players started their 50-year run with their first performances on the grassy area where the pool was once located.

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The Montford listserv is a neighborhood discussion list. This is a place where you can exchange news about the neighborhood. Visit [Montford.org](http://Montford.org) to learn more.



**From the Vault: The Tour of Homes 34 Years Ago!**

**CHRISTMAS PAST**  
*Lives in Montford*

A TOUR OF FIVE HISTORIC HOMES  
Sunday,  
December 11, 1988  
3:00 - 7:00 p.m.

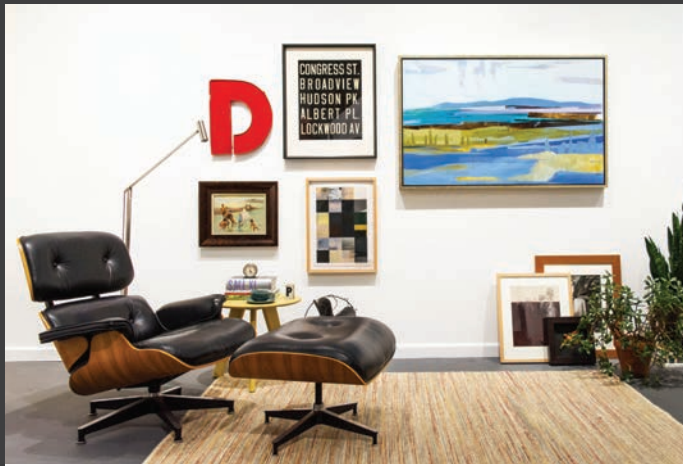
Tickets may be purchased at Pisgah Legal Services at 89 Montford Avenue  
beginning at 3:00 p.m.  
Admission is \$5.00 per person.

Sponsored by the Montford Community Club

**Editor:** Even though The Holiday Tour of Home as we know it has been celebrated for 25 years, there have been earlier versions of celebrations in Montford.

My neighbor James Liner gave me this poster and reminded me of this forgotten event. He actually has one of the commemorative candle sconces that belonged to his partner W.C. Justice.

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*This article was originally published in the September 2014 issue. Joan Miller editor.*

## Remembering a Montford Childhood in the 1950s and 1960s

Anne Plyler

I grew up in Montford and lived here from 1952-1966 before leaving for UNC Greensboro and UNC Chapel Hill. Cokes were 5 and 10 cents at my first job, working the soda counter at Montford Pharmacy at the Montford-Soco-Cullowhee intersection. I started working in junior high school, while my husband-to-be, who drove the delivery jeep for the pharmacy, started in high school.

Dad worked in administration at Highland Hospital on Zillicoa Street as did my aunt, a psychiatric social worker who lived in the Ambassador Apartments on Pearson Drive with our grandmother. Their offices were in the historic and beautiful Rumbough House on Zillicoa, where occasionally I was lucky enough to play hide and seek. My aunt reportedly identified Zelda Fitzgerald's body after the 1948 fire at Highland that made front page headlines in the San Diego newspaper a few months before I was born, according to my parents who were living there at the time.

### Neighborhood Fun

Our house was at 321 Pearson Drive on the corner of Santee Street. My father walked to work every day while I rode the bus to Randolph School on Montford Avenue and walked home. I took piano lessons in the Gudger house across the avenue from Randolph. The school bus always stopped on our corner of Pearson, and a gaggle of children entered and departed its doors.

When we lived there, the land across the street was wooded—no houses. We spent hours making trails, forts, tree houses, and hideouts all over those woods. Once we even made an igloo structure out of bent limbs and fall leaves.

Summers were spent playing tennis in Montford Park, riding bikes and blazing trails in the woods between our house and friends on Tacoma Circle, catching lightning bugs, and playing kick the can at dusk. When we felt adventurous, we walked the sewer pipe from Montford Park to the Smith property on Hibriten Drive, which bordered Riverside Drive. The Smith house was built in the shape of a ship by a sea captain, according to twins Ramsey and Sylvia who lived there. Behind the main house was a two room cabin—our clubhouse—where we put on plays, had sleepovers, and camped out.

When I first came to Asheville to visit my grandmother, Montford Park had a wading pool, which was my favorite place to cool off. Later the pool was covered over to become a stage for the Montford Park Players' Shakespeare productions.

At the bottom of Montford Avenue, on the right just before the driveway to Klondyke, was a dry sandy lot with a few small, scraggly pine trees. The neighborhood kids named it Texas. It was a great place to ride bikes and make up ghost stories about the goings-on in the tool sheds that belonged to Highland Hospital which you could see through the deeper woods, if you walked back far enough.

Not too far away toward the hospital was a sewer drain that formed a deep, round room under the street. For some reason we fantasized about gaining entry down there but always wondered whether we could get out again if we did. That sewer drain was also purported to be haunted.

One of my favorite pastimes was riding my bike in Riverside Cemetery and exploring the oldest grave sites. One in particular, way back and built into a bank, had double doors held together by a linked chain. It looked almost like a garage. Word was, you had to ride fast by that grave because the ghosts would come out and grab you if you tarried. Later I came to appreciate Riverside as the final resting place of Thomas Wolfe, O. Henry, Zebulon Vance, and George Masa, the photographer whose work documented the Blue Ridge Mountains.



**Singing around the piano in the Homewood music room, c. 1960. Photo by Ewart M. Ball, Jr., Asheville Citizen-Times. North Carolina Collection, Pack Memorial Library, Asheville.**

## Homewood and Highland Hospital

Every Christmas Eve, the Highland Hospital staff and their families gathered for a party at Homewood, the iconic grey stone building on Zillicoa. There the Christmas tree reached to the top of the 20-foot ceiling and cherry walls and windows encircled us while overhead chandeliers sparkled. Underneath the tree, tinsel and bowed packages dazzled the children in attendance. We sang Christmas carols accompanied by a grand piano. Eventually we got around to the one all the children loved the best, “Santa Claus Is Coming to Town,” because we knew that was the cue for Santa himself to appear. Wonderful memories were woven in that room.

Only later as an adult did I come to appreciate the history associated with Homewood, which was built c. 1934. Dr. Robert Carroll, a pioneer in psychiatric care, founded Highland Hospital and designed the building, which was added onto in stages. The final addition, where we celebrated Christmas, served as a concert hall for his very gifted wife, a concert pianist. Celebrities, politicians, and artists came from all over the world to hear her play and to study with her.

Dr. Carroll’s adopted daughter, Charmin, followed in his footsteps and became a psychiatrist. She served as Highland’s chief of staff some years later after the hospital was given to Duke University in 1939. She lived with a companion in the red brick house opposite Zillicoa on Montford Avenue. I knew this Dr. Carroll as a five year old, pulled by the magnetism of her two boxer dogs, Lucy and Gee. Before we moved to Asheville, the highlight of my visits was feeding the dogs from a baby bottle, which they seemed to enjoy as much as I did.

One of my dad’s best friends was Dr. Robert Craig, a psychiatrist, whose daughter Barbara became one of my favorite playmates. The Craig family lived in what is now the Daoist Traditions College of Chinese Medical Arts at 382 Montford. Our families—Dr. Craig’s four children and our family’s three—often celebrated Thanksgiving around the Craig table. Daddy and Dr. Craig both sang bass in Trinity Episcopal Church’s choir for years, until they were no longer able. Music was the tie that bound them.

## Klondyke and Neighborhood Change

Another playmate was Robbie Wall, who lived at the end of Montford in the Klondyke mansion, which was rumored to have a hundred rooms and a gymnasium on the third floor. Although I never got around to counting the rooms, it seemed an awful big house for one little girl, her parents, and several very large dogs.

The house was razed in 1970 for a public housing project. That was the year I graduated from Chapel Hill and dad served as president



**Klondyke, built for Tench C. and Sarah Coxe in 1898, stood at 475 Montford Avenue until it was torn down in 1970.**

of Montford Community Club. As you might imagine, there was a good bit of controversy about the housing project, which Dad championed in spite of the opposition. Many of our longtime neighbors moved away, and the dynamics of the neighborhood began to change. My parents were insistent on staying and living in an integrated community.

The Justice family moved in beside us and turned out to be the very best of neighbors. We shared a driveway and a garden’s abundance, and when the time came to mourn my father’s death, it was our black neighbor, Mr. Justice, whose embodied kindness and prayers provided the most comfort and solace to me.

## Coming Home to Montford

The house where we lived has recently been beautifully and lovingly renovated by a couple who came here to retire. My dad would have been so pleased to see what they’ve done to it. I’d love to be invited inside to see the finished product.

Now I’ve returned to the neighborhood and come full circle, a 66-year-old woman who still is very much animated by the child who grew up in Montford and has reached her childhood dream of becoming a physical therapist.



We appreciate Archetype Brewery offering a vibrant setting for the Montford Neighborhood Association meetings.

## Forever Montford

### WELCOME PACKET

#### Randy Hall

Forever Montford, a committee of the Montford Neighborhood Association (MNA) has created a Welcome Packet for new Montford residents. The packet contains information such as a brief history of Montford, a list of MNA board members along with contact information, Montford listserv, Montford newsletter, neighborhood parks, events (due to ongoing COVID-19 concerns, be sure to confirm event dates/times), restaurants, maps, volunteer opportunities and much more. Packets are being delivered by MNA board and Forever Montford committee members upon learning of new residents. Recipients of the Welcome Packet have shown great appreciation with one neighboring writing, "Looks like we lucked out in the neighbor and neighborhood department! I appreciate the history and local information. Well done, and thank you for your thoughtfulness."



If you are new to Montford or know of a new resident, please contact one of the below, and we will coordinate delivery of a Welcome Packet.

Randy Hall: [cpabanker@yahoo.com](mailto:cpabanker@yahoo.com)

Leslie Humphrey: [leslie@squarepeginc.net](mailto:leslie@squarepeginc.net)

Ashima Nair: [ashimanair@gmail.com](mailto:ashimanair@gmail.com)

Lynn Raker: [lynn.raker@gmail.com](mailto:lynn.raker@gmail.com)



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*The Montford Newsletter* is published online by the Montford Neighborhood Association, P.O. Box 7181, Asheville, NC 28802, for the residents of Asheville's first historic neighborhood. We welcome articles and advertising by the 20th of the month.

Note: Opinions expressed in this newsletter by contributing authors do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the MNA.

Contact Editor Ross Terry at [ross@krtdesign.com](mailto:ross@krtdesign.com), 230-7439 for more information.