



MONTFORD

THE NEWSLETTER OF ASHEVILLE'S MOST HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOOD
Vol. 29 No. 06

JUNE/JULY '24

Welcome
Summertime



Regatta at Lake Julian. Photo courtesy of the Asheville Sailing Club.

TEMPIE AVERY MONTFORD CENTER

Calendar

Toddler Craftin' Outdoors

Ages 2-5 accompanied by adult
July 3 from 5:00-6:00 PM
Free

Youth Beach Towel Tye Dyeing

Ages 7-10
June 23 from 2:00-3:00 PM
\$5 pre-registration

Youth Field Day Frenzy

Ages 6-10
June 22 from 2:00-3:00 PM
\$5 pre-registration

Youth Field Day Frenzy

Ages 12-16
July 20 from 2:00-3:00 PM
\$5 pre-registration



Toddler Play Time

Ages 2-6 accompanied by adult
Sundays, June 9, 16, 23, and 30 from 1:30-3:30 PM
Free

Pick-Up Basketball Sundays

4:00-6:00 PM (schedule may be subject to change)
Free



Pick-Up Basketball Thursdays

6:00-9:00 PM (schedule may be subject to change)
Free

Splashing Sprouts

Ages 2-5 accompanied by adult
July 13 and 27 from 4:00-5:00 PM
Free

Teen Nerf Night

Ages 13-16
June 14 and 28 from 6:00-7:30 PM

For more Information Contact:

Seth T. Jackson, Recreation Facility Manager | 828-253-3714
Tempie Avery Montford Recreation Center | 34 Pearson Dr, Asheville, NC 28801
www.ashevilenc.gov/parks | Facebook | Instagram

Advertisement for R7 PAINTING SERVICE. Includes logo with a large 'R7' and text: Daniel Creft, 828-747-9293, r7paint@icloud.com, Interior & Exterior Painting, Pressure Washing, Popcorn Removal, www.r7painting.com

Advertisement for Juneteenth. Features a heart graphic with rainbow colors and a star. Text: REMEMBERING, HONORING, AND CELEBRATING JUNETEENTH MONDAY, JUNE 17 - FRIDAY, JUNE 21

A Night With the Moths & Fundraiser for Bee City USA-Asheville, June 15 at the Odyssey School



Photo Credit: Kari Fernandez

Come enjoy an evening on **June 15** discovering native moths and support Bee City USA-Asheville. This kid-friendly evening starts with delicious non-alcoholic beverages courtesy of Devil's Foot and small bites courtesy of Liz and Sally Lesesne and Jesse Cervantes as we learn some moth basics. Tickets are \$25 and kids get in free if accompanied by a registered adult!

The Odyssey School's picnic shelter is the perfect location for suspending white sheets and firing up the black lights. Our leader will be conservation biologist Thomas Reed, a naturalist specializing in reptiles, amphibians, and invertebrates. With a commitment to conservation and love of field work, Thomas advocates for the protection of animals and our ecosystems. Thomas also enjoys connecting with nature through biological survey efforts, wildlife photography and work with citizen

science projects, and is looking forward to sharing his appreciation for these pollinator species to help safeguard their rich biodiversity.

The national Bee City USA pollinator conservation program started in Montford at the home of Richard and Phyllis Stiles. The program has grown to 400 affiliates in 47 states today and has been managed by the Xerces Society since 2018.

We are thrilled to spend a night with nature's most stealth pollinators at Montford's own Odyssey School on Zillicoa Street as part of our 12th annual Pollination Celebration! month of events. To see this and other Pollination Celebration! events, visit beecityasheville.org/pollination-celebration. The month begins on June 1 with a festival of four free, inspiring films—each with stunning cinematography--at Pack Library.

As darkness falls, who knows how many species we may see? (After all, there are 160,000 known species.) Consider downloading the iNaturalist app to your smart phone ahead of time so you can share photos of these fascinating creatures and contribute to citizen science. There's so much to learn; you may discover a formerly unknown moth!

Register for "A Night With the Moths" at beecityasheville.org/events/mothing-night.

Phyllis Stiles

she/her/hers

Founder/Director Emerita of national Bee City USA

<https://beecityusa.org/>

Chair of local affiliate Bee City USA - Asheville

<https://beecityasheville.org/>



Photo Credit: Julia Fosson



Photo Credit: Phyllis Stiles



Photo Credit: Phyllis Stiles



Historic Resources Commission of Asheville and Buncombe County

Montford Action Agenda 05/08/24

Members Present: Sioux Oliva (Chair), Will Hornaday (Vice-Chair), Amy Moxley, Alexander Ellenbogen, Celesta Gorman, Shannon Watkins, Jenny Bowen, Annie McDonald, Maria Delsasi

Members absent: Claire Thomas, Sara Groce

Staff Present: Alexandra Cole, Madelyn Stone, Jannice Ashley

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

Item, Summary and Action

209 Cumberland Avenue - Subdivision of existing 1.067 acre parcel into one (1) new 0.627 acre parcel with existing primary and accessory structures and one (1) new 0.44 acre vacant parcel..

Action—Approved

122 W Chestnut Street - Installation of 4' tall black aluminum fence around perimeter of front yard.

Action—Approved

19 Rosewood Avenue - Construction of a one-story, 310 square foot addition on rear elevation, replacement of an existing deck on the rear elevation and installation of three (3) skylights on rear facing portion of roof.

Action—Approved

5 E Waneta Street - After the fact request to replace ten (10) windows on the rear elevation with new aluminum clad windows.

Action— Denied

6 Danville Place - Construction of new one-and-a-half story, 3,600 square foot primary structure and a new one-story 795 square foot accessory structure..

Action— Continued

HRC Application Portal

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

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



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Would you like to get in touch with your neighbors more easily?

Do you have hobbies or special interests that you would like to share with others?

Do you want to be more involved in the Montford community?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, the Montford Neighborhood Directory is for you. The Montford Neighborhood Association has created an online directory, making it easy to do all of the above. It is a secure directory which is stored on Google Docs, so you will need a Google account to access the directory. No Gmail is required, just a Google account. No Google account? No problem, it is a few easy steps to create one and you can keep your old email address.

To date, we have 130 neighbors who have signed up, and we invite you to join as well. Neighbors have already started forming social groups using the Directory. They have expressed interest in Book Clubs, Supper Club, Wine Club, Hiking, Yoga, Tennis, Gardening, Crafts, Cooking, Baking, Woodworking, Painting, Playdates and more. If you would like to join, simply send an email to montford.directory@gmail.com



Kudzu clean-up

Thank you to all who came to dig kudzu crowns. There were 7 of us from Montford and Five Points and we got an awful lot done! Of course, there is more to do. So, our next workday will be **June 22nd from 9:00-11:00** at the intersection of Cable and the Reed Creek Greenway. Please join us if you can!

Susan Eggerton & Karen MacNeil

We've done our part, but there's still more to do.



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The Montford listserv is a neighborhood discussion list. This is the place where you can exchange news about the neighborhood.

Visit <https://montford.org/montford-listserve/>

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Forever Montford

WELCOME PACKET

Dan & Judith Sanford

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, 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.

Dan Sanford: sanford.danielj@gmail.com

Judith Sanford: sanford.judith@gmail.com

Leslie Humphrey: lesleinmontford@gmail.com

Ashima Nair: ashimanair@gmail.com



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Resource Directory

Historic Walking Tours

Stroll the neighborhood or downtown. Walking tours of historic Montford, Riverside Cemetery, Biltmore Village and downtown Asheville.

- 777-1014.

Raven Invasive Plant Management

Saving trees and native plants from non-native invasives. Raven IPM is a local, organic, woman veteran-owned business specializing in mechanical removal of invasive plants. No chemicals, just hard work. • (828)866-3200 • RavenNC.com

Smart Feller Tree Works

Down trees got you down? Contact us for all your tree removal and pruning needs! We are locally licensed and insured. Please call for free estimates. Montford references available. Thanks.

- 828.545.5503

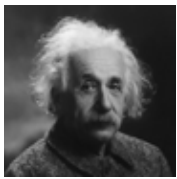
Square Peg Construction Inc.

Add beautiful custom woodwork to your historic home: New upgrades like wood paneling, built-in cabinetry, trim, doors, stairs and railings. Small details add big impact! Montford references.

- Call your neighbors, Leslie and David Humphrey 277-5164



Pack Memorial Library 67 Haywood Street in downtown Asheville



“The only thing that you absolutely have to know, is the location of the library.”
—Albert Einstein

Are you new to the neighborhood or has it been a long time since you last visited Pack Memorial Library in downtown Asheville? There are endless resources to explore or to discover:

- **Over 150,000 items available for browsing and lending.** These resources include books, periodicals, CDs, DVDs, and research materials. The library also participates in statewide resource sharing and offers inter-library loans.
- **Free internet access, public computing, and Wi-Fi.** Photocopy and printing services are available for a small fee.
- **Free laptop and hotspot lending program.** Laptops and hotspots are now available for a free 30 day loan with a library card.
- **Free tickets to local attractions.** Use your library card to sign up for Zoom passes, which are free tickets to local attractions like the WNC Nature Center, the NC Arboretum, or the Asheville Museum of Science.

- **Free digital audiobooks, e-books, magazines, and movies.** The Libby app from Overdrive provides downloads of these items to your smart phone, tablet, or computer. It's like an Audible subscription service, but free with your library card.

- **A vibrant and inviting children's library.** The library has books for all ages and reading levels, and board games, and sporting equipment available to lend.

- **Thousands of unique local historical records, photographs, maps, and memorabilia.** The Buncombe County Special Collections Library provides researchers the resources and expertise they need to understand and interpret the history of Western North Carolina.
- **Bookends Used Bookstore offers bargain prices for a wide variety of books and media, including vintage and collectible materials and bestselling fiction.** Proceeds from the sales benefit the library programming.

For more information, visit the library or their website:
<https://www.buncombecounty.org/governing/depts/library/branch-locations/pack-memorial.aspx>

Parking in the Civic Center parking ramp is free for the first hour. The library is also walkable from the Montford neighborhood.

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INDEPENDENCE DAY

Sunday, March 26, 1978 issue of the *Citizen-Times*.

Montford In Retrospect...

Suburban Neighborhood Once Slightly Different,
But Always Something Special

By BILL MOORE

Citizen-Times Staff Writer

Montford would have happened anyway.

But the "White Plague" helped give the area that special quality responsible for it being designated a national historic neighborhood.

And it is that special quality that is behind the efforts of at least two organizations to preserve and restore the once-fashionable neighborhood.

The "White Plague" was tuberculosis. It imparted to the Montford area a sort of cosmopolitanism conspicuously absent in most suburbs.

The presence at an early stage of a true-blue, cricket-playing English architect helped a lot, too.

Montford was named, in all probability for Col. Joseph Montford, a Revolutionary War officer from eastern North Carolina, or for one of his daughters who married Samuel Ashe, later elected governor of the state.

Asheville, of course, was named to honor Governor Ashe. It is doubtful, however, if Governor Ashe, his wife, or Colonel Montford ever saw Buncombe County.

From a small beginning approximately in 1792, Montford was for decades afterward a sleepy suburban settlement living quietly in the shadow of Asheville.

It grew, but its growth was slow until a couple of decades after the War Between the States.

Then it started the expansion that in time would make it the most attractive and desirable neighborhood in the community.

By the turn of the century, Montford, with its tree-lined streets, its well-designed, comfortable homes was a showplace.

To it were drawn the business and professional men of Asheville. To it were drawn the victims of tuberculosis and their families.

These were largely people from out of town, from out of state, and sometimes, from out of the country. Their presence tempered the nature of the Montford neighborhood. They represented different cultures, different points of view, and to some extent, different values.

They made Montford something different too, far different from the usual suburban neighborhood. In the usual small town in the United States at that time.

But the presence of strangers was not all that helped Montford.

It also had a striking architectural unity, a unity that is apparent in the neighborhood even today.

The oldest surviving home in Montford is the Rankin House at 635 Rankin Ave.

Editor's note: Susan Roderick dropped by with a page she had saved from the Sunday, March 26, 1978 issue of the *Citizen-Times*.

This article was before the attempt to save the Coleman House failed. The house was razed to make way for a steak house. Later the City acquired the property and it is now the location of the Asheville Visitor Center.



The original parts of the building were constructed in 1846, it is believed. The two-story, five-bay home was built in a simple Greek Revival style, but it has been much altered over the years.

Probably the most handsome home built in the area is the Rumbough House, built in 1892.

It combines elements of the Queen Anne and Neoclassic styles of architecture. Lovingly constructed by skilled artisans,



TYPICAL OF THE GRACEFUL ARCHITECTURE and skilled workmanship that characterizes the Montford neighborhood is the Rumbough House, now the administration building for Highland Hospital and lovingly maintained.

It is one of the finest examples left of the type of architecture and craftsmanship that went into expensive homes of that day.

It now serves as the administration building of Highland Hospital and has been preserved with care and sensitivity.

The period from 1892 to about 1910 saw the greatest expansion in Montford's history. Many architects and many builders operated there and homes of many different styles were constructed.

But somehow, through it all, that unique sense of architectural unity survived.

One of the men responsible for that was Richard Sharpe Smith.

Smith was born and trained as an architect in England. As a young man, he emigrated to America and went to work for New York Architect Richard Morris Hunt, the "society architect."

Hunt designed and built mansions for the wealthy in New York, Philadelphia, and Newport, R.I. He built for the Vanderbilts. He designed Biltmore Estate.

Hunt assigned Smith to supervise the construction of Biltmore. Smith spent the rest of his working life in Asheville.

While Biltmore was going up, many craftsmen from England were employed on the project.

Smith organized some of the younger ones into a cricket team of which he was playing manager. The team stayed together for two years, then disbanded.

The team probably fell apart because the English craftsmen went back to England, but it might have folded for lack of opposition.

When the Biltmore project was finished, Smith stayed in Asheville. He was the first professionally trained architect to open an office in the city.

It is estimated that Smith or his associates designed 30 of the homes in Montford, ranging from simple cottages to large, luxurious homes.

Smith favored a faintly Queen Anne style of architecture with emphasis on design features like steeply pitched and gambrel roofs, bay windows, stuccoed walls, and stone foundations.

He was a leader in the use of a form of stucco called "pebbledash" and many of his houses featured pebbledash lower walls topped by shingled upper stories.

Smith's style set the pace for the other architects who worked in the Montford neighborhood.

Although they employed styles ranging all the way from Queen Anne through Colonial Revival with a dash of Italianate and even a hint of Frank Lloyd Wright, somehow the neighborhood stayed architecturally harmonious.

The fact that many of the homes in Montford were built on spacious, well-landscaped

lots helped preserve the unity of the place, too.

One of the most interesting homes in the area is the Coleman House, built on a small hill at 36 Montford Ave. ("The head of Montford").

The house is important for a number of reasons but mainly because it serves as a dramatic introduction to the Montford area for anyone entering it from downtown Asheville.

Recently the Coleman House has become the target of an optimistic preservation effort.

While gracious homes were springing up all over the Montford area, so were hospitals and nursing homes, almost all used to care for tuberculosis victims.

Western North Carolina always has been a health resort, dating back to Colonial days when wealthy planters along the South Carolina coast sent their families to the mountains for the summers to escape the fevers of the coast.

The first serious efforts to conquer tuberculosis focused a great deal on Asheville.

In combatting tuberculosis in those days, physicians entered the battle almost weaponless.

The only treatment known to be at all helpful was a combination of fresh air, bed rest, good food, and good nursing care.

The hospitals here supplied the bed rest, the good food, and the nursing care. Asheville supplied the fresh air. And the patients came here by the hundreds, sometimes by the thousands.

A long-time resident of Montford said recently. "When

I was a small girl I could see eight other homes from my front door. Doctors owned six of those homes. They didn't all treat TB, of course, but most of them did."

Many of the TB patients did not survive, unfortunately. But many of them did. And many of those who did stayed here.

They brought their families here, found jobs and homes, and settled down to become a part of the community. They contributed to the sometimes astonishing diversity of interests and cultures that are so much a part of Montford and of Asheville.

Toward the end of the 1920s, it became evident that the

Montford area had entered a decline, a decline that steepened sharply when the Depression hit.

The signs of decay were slight at first. Some homes didn't get as much paint as they needed; landscaping showed signs of neglect.

Some Montford residents who had the money and the inclination emigrated to places like North Asheville and Biltmore Forest.

Then large residences changed hands and the new owners often chopped them up into small apartments or made boarding houses of them.

Not all the old-line Montford residents left, of course. Some stayed and maintained their properties, even when to do so involved personal sacrifices.

But it was plain that unless something happened, the Montford neighborhood was destined to become a slum.

A few years ago something did happen the Montford Community Club was organized.

Composed of old residents of Montford, new residents of Montford, and some people who fall in between, the club started a campaign to preserve and restore the neighborhood.

It organized clean-up and paint-up campaigns. It lobbied members of city council for neighborhood improvement. It did all that it could to prevent commercial encroachment on the area.

The club's efforts, some of them keyed to federally funded programs designed to improve neighborhoods, began to bear fruit.

The neighborhood got park improvements, street improvements, water, and sewer service improvements, a new recreation center and an increased awareness in the neighborhood of the fact that something good could be done in Montford.

A couple of years ago some members of the club started a campaign to get the entire neighborhood listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

It was not an easy project. It was necessary to do an enormous amount of research and to inventory virtually every building in the area.

But with some enthusiastic help from the N.C. Department of Cultural Resources and officials of the city of Asheville, the job was done and last December the area was declared a national historic neighborhood.



TARGET OF AN EFFORT by the Preservation Society of Asheville and Buncombe County is the Coleman House, located at the "head of Montford." The society is trying to reserve and renovate the historic home. (Staff Photos by June Glenn Jr.)

The designation means that the neighborhood is relatively (but not absolutely) free of the peril of being cut up to make way for large public works projects such as freeways.

And it means that residents of the area can qualify for financial help in preserving and restoring homes in the area that otherwise would not be available to them.

In the end, however, the fate of Montford, as one area resident said, still rests on the

willingness of the residents there to work hard to preserve a special place in which to live.

But other agencies are helping, too.

Less than a year ago the Coleman House, now in a sad state of disrepair, came on the real estate market. The Preservation Society of Asheville and Buncombe County, a relatively new organization, acted to save the house.

After negotiations with the bank that is responsible for the sale of the house, the society obtained a \$14,500 grant which it used to buy some time for the Coleman House.

The society is now, on its own, looking for a buyer who will agree to restore the house.

The property is zoned for commercial use and the society is reconciled to the fact that the building must be used for a business property. But it doesn't want to see the Coleman House demolished in the process.

As part of its campaign to save and restore the Coleman House, the society has decided to earmark some of the proceeds from its second annual Heritage Week to that purpose.

Heritage Week will start April 30. A program of public events is planned that will extend over two weeks. And the effort to preserve the old building at the "head of Montford" will benefit.

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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 Kelly Ross Terry at krtgraphicdesign@gmail.com, 230-7439 for more information.