



HOLSTON HILLS DOGWOOD TRAIL

“Old McDonald had a farm, and on this farm,”.... A country club with a golf course grew, surrounded by stately homes and a winding river. The Joseph McDonald family purchased 300 acres of land north of the Holston River in 1894, which had been granted to Robert McCree from the State of North Carolina almost 100 years earlier. When Mr. McDonald died, his widow sold the farm to James Shea and less than 10 years later it was sold to Dr. Herbert Acuff. A prominent physician, Dr. Acuff had a vision for developing Holston Hills into a planned golfing community in the country.

Historic Holston Hills, located east of downtown, was the vision of businessmen and investors in 1925 to develop a 180-acre country club, golf course and stately residences along the curves of the Holston River. The group sold shares after subdividing the land for home sites. Shareholders drew numbered choices for home sites from a hat, and their holding purchase included membership to the country club.

The clubhouse with its’ rambling English Colonial style was designed by nationally known architect Charles Barber and the 18-hole golf course was designed by the world famous golf course architect Donald Ross.

Scattered generously amid the rolling hills is a varied mix of architectural housing styles from Colonial Revival, Italianate Revival, and Tudor built in the 1930’s to the single-story ranch style of the 1950’s.

The different eras of construction are easily recognizable as you travel through the neighborhood and the absence of conformity bestows the individualized character of each house. Many homes have their own private vistas of the Smoky Mountains, in fact from the parking lot of the country club on a clear day one can see Mount LeConte.

A centerpiece along the trail is the Holston Hills Community Club Park situated at the corner of Holston Hills Road and Chilhowee Drive. This park is home to approximately 39 dogwoods; many of the young trees have been planted through Dogwood Arts’ ‘Bazillion Blooms Program’ as we plant for the future to replace older trees which have succumbed to age or disease. The Historic Holston Hills Community Club in was formed in 1937 by neighborhood women as a group for gardening and socialization. The park was granted to the group in 1951 and the relationship with the Dogwood Arts Festival began in 1956 as the site of the annual ceremonial ribbon cutting in the park. This Dogwood Trail, established in 1956, celebrates its’ 60th anniversary this year as Dogwood Arts’ Featured Trail. Today, the park hosts egg hunts, garden club in-service meetings, and a holiday tree lighting for the community.

As you follow the trail, 4815 Westover Terrace built in 1927, is one of the original homes of the neighborhood. At 4900 Westover Terrace, also built in 1927, was the home of Edward M. Vestal. His family company, Vestal Lumber and Manufacturing Company, was the business for which the Vestal Community in south Knoxville was named. Crestwood, arguably one of the most picturesque streets in the neighborhood, has many of the original homes built in 1927. Of interest is: the home at 5518 Crestwood, believed to be the first home completed in 1927, a brick Tudor Revival style home at 5404 (1928), and an Italianate Revival style house at 5421 Holston Hills Rd (1928). The Barber & McMurray stone tudor house (1927) was built for the owner of Salomone Marble Company, who contracted the marble construction for the National Gallery and Supreme Court Building in





Washington, D.C., as well as other notable buildings in New York City. Moving west along Holston Hills Road and across from the country club's pool is a brick Tudor with a recognizable "turret" built in 1939. During this same year (1939) Mr. William Chambers built a stone and house overlooking the river at 5610 Holston Hills road, Mr. Chambers has been referred to as "the father of Oak Ridge", as he recommended the location of that secret city to the US Army and helped oversee the atomic project.

At the corner of 5600 Holston Hills Road and Cliffside Lane stands a three-story home which is the site of Joseph McDonald's Idle Hour Creamery built in 1910. McDonald sold his products by the brand Idle Hour Farm Sanitary Dairy.

Holston Hills has been home for people from all walks of life and professions. There have been presidents of colleges, such as former UT's Ed Boling; family businessmen, such as Fred Rose, Sam Beaty, George Reagan William Johnson; many physicians Dr. Thomas Stevens founder of Knoxville Orthopedic Clinic; Olympic champion diver, Frank Dempsey; politicians such as the late John J. Duncan Sr., who was mayor then U.S. Congressman while he lived in Holston Hills.

Acknowledgements: Sandy Stevens-Woodland history of Holston Hills

Today, this thriving community, with its close proximity to downtown Knoxville and panoramic river and mountain views is a treasure. We are happy to welcome McConnell Golf to our neighborhood and look forward to their role in our community.

Dogwood Arts promotes & celebrates our region's art, culture, and natural beauty. For more information and a full calendar of events, visit dogwoodarts.com

