

Telling Our Story

ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MEMBERS 2005

ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2005



Celebrating the Olmsted vision for parks and parkways throughout our region are curators of the BHS exhibition: Marjorie White, Heather McArn and Scott Fuller (above). On hand to welcome patrons to the Library Gallery at Birmingham Public Library are: Lillie Fincher, BHS Trustee; Barbara Sirmans, BPL Director and Rebecca Doremus, BHS volunteer (below).



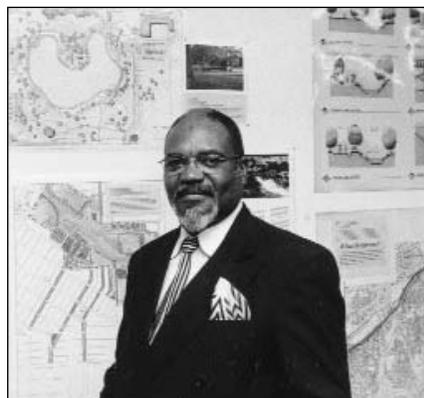
- Increased the Endowment to \$565,000 to perpetuate the Society
- Reprinted Olmsted Brothers' 1925 report *A Park System for Birmingham*
- Organized *The Olmsted Vision-Parks for Birmingham*, an exhibition analyzing the impact of Olmsted planning on regional development
- Co-sponsored a symposium on park and greenway projects
- Transcribed correspondence between Birmingham park advocates and the Olmsted park planning firm, 1906-1938
- Completed National Register of Historic Places nominations for the Birmingham Civil Right District, Center Street-Dynamite Hill District, Graymont School and New Pilgrim Baptist Church, all properties rated as possibly "nationally significant"
- Documented Phillips High School and worked for its preservation
- Celebrated early 20th Century women artists with talks and an exhibition at our Annual Meeting
- Conducted Downtown Discovery Tours for hundreds of school children
- Conducted Preservation Awards to celebrate preservation heroes and tour city center lofts
- Hosted the annual Heritage Society party at a distinguished residence
- Reprinted *True Tales of Birmingham* and *The Ghost of Sloss Furnaces*
- Distributed publications nationwide



Wendy Jackson, Director of the Black Warrior-Cahaba River Land Trust, points to the proposed Red Mountain Park (the former TCI-U.S. Steel Spaulding and Ishkooda red ore mines) for which the Jefferson County Commission recently voted funds for the Land Trust to acquire as a future 1,000+ acre mountain top park . . . a park recommended by the 1925 Olmsted report.



Wayne Hester and son Summers check out the Village Creek Greenway project.



City Planner Victor Blackledge shares drawings of the Patton and Ensley-South Pratt Parks, new parks built in the floodplains of Village Creek, a streamside use the Olmsted Park report of 1925 encouraged.



Exhibition visitors, Alice Bowsher and BPL Associate Director Renee Blaylock, found much to discuss.

Celebrating Preservation Heroes



The Phoenix Building, which fills nearly an entire city lot along Second Avenue North hosted the 2005 Preservation Awards presentation. It was built as headquarters for Southern Bell. Phoenix Arts, LLC — a partnership formed by Jeremy, Anna and Ben Erdreich and Carl Hess — returned the terra-cotta clad structure to spectacular new life and filled its 70 high-ceiled lofts with enthusiastic tenants.



2005 Award winners included Sheila and Ira Chaffin for their Cobb Lane Bed and Breakfast on 19th Street in Five Points.



John Morley, Cosette Brown and Harper Rape of J. J. Morley Enterprises, Inc. for restoration of the terra cotta on the Phoenix Building facade.



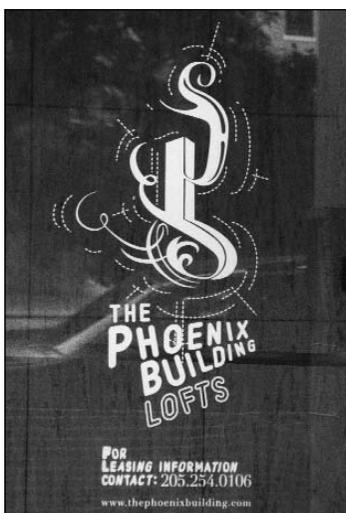
School Board Member Virginia Volker, Superintendent Dr. Wyman Shiver and neighborhood president Angela Anderson for working to save the historic Robinson School in the East Lake neighborhood.



Also feted were Stuart Oates, Director of the Oak Hill Memorial Association; Steve Coleman, President and Trustees: Cathy Adams, David Herring and Penny Cunningham — who commissioned and are implementing a preservation plan for this historic cemetery.



Andrea and Jim Bennett, Vicki Kes and Rusty Crouthers accept accolades for decades of superb work restoring the Civil War-era Tannehill Furnaces and developing the Iron and Steel Museum of Alabama, with its new exhibits that tell the story of ironmaking and industry in the antebellum South.



Loft tours followed awards.



Building Stewardship through Education



Gathered for the Annual Meeting at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens are speakers: UAB art historian Dr. Heather McPherson, collector and connoisseur Dr. Julius Linn Jr. and Marjorie White. They reviewed the national and international art context in which early 20th century Birmingham women became successful, professional artists and strong advocates for the arts in the city.



Kaydee Erdreich Breman and Debbie and Lewis Burks Jr. enjoyed learning about *Women Artists of Birmingham, 1890-1950* at the exhibition at the Gardens . . .



. . . as did Trustees Douglas Stockham, Bo Grisham and Stewart Dansby.

Sam Frazier (right) opened "Woodside," his Belle Mina estate to the Heritage Society for a fabulous evening soiree.



Continuing decades of research on Birmingham's Civil Rights legacy, historians Mark Shelby and Gene Ford and photographer John Lieb documented Phillips High School, finding it an architectural treasure, remarkably intact after 80 years of daily use. Based on its architectural excellence and Civil Rights associations, the team recommends Phillips for submission as a National Historic Landmark, a site significant to the history of our nation.



National Historic Landmark status was officially conferred on Bethel Baptist Church at a November press conference at which senior historian Frank Miele of the National Park Service presented the official bronze plaque to the church. Pictured in this *Birmingham News* photograph by Beverly Taylor are, left to right: the Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth, pastor of Bethel from 1953 to 1961 when Bethel served as the headquarters for the Birmingham Civil Rights Movement, the Rev. Thomas Wilder, Frank Miele, Odessa Woolfolk and Marjorie White.



The historic New Pilgrim Baptist Church, a major Civil Rights church under the leadership of the Rev. Nelson Smith Jr. and now within the UAB campus, has been submitted to the National Register with a rating of "nationally significant."