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The source of Park Place photo on page 2 is unknown.

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Knox Heritage
Fountain City Homes
Trolley Tour

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A Brief History of Fountain City

In 1788, the State of North Carolina granted John Adair a 640-acre section of land in recognition of his services to his country. Land grant No. 28 gave him one square mile of wilderness land in Grassy Valley that extended from the present Fountain City Business Park to the Gresham Junior High School campus.

The city that would become Knoxville was born in 1786 when James White established White's Fort on the banks of the Tennessee River (then called the Holston) between First and Second Creeks. It was only 2 years later that John Adair (1732–1827) established Fort Adair on his land just one mile south of the area that would become central Fountain City many years later.

Adair’s Fort was designated a supply base for the Cumberland Guard, which was responsible for protecting settlers from North Carolina and Virginia as they moved toward the Cumberland Settlements at present-day Nashville. The fort stored corn, flour, pork, and beef to supply the families as they moved through the wilderness. The area was sparsely populated over its first century. Then Fountain Head Improvement Company received a charter giving it the right to develop a park and resort on July 1885. Stephenson and Getaz, architects and builders, drew up plans for a splendid hotel building three stories high with 40 to 50 rooms. Several guest cottages were planned and erected over the next few years. The Fountain Head Hotel, built overlooking the beautiful wooded park and campgrounds, was ready for occupancy in the spring of 1886.

Interest grew again when the Fountain Head Dummy Line made its first run in 1890. As transportation became faster and easier, Knoxville businessmen first built summer residences in Fountain City and later established year-round homes. Among those who built permanent homes here were John W. Hope, jeweler; Colonel J.C. Williams, coal magnate; W.T. Hall, clothier; and Sol George, department store owner.

The Dummy Line made a stop at Smith’s (Smithwood), and the busy Tazewell-Jacksboro Turnpike—a macadamized toll road—ran through Smithwood and Beverly. With better access and transportation, that area developed faster than the area around the lake and the park.

A Brief History of Fountain City, continued

The George, McMillan, Caldwell, Kesterson, Anderson, Tillery, Conner, Rochat, and Truan families, among others, built on or near Tazewell Pike.

A real estate boom developed in 1890, when Col. J.C. Woodward of Lexington, Kentucky, and a group of capitalists bought 431 acres of land in Fountain Head at a cost of $159,600. They launched an extensive advertising campaign in the Knoxville newspapers stressing pure water, beautiful trees, and a pleasant climate, prompting a number of new families to build homes around the Fountain Head Park area.

There was a lot happening in 1890 with the Dummy Line operating, the hotel open, and busy real estate sales. That same year, the United States Post Office was established, and the name changed to Fountain City to avoid confusion with another Tennessee town called Fountain Head in Sumner County.

The resort season of 1891 is remembered as the best season ever enjoyed by the Fountain Head Hotel. However, the Knoxville Blue Book (1894) listed only 70 permanent residents. No curative powers were claimed for the water from the Fountain Head Spring, as was the case with several resorts with mineral springs all over East Tennessee. Regardless of that, some of Knoxville’s most prominent families took advantage of the cool summer breezes, the hospitality, and the delicious 50-cent meals prepared by Mary Donahue.

Holbrook College opened in 1893 with an enrollment of more than 100 students and, by 1900, the central business district along Hotel Avenue was being developed. Central High School purchased the building and grounds of Holbrook College and opened there in 1906. By 1940, there were 40 businesses along Broadway alone. Slow but steady growth continued until the population had reached 30,000 by the time the suburb was annexed into the City of Knoxville in 1962.

Taken from Images of America—Fountain City by J.C. (Jim) Tumblin and C. Milton Hinshilwood

(continued on inside back cover)
In 1890, Colonel J.C. Woodward and a group of capitalists from Lexington, Kentucky, bought 431 acres at a cost of $159,600, plus the Fountain Head Hotel and the 14.1 acres surrounding it, including the park, for an additional $27,500. Colonel Woodward built his home in 1890 at a cost of $20,000 with the Baumann Brothers as architects and W.H. Dawn, Sr. as the contractor. In 1899, Woodard would build a home for his son Hu called Lakeview.

Colonel Woodard served as president of Knoxville Business College and later become involved with a custom publishing company and a company called Southern Canopy Company. Later Park Place was home to Matthew S. McClellan (1900–1909), Thomas Pruden, and J.C. Williams (1917–1980). The house was demolished in 1980 for a Target store.

In 1890, Colonel J.C. Woodward and a group of Lexington, Kentucky, capitalists founded the Fountain Head Land Company. By 1891, the group had designed the lake and under the supervision of Felix G. Phillips, a prominent local civil engineer, and had excavated, built the retaining walls, and impounded the heart-shaped lake.

In the fall and winter of 1985 and 1986, the lake was drained and refurbished. Currently, the Fountain City Lions Club maintains the lake.

Fountain City Lake
5300 North Broadway

Park Place/Woodward-Williams House
5101 Broadway
Adair Gardens was platted in 1920 as the Adair Gardens Subdivision. Its western terminus on Broadway, the location of streetcar tracks, and later bus lines, made it attractive as a commuter suburb.

The houses for Adair Gardens were built for speculation and building dates from early the 1920s into the early 1930s. Some of the many architectural styles in Adair Gardens include Tudor Revival, Colonial Revival, and Neoclassical.

**Adair Gardens Historic District**

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**Greenwood Cemetery**

Greenwood Cemetery was established by Dr. Reuben N. Kesterson (1858–1931) in 1900. When his first son Robert Neil (1887–1890) died from a childhood illness at age 3, Kesterson was so upset that he took a year off from his dental practice to travel nationwide seeking a model for the cemetery that would be his son’s final resting place. In 1900, Kesterson bought a 175-acre tract of land on Tazewell Pike and Greenwood Cemetery was established. Dr. Kesterson would relocate his son’s coffin to Greenwood from Old Gray Cemetery. A memorial for the son was erected in 1928—a 45-foot marble obelisk at his gravesite. At the time, the memorial was the second largest in the country, second to the 65-foot memorial at the gravesite of a member of the Rockefeller family. The marble for the memorial was quarried and milled in Georgia and shipped to Knoxville by rail and carried to the site by wagons. It is said that the monument was planned so it would be visible from the upstairs dormer windows of the Kesterwood home, a half mile away at 5116 Kesterwood Road. Many prominent Knoxvillians are buried here, including James Agee’s father, Ellen McClung Berry and members of the McClung family, George S. Dempster, C.B. Atkins, and Sol H. George. Knoxville’s old families used the cemetery when Old Gray began to be overcrowded. Later generations of Knoxville families moved to Highland Cemetery on Sutherland Avenue in the mid-to-late 20th century.
Dr. Charles L. Chumley and Marie Jones Chumley and their three children, Charles L. Jr., John, and Patricia, lived here. Dr. Chumley began his surgical practice in Knoxville in 1929 and became a pioneer in brain surgery in East Tennessee. John Chumley became an internationally acclaimed artist with paintings in the permanent collections in ten art museums and in the American Embassy in Moscow.

Shannondale Presbyterian Church was built in 1886 by Stephenson & Getaz soon after the congregation was established. Stephenson & Getaz advertised themselves as builders, contractors, and architects from 1886 until 1890. The firm was actually established in 1882 as an architectural manufacturing company where shops were spread out over four buildings for the manufacturing of doors, window sashes, flooring, ceilings, weather board, brackets, molding, mantles, and seasoned lumber. With 32 employees, it was thought to be one of the most extensive business ventures of its kind. Their venture into the field of architecture followed their success in winning the design competition for the Knox County Courthouse.
Dr. Reuben N. Kesterson’s home, called Bedford Oaks, was built in 1928 in Smithwood near the second Tazewell Pike entrance to Greenwood Cemetery. It is said that the dormer windows on the home were built to permit a view of his son’s monument, a tall obelisk about 1,000 yards away. Kesterson was born in New Tazewell on July 12, 1858. Educated in local Claiborne County schools and Mossy Creek Academy, Kesterson would go on to receive his dental degree from the University of Louisville Medical School Dental Department in 1883. Kesterson opened his first office in Tazewell but, after a few years, moved his office to Knoxville in 1887. His office was in the East Tennessee National Bank Building at 505 S. Gay Street. It is said that Dr. Kesterson was the first college-educated dentist in Knoxville and became one of the first deans of the Dental Department of the Tennessee Medical College, then located in Knoxville. It is also said that Kesterson bought one of the first Cadillac automobiles straight from the Detroit factory in 1903 and had the parts shipped to Knoxville and assembled. Dr. Kesterson died December 4, 1931. The house was later home to City Councilman, Howard Kesley.

The Humbard house was built in 1919. John Humbard was a road construction superintendent for projects on several continents. Some of his local projects included the road from Pigeon Forge to Newfound Gap (which is said to have been his most challenging project) and included the Panamanian Trans-Isthmian Highway, the stone bridge over Linville Gorge, and the Blue Ridge Skyway between Blowing Rock and Linville, North Carolina. Humbard was also in charge of the construction of the 1,563-mile Alaskan Highway from Fairbanks to Dawson, Alaska, and various projects in Turkey, Central America, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands.

In 1951, Humbard was appointed Director of the Imperial Ethiopian Highway Authority for a $9,000,000 road building project.
Gibbs Drive Historic District

Once known as Jackson Boulevard, the first house to have been constructed on Gibbs Drive predates the subdivision. The 1910 Colonial Revival house at 3047 Gibbs Drive was built on the corner of Jackson (now Gibbs) and Jacksboro Pike. That same year, a group of real estate and mortgage company partners and investors had the land surveyed and subdivided. The subdivision restrictions required that only single family houses be built. Throughout the rest of the second decade of the 20th century, houses began to spring up along the new development. It is obvious that the automobile played an important role in Gibbs Drive development, as evident in the number of garages that were constructed alongside or behind the houses. Architectural styles found along Gibbs Drive are bungalows and craftsman-influenced houses; revival styles, including colonial, Dutch, and Tudor; and minimal traditional.

Carlos Campbell House
2837 Gibbs Drive

The house at 2837 Gibbs Drive was built around 1916, and Carlos Campbell moved with his family to this house in 1922. Campbell was one of the five individuals who had major roles in the establishment of the Great Smoky Mountain National Park. He was also a founding member of the Smoky Mountain Hiking Club.

Carlos Campbell co-authored the book *Great Smoky Mountain Wildflowers*, which is now expanded and revised and in its fifth edition, and *Birth of a National Park in the Great Smoky Mountains*, written in 1960 and reprinted three times.
The Dempster-Francis House was built in 1924. George Dempster lived in the house from 1929 until about 1933/34. Dempster lost the house during the Great Depression when the property was auctioned off. During the Depression, his construction company and other business ventures went bankrupt.

Dempster would later become Knoxville’s city manager, councilman, and mayor from 1952 until 1956. He is best known as the inventor of the Dempster Dumpster.

Coal magnate Louis Francis lived in the house in the 1930’s, and his daughter, Margaret Francis lived there until 2001.

Savage Gardens were designed by Arthur Savage, who was known as the “Father of Rock Gardening in Knoxville.” The bungalow-style house was built in 1914 and purchased by the Savages in 1917.

Savage Gardens contains many rare and beautiful plants, many of which are unknown to the East Tennessee area. Savage created the rock garden over many years, and this style of design was used to highlight the many different varieties of plants. Some of the stone structures designed were The Stone House (1926), Round Water Tower (c. 1926), Hexagonal Water Tower (1918), Oriental Pagoda (pump house) (1926), Stone walls (1921), and the Pools (c. 1921 and 1926).

Savage House and Gardens is currently owned by Bill Dohm and Patty Cooper and is the home of Garden Montessori School.
C.J. McClung (1866–1932) was a prominent businessman and was partners with his brother Calvin M. McClung in the wholesale hardware business. Their company was called C.M. McClung and Company.

The house was built on Black Oak Ridge in the Grove Park addition with a spectacular view of downtown Knoxville and the Great Smoky Mountains. The house later became home to William Walkup, the president of Home Federal Bank. The house is currently owned by Raymond M. Fuller.

Judge John Green (1859–1957) built this house in 1922. It is a Barber & McMurry design. The Green family built their house on the site of their first home, which was also called Ridgeview. Green was the Chairman of the Fountain City Park Commission for many years and was on the Knox County Library Board for 72 years.

Green married Ellen Marshall McClung, daughter of Frank H. McClung—Knoxville merchant and descendent of Knoxville founder James White—and sister to Charles McClung. For many years, the Green’s permanent home was located on Laurel Avenue in Fort Sanders, and they would spend summers at Ridgeview. The house is now home to Dr. Joe Black, Jr., a well-known retired pediatrician.
Belcaro was home to Judge Hugh Lawson McClung (1858-1938). McClung, great grandson of James White, founder of Knoxville, was a member of the Board of Trustees of East Tennessee University and built a large law practice with his brother-in-law, Major Thomas Webb. McClung also invested in real estate and coal. McClung was one of the wealthiest men in Knoxville when he retired in 1908. In his later years, he bought land on top of Black Oak Ridge and built his home, Belcaro. James Chillman was the architect with Ralph E. Griswold as the landscape architect. The real driving force in the planning, design, and building of Belcaro was his daughter Ellen McClung. The house was completed in 1922 at an estimated cost of $175,000. The house and gardens were the site of the wedding of Ellen McClung to Thomas Berry in 1928. While the house was Georgian Revival in style, the gardens were inspired by Italian gardens, especially Villa Gamveria at Settignano near Florence. When McClung died in 1938, he left the home to his wife and daughter. Ellen McClung Berry lived in it until she moved in 1953. The house was torn down in 1996 and a new house was built.

Gresham Middle School
(formerly Central High School)
500 Gresham Road

When the new Central High School was built in 1971, the former high school became Gresham Middle School, named for the venerable principal of Central from 1919 to 1947, Hassie K. Gresham. Holbrook Normal College occupied the site from 1893 to 1900.
Colonel J.C. Woodward built Lakeview for his son Hu Woodward (1880–1950) sometime in the late 1800s. Some sources state that the house was built in 1890; tax records indicate the house was built in 1899. Woodward and his family, including Hu, would move to 305 E. Fifth Avenue around 1903. Later in his adult life, Hu would split his time between his winter residence in West Palm Beach, Florida, and his summer home in Montclair, New Jersey. Hu died in 1950 and was buried in Montclair. Today, the home is extensively remodeled and much of the original house remains as the core structure of the Gentry-Griffey Funeral Chapel. Dr. Gideon H. Morgan bought the house around 1903. H.A. Rogers owned the house for a short time and then sold it to Dover Williams (1874–1924) in 1917. Williams and his brother John were owners of coal mines in Harlan and Coxton, Kentucky, and commuted back and forth on the train. The Williams family lived in the house until 1943 when it was converted into apartments. L. Glenard Gentry (1904–1971) bought the house in 1948 and remodeled the structure into the current Gentry-Griffey Funeral home.

Finished in 1886, the Fountain Head Hotel was a popular attraction for day and overnight visits to the park and lake. There were about 50 rooms and lodging started at $2.00 per night.

Not like any other hotel during this era, the Fountain Head Hotel had a bathroom on each of the three floors with hot and cold running water. Meals were served for 50 cents, and an Italian band played every night. The band marched down the long steps by the side of the spring to give concerts from the bandstand in the park at 6:30 p.m. each night.
Fountain City had excellent transportation provided by the Dummy Line. It was built in 1889, and the first train started running in 1890 and continued until 1905.

The Dummy Line ran from Central Market (now Emory Park), and the northern terminus was “The Station” at Hotel Avenue and Broadway. The round trip took an hour and cost 15 cents (10 cents one way).

Eventually, there were three engines, seven passenger cars, and four freight cars. At its height, as many as 10,000 passengers rode the Dummy Line per day, from 5 a.m. until midnight. The downtown terminal was just north of Old Gray Cemetery.