

HistoricTM
Oakwood

Welcome!

Written and produced by:



THE SOCIETY FOR THE PRESERVATION OF
HISTORIC OAKWOOD

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The Society for the Preservation of Historic Oakwood (SPHO) is a nonprofit organization
dedicated to the preservation of the Historic Oakwood District.

All residents and property owners in the City of Raleigh's Historic Oakwood District
are automatically members.

Welcome to Oakwood!

*You have moved to an extraordinary place
and we are glad you're here.*

This pamphlet highlights what makes our neighborhood so special, provides some need-to-know information about living in Oakwood, and explains the many ways you can participate in your new neighborhood.



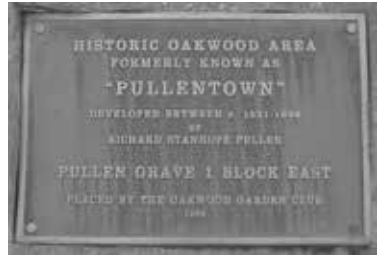
Mordecai House, Mimosa Street, Raleigh, NC, c.1900-1920, Aunt Missouri and a baby in a carriage in front. From General Negative Collection, State Archives of North Carolina.



Lane Street Paving 1916; State Archives of North Carolina.

OAKWOOD'S HISTORY

At the time of the Civil War, what is now Oakwood was the northeastern outskirts of the small town of Raleigh. It was woods and fields, mostly owned by the Mordecai family, and became a campground for Sherman's Union troops in April of 1865. In the 1870s,



the Mordecais sold off lots for development. Some of the houses in these years were built in the Italianate style, with arched windows and bracketed cornices, or the French-inspired Second Empire style, with mansard roofs. But most houses were built in the North Carolina vernacular style, with sawnwork detail. Most were built of heart of yellow pine, with roofs of tin or wooden shingles. The streets were dirt, but lined with trees. Most people had vegetable gardens and kept livestock.

By the 1890s, Oakwood had become a fashionable suburb, with mule-drawn streetcars leading to downtown and to nearby Brookside Park, which had a pond, carousel and dance pavilion. The streets were lit with gaslights, and there were water pumps on the corners. Houses were built in the Queen Anne style, with steep slate roofs, gables and towers, turned woodwork, stained glass, and a rich palette of paint colors. The residents were a mixture of upper-middle-class to working-class folks: state officials, merchants, craftsmen, teachers and railroad men.

In the early 20th century, the streets of Oakwood were paved in "Belgian blocks" of Wake County granite. Streetcars and streetlights were electrified. Small shops opened on corners throughout the neighborhood. Houses were built in the Neoclassical Revival style, with classical columns, gables shaped like Greek pediments, leaded glass windows, and elegant pastel paint colors.

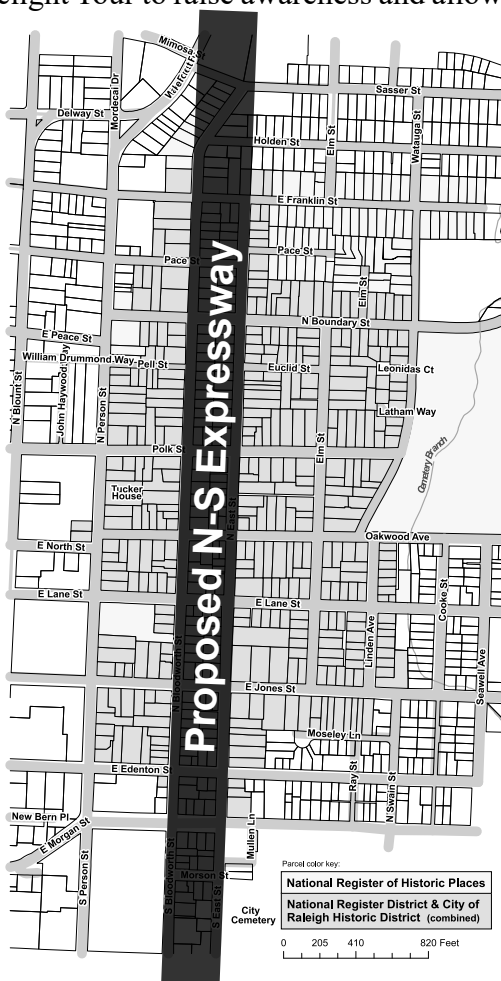
After World War I, most of Oakwood's remaining empty lots were filled with charming but modest Craftsman-style bungalows. Many residents took in boarders to help pay the rent or mortgage.

After World War II, the automobile allowed for more far-flung suburban-style development, and Oakwood became downright

unfashionable. The streetcar lines had been pulled up for scrap to help the war effort. Brookside Park closed down. Most of the wealthier families moved out and their old houses were made into apartments or rooming houses. Dilapidation set in. By the early 70's, this run-down neighborhood was considered of so little value that the State decided to demolish much of it to make way for the "North-South Expressway." But at the same time, new folks were beginning to move in and fall in love with Oakwood's fine design and craftsmanship. They joined with some remaining old families to oppose the expressway and **formed the Society for the Preservation of Historic Oakwood (SPHO) in 1972.** They held the first annual Candlelight Tour to raise awareness and allow people to see the wonderful interiors of these homes.

Oakwood was designated Raleigh's first National Register Historic District in 1974, and its first local Historic District in 1975. Over the next several decades, the old homes were restored one-by-one to their original charm and splendor.

Now Oakwood is once again a flourishing neighborhood, and its houses are lovingly cared for by dedicated homeowners. The official website for the SPHO, historicoakwood.org, is full of current and historical information about Oakwood and its residents.



HISTORIC DISTRICT

The Historic Oakwood neighborhood is a designated historic district by city zoning. Historic districts have restrictions on exterior modifications to all properties, structures and landscape.

Certificate of Appropriateness (COA)

Any exterior work where there is a change in the design, materials, or general appearance of the structure or grounds requires a COA approval prior to commencing work or obtaining other permits. COA applications and certificates are handled by the Raleigh Historic Development Commission (RHDC).

Submit your COA application early enough in the project schedule to modify work plans as needed and be sure to obtain approval prior to purchasing materials or commencing work. Minor works can be approved by city staff. Major works may require review by the commission.

Applications that must be reviewed and acted upon by commission members in a public hearing must be filed by the application deadline each month to be placed on the next month's COA agenda. The COA schedule is in The Oakwood News. The staff at the RHDC are an excellent resource about historic renovations and are available to answer questions about the COA process at 919-832-7238. Please note that you are responsible for obtaining any additional permits that City code or any law may require. For more detailed information and application forms, visit their website: rhdc.org.

To begin work without COA approval is a violation of City code. Please note, the SPHO does not provide COAs. They are granted by the City.



Tucker House moving, 1975; State Archives of North Carolina.

WAYS TO CONNECT

The Oakwood News

The Oakwood News is the newsletter delivered to your doorstep every month (except January). It is the official communication vehicle of the SPHO and includes information about SPHO meetings, volunteer opportunities, social events, Garden Club happenings, Children's Committee events, and more. It also includes contact information for SPHO board members and chairpersons of the various committees, as well as other helpful contact information.

SPHO Meetings

Every resident and every property owner in Oakwood is automatically a member of the Society for the Preservation of Historic Oakwood (SPHO). No fees or dues are required. The SPHO works to preserve the neighborhood and its history, organizes fun events and activities for adults and children, publishes the monthly Oakwood News, manages the listserv, undertakes improvement projects, and generally works to improve the safety and well-being of Oakwood residents. It is an entirely volunteer organization and is directed by an elected 16-member

board, which meets at 7:00 p.m. the second Thursday of every month at the Tucker House at 418 N. Person St. All SPHO members are invited to attend, and all are encouraged to get involved in SPHO initiatives.

The Listserv

The Historic Oakwood Users Group, aka “the listserv,” is an informal vehicle for up-to-date neighborhood news. Whether there is a missing pet, a leaking pipe or free symphony tickets, post a message and you are sure to get help from the listserv community. To join this email group, request membership using the application at HistoricOakwood.org/listserv.

The Oakwood Garden Club

The Oakwood Garden Club is comprised of residents who are interested in gardening and improving Oakwood. The Garden Club meets on the first Thursday of each month at members’ homes. The Garden Club presents an extremely popular Garden Tea and Tour of Oakwood in the spring. It also maintains the Vallie Henderson Park and Historic Oakwood signs, awards a Yard of the Month, sponsors a holiday decorating contest, and performs other functions in the neighborhood. The Garden Club welcomes all Oakwood residents regardless of their level of gardening skill (or the number of plants killed in the past!) See the Oakwood News for information about the next Garden Club meeting or event.

Social Events in Oakwood

The Social Committee organizes quarterly social events and welcomes volunteer help. See the Oakwood News for upcoming events as well as contact information for the chairs of the Social Committee. SPHO organized social events include:

- Samedi Gras celebration with gumbo and Mardi Gras beads
- Jazz Supper pot luck with live music in the spring
- Fourth of July parade and block party
- Fall pig pickin’ in the cemetery

Oakwood Athletic Club is a long-standing resident tradition. This tongue-in-cheek name for a monthly adult-only cocktail party refers to

doing eight-ounce curls – wine glasses mostly. All residents are invited to Athletic Club, which is held at a different neighbor’s home the last Sunday of each month (except December). Guests bring a dish to share and their own beverage. The September Athletic Club is the SPHO’s annual homecoming when we invite past residents to come back and catch up with us. Check the newsletter and listserv for announcements of the location.

Halloween

Oakwood is a true Halloween destination and we welcome families from around the city to our neighborhood to enjoy the decorations and the treats. You can expect up to 1,000 trick-or-treaters at your porch.

Children’s Events

The Children’s Committee organizes the annual Easter Egg hunt, the kids’ stations at the annual Samedi Gras party, the fall pig pickin’, and numerous other events throughout the year for the many children that live in Oakwood.

The Oakwood Common, located at the corners of East and Boundary Streets, is a city-maintained, fenced-in park with playground equipment.

The Historic Oakwood Candlelight Tour®

The SPHO’s largest event of the year is the Candlelight Tour, which was started in the 1970s as a way to fund the preservation of Oakwood. Since its humble origins with four houses on tour, it has grown to showcase 10-12 homes and is attended by thousands of visitors during the second weekend of December. Most of the neighborhood is involved in the tour, whether in decorating their home, volunteering to be hosts, helping sell tickets, or doing any of the many jobs needed for a successful tour. Volunteers receive a complimentary ticket for the tour and are invited to the After-Tour Party. Proceeds from the tour are used in a revolving fund to advance restoration and improvements in Oakwood and for the neighborhood’s many activities.



Historic Raleigh: The Women's Baptist College [now Meredith College] which stood at the corner of Edenton & Blount Streets, Raleigh, NC circa 1907 - later the Mansion Park Hotel. Purchased in 1951 by the State of North Carolina and demolished in 1967 for a parking lot. Today the site remains mostly a parking lot. Photo: State Archives of North Carolina.

LIVING IN OAKWOOD

Garbage Pickup

The City of Raleigh provides curbside garbage collection each Friday and recycling collection on alternating Fridays. All garbage must be placed in the green rolling trash cans provided by the city.

Recycling collection is every other week. Collection days are noted on the calendar in The Oakwood News. All recycling should be placed in the rolling blue recycling containers provided by the city.

[Starting July 2022] Yard waste collection is every other week - alternating with recycling. Collection days are noted on the calendar in The Oakwood News. All yard waste should be placed in the rolling brown containers provided by the city or biodegradable paper bags. Loose limbs and brush may be tied into bundles no longer than six feet.

Pets

Oakwood is filled with pet lovers and you will often see neighbors walking their dogs. **It is against the law for dogs and cats to run loose**

within the city limits. Please keep your dog leashed, your cat at home, and clean up after your pets.

City ordinances ban ALL dogs from the Oakwood Common as it is a designated children's playground. Oakwood Dog Park is conveniently located within one mile of Oakwood's boundaries at 910 Brookside Drive, and provides a safe area for your dog to run off-leash and interact with other dogs.

The Oakwood News periodically publishes pictures of the pet of the month. Be sure to nominate your special furry or scaly friend for this honor.

House Plaques and History

You may have noticed the beautiful bronze plaques on many of Oakwood's restored homes. These are provided at cost by the SPHO, and state the name and construction date of the house. If you would like to obtain a plaque for your home, see the Oakwood News for contact information for the Plaques Committee chair who can explain the process and criteria. Basic historic information on most properties is available in the Property Inventory on the SPHO's website: historicoakwood.org/property-inventory

Local Businesses

Oakwood is home to several diverse businesses, including restaurants, yoga studios, and law offices. The Oakwood Directory has a special section that lists contact information for businesses located within the neighborhood. There are restaurants, shops, salons, galleries, and other services along Edenton, Person, Franklin and Blount Streets, as well as at Seaboard Station, all within walking distance from anywhere in Oakwood. There are shops, restaurants, and services just beyond the edge of the neighborhood in Downtown Raleigh and Glenwood South. The Downtown Raleigh circulator bus, The R-Line, has stops on Wilmington and Peace Streets, also within walking distance of Oakwood. See your welcome basket for discount coupons for area businesses and an R-Line map.

Grocery Stores

There are many grocery stores convenient to Oakwood. Some of the closest stores are:

Publix - Peace Street

Food Lion - Raleigh Boulevard

Harris Teeter - Oberlin Road, Village District

Fresh Market - Woodburn Road, Village District

Weaver Street Market - Hargett Street

Costco - Wake Forest & Six Forks Roads

Trader Joe's - Wake Forest Road

Sam's Club - South Saunders Street

Whole Foods - Wade Avenue

Wegman's - Wake Forest Road

**We hope you come to love Oakwood and
become involved in its many activities.
See you 'round the neighborhood.**



416 Elm Street in Raleigh, NC c. 1970s. From the Archie and Vallie Henderson Photograph Collection, PhC.145. State Archives of North Carolina.



219 North East Street in Raleigh, NC c. 1970s. From the Archie and Vallie Henderson Photograph Collection, PhC.145. State Archives of North Carolina.

