

1975

ABOUT THE NEIGHBORHOOD
NEWSLETTER

What you are now reading is going "in house" to about 300 addresses in Oakwood. This is a new method of getting news to Oakwood residents. Names and addresses were updated and put on a computerized mailing system this fall. Our new status as a non-profit organization allows us to take advantage of the economy of bulk rate mailing.

THE 1975 CHRISTMAS TOUR

The Society will sponsor its fourth Christmas tour of Oakwood homes on Saturday, December 13 and Sunday, December 14. Homes will be open from 1:00 to 6:00 P.M. on both days. Our Oakwood-Mordecai meeting house will be open for the first time and will serve as a center for refreshments and music.

These thoughts from a 1972 book, BUYING AND RENOVATING A HOUSE IN THE CITY by Deirdre Stanforth and Martha Stamm seem good ones for Oakwood people to think about:

"A pioneer is a trend setter, not a status seeker. He has to have abundant self-confidence and the courage of his convictions."



MEMBER NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION • MEMBER HISTORIC PRESERVATION SOCIETY OF NORTH CAROLINA

Society for the Preservation of Historic Oakwood

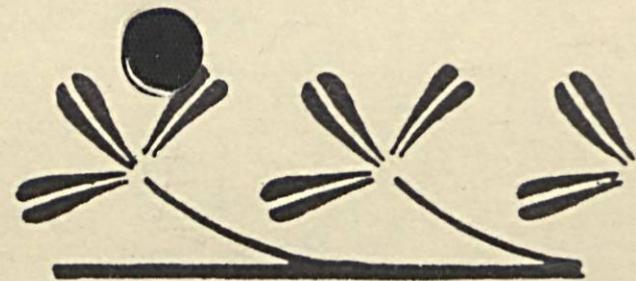
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THE OAKWOOD NEWSLETTER





1975

ANNUAL MEETING ON THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 13 at 7:30 P.M.

The Society's annual meeting will be on Thursday, November 13 at Fuller Memorial Baptist Church at 800 North Bloodworth Street. Election of officers for 1976 will be the primary purpose of the meeting. The Society's Nominating Committee has nominated for 1976:

Taylor McMillan for *Chairman*
Mrs. Carolyn Parlato for *Vice Chairman*
Ms. Ann Reed for *Corresponding Secretary*
Miss Mamie Bridgers for *Recording Secretary*
Mrs. Linda Sipe for *Treasurer*
Mrs. Vallie Henderson for *Historian*
Harvey Bumgardner for *Director*
Mrs. Dixie Crew for *Director*
Mrs. Bobbie Duddley for *Director*
Bruce MacDougal for *Director*
Miss Maggie Sears for *Director*

The four Directors with one year of their two-year terms remaining are:

Mrs. Barbara Moody
Jim McCloud
Gary Norton
Mrs. Ruth Little-Stokes

Please mark Thursday, November 13 on your calendar. There will be no further notice of this meeting. TIME: 7:30 P.M.

HISTORIC RALEIGH DAY, SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26

Because of growing interest in local history and in historic preservation such as that in Oakwood and Boylan Heights, the Historical Publications Section of Division of Archives and History of the Department of Cultural Resources and the Wake County Public Libraries will hold a "Historic Raleigh Day" on Sunday, October 26. The Society's Board of Directors endorsed this event at its September meeting. A walking tour of Oakwood will begin around 2:00 P.M. If you own a flag, this is a fine time to display it. For more specific information, call Jim Baucom at Olivia Raney Library.

WPTF TALK SHOW ON TUESDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 21

In connection with Historic Raleigh Day, radio station WPTF will host a talk show. Interested listeners will have the opportunity to call in and voice their opinions on such topics as, "Is there a need for preserving the older neighborhoods of Raleigh?" This program will help advertise the events of October 26 and will include special guests.

THE OAKWOOD HISTORIC DISTRICT

In June of this year the Raleigh City Council legally recognized the value of Oakwood by creating the city's first Historic District. This is a special type of zoning which adds architectural standards to existing regulations.



HOW THE HISTORIC DISTRICT ORDINANCE AFFECTS OAKWOOD RESIDENTS

Before any outside alteration can be made and before a building permit for exterior changes can be issued, a certificate of appropriateness must be obtained. Application for this certificate is requested from the City Planning Department. A Historic Districts Commission, comprised of nine members who are appointed by Raleigh City Council, must review any exterior architectural change to be made. This Commission will issue or deny a certificate for the changes. The new ordinance not only applies to houses and structures, but also to streets, sidewalks, utility elements, and large trees. Historic districts are not unique to Raleigh. There are hundreds of such districts throughout the country which were created to encourage the revitalization and preservation of valuable architecture, mostly in inner-city areas. If you have specific questions regarding this new ordinance, answers are available from the Raleigh Planning Department at 755-6750.

PLAQUES FOR OAKWOOD HOUSES

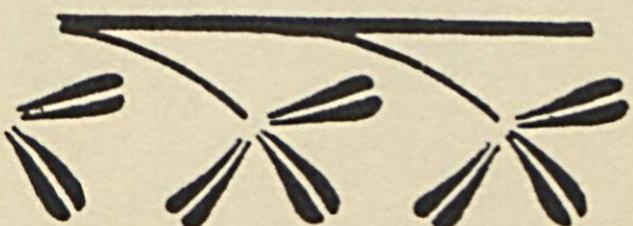
In September, the Board of Directors created a standing committee to administer its newly-adopted guidelines for issuance of plaques. The approved style is the same that has been used for the past 18 months or so by a number of Oakwood homeowners. It will be sanctioned by the Raleigh Historic Districts Commission. Future changes in the design, of course, are possible; but they must be approved by the Board of Directors. Plaques are very helpful to Oakwood tourists. With the high level of interest in our area, we do encourage the display of plaques especially on those houses currently featured on the "Walking Tour Of Historic Oakwood."

HOW DO HOMES RATE PLAQUES?

The main criterion is that the house be at least 50 years old. Deeds, title records, old maps, postal records, fire department records, and statements from recognized experts are a few of the sources through which age of a structure can be dated. By the way, the 50-year-old standard is what is also used by the National Register of Historic Places. Suggestions were obtained, as well, from the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Mrs. Bruce MacDougal (Jill) is Chairperson of the Plaque Committee and she is in the process of organizing it. She may be reached at 834-5952.

FIRST GENERAL NEWSLETTER

In late October the Society will mail out its first general newsletter. This newsletter will go to about 1700 addresses. This number includes not only Oakwood residents, but names and addresses of Raleigh people who have supported Oakwood since the Society's beginning. The publication will contain a brief history of the organization and what it has accomplished during its three years of existence, plus some general newsworthy items.



→ 1976 (beg. of)
1975

Society for the Preservation of Historic Oakwood

Post Office Box 11137/Raleigh, North Carolina 27604

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Oakwood
Autumn Nineteen Hundred Seventy Five



Raleigh's Oakwood. Oakwood is Raleigh's oldest intact residential neighborhood. Its houses were built largely between the years immediately following the Civil War and the beginning of World War I—a nice catalog of Victorian variety in architecture. Oakwood's boundaries are Person Street on the west, Watauga and Linden on the east; and by the Society's definition, Jones Street on the south and Franklin Street on the north.

How the Society Began.

The Society began under the most unpromising of circumstances. It was formed in October 1972 to save Oakwood from an expressway which would have paved over the neighborhood. Oakwood had for years suffered typical central-city decay, but by 1972 eight of its steadfast old houses had been



Second Empire house, the Bullard home on East Jones Street.

the state. They got the endorsement of Wake Environment. Both local newspapers publicized the preservation effort sympathetically.

By October 31 the Society had a name and a charter and by November 18, its first Board of Directors. Historic Oakwood at least had a structure for tackling what seemed impossible obstacles.

Since that unpromising beginning, these things have happened.

The first victory for the infant Society came on November 22, 1972 when City Council adopted the downtown revitalization plan; but, heeding pleas to save Oakwood, omitted the expressway from it. At each of its three Christmases, the

Society has sponsored a tour of Oakwood homes, an event that promises to become an annual one. In August 1974 the Society held a "New Look at Historic Oakwood" featuring homes, gardens, and fashions. During these four events well over 3000 people came to visit an area that was renewing itself.

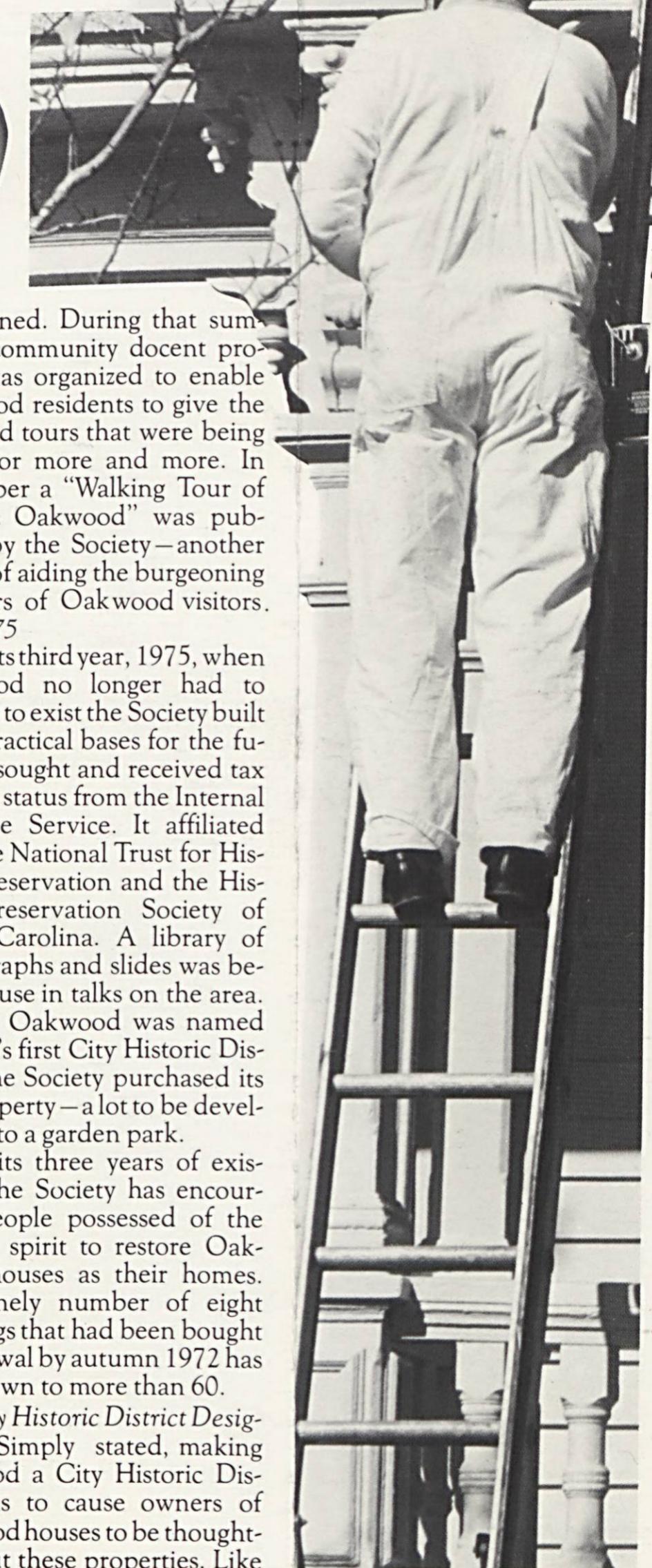
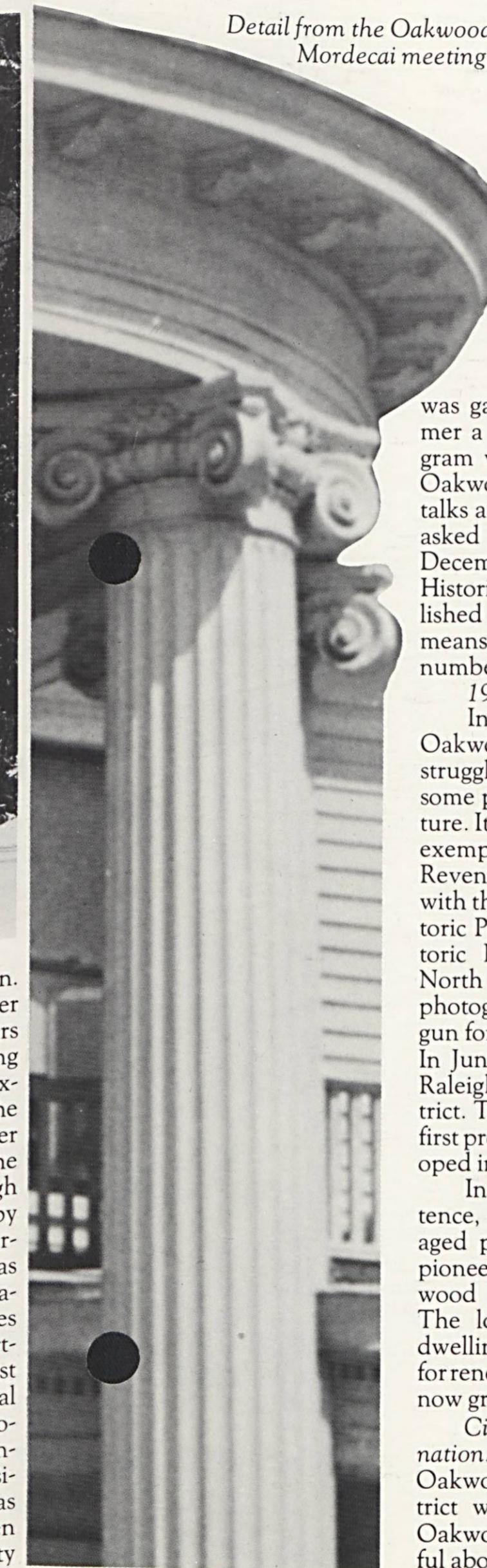
Early in 1973, with a grant from the North Carolina Committee for Continuing Education in the Humanities, Meredith College made historical and sociological studies of Oakwood. This came as a badly-needed lift in prestige for a neighborhood so precariously placed. Interest in Oakwood grew, but there was widespread fear of the ruinous highway as well. For many months few

houses were sold for restoration.

With the coming of summer in 1974 the hundreds of hours of citizen action began coming to fruition. On June 3, the expressway was removed from the map by City Council. Another milestone was reached on the 25th of that month. Through

the nomination prepared by North Carolina Division of Archives and History, Oakwood as a district, was placed on the National Register of Historic Places by the United States Department of the Interior. On August 19 new zoning in residential density, long sought by the Society, was achieved. From zoning permitting 20 to 30 residences per acre, Oakwood was downzoned to permit only ten per acre and further stability

Detail from the Oakwood-Mordecai meeting house.



Restored home of William Edwards and Herbert Zelmer. 321 E. Lane St.

was gained. During that summer a community docent program was organized to enable Oakwood residents to give the talks and tours that were being asked for more and more. In December a "Walking Tour of Historic Oakwood" was published by the Society—another means of aiding the burgeoning numbers of Oakwood visitors.

1975

In its third year, 1975, when Oakwood no longer had to struggle to exist the Society built some practical bases for the future. It sought and received tax exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service. It affiliated with the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Historic Preservation Society of North Carolina. A library of photographs and slides was begun for use in talks on the area. In June Oakwood was named Raleigh's first City Historic District. The Society purchased its first property—a lot to be developed into a garden park.

In its three years of existence, the Society has encouraged people possessed of the pioneer spirit to restore Oakwood houses as their homes. The lonely number of eight dwellings that had been bought for renewal by autumn 1972 has now grown to more than 60.

City Historic District Designation. Simply stated, making Oakwood a City Historic District was to cause owners of Oakwood houses to be thoughtful about these properties. Like

the district, the owners took on new status and have become keepers of some of Raleigh's architectural history. The ordinance requires that a certificate of appropriateness be obtained by the owner before exterior changes can be made to a structure. Our natural heritage of large trees is also protected. This is administered by the Raleigh Historic Districts Commission.

The Garden Park.

The lot at the corner of Linden and Oakwood Avenues was purchased by the Society for development into a garden park. From Wake County Beautification Committee has come a grant of \$500.00 for the enhancement of the property. Application has been made for a Bicentennial grant. The first gifts of labor and of plants have come from Oakwood people. A landscape architect was employed who drew plans for what is to be a bit of green loveliness in the central-city.

The Oakwood-Mordecai Meeting House.

Months of creative planning brought about the community center needed by the Oakwood and Mordecai areas. Tucker mansion standing on Blount Street within the State Mall area and scheduled to be razed, was moved by the City in May 1975 to the 400 block of Person Street. In late autumn it will be open for use as an adult meeting house.

1975's Christmas Tour.
Historic Oakwood's fourth



Gaslight
again brightens
a Polk Street
doorway.

Christmas tour will be held on Saturday, December 13 and Sunday, December 14, 1975. A number of Oakwood homes will be open for the tour. As a special part of the event Oakwood-Mordecai Meeting House will be open—a festive setting for the Christmas pleasures of refreshments and music.

As a tax exempt organization the Society can now receive contributions and readily apply for grants. For the immediate future, the monies will be used for such things as:

- 1) Defraying the expense of this and future newsletters
- 2) Defraying the expense of the "Walking Tour" guides
- 3) Carrying out the Society's basic objectives of protecting and preserving the Oakwood community.

If you would like to help the Society in these efforts, contributions, fully tax deductible, may be sent to:

*The Society for the Preservation
of Historic Oakwood
P.O. Box 11137
Raleigh, North Carolina 27604*

Oakwood's story seems a peculiarly American one—of Americans again on a frontier, this time the contemporary one where a castoff heritage is being renewed into something to cherish.

With this newsletter, Oakwood people wish to send a very deep expression of thanks to everyone who supported the saving of the neighborhood, especially at the beginning when it seemed an unstylish or even an unwise thing to do.

Board of Directors, 1975

Chairman	K. Barry Poe
Vice Chairman	Charles Parlato
Corresponding Secretary	Mrs. P. T. Rideout
Recording Secretary	Miss Mamie Bridgers
Treasurer	Mrs. Kerry Sipe
Historian	Mrs. Archie Henderson

Directors

Harvey Bumgardner	Gary M. Norton
Frank Daino	Mrs. Ruth Little-Stokes
Robert A. Hoadley	Mrs. Ernestine Roach
James M. McCloud	Stewart Woodard
	Mrs. Charles Moody

Renovation of the Oakwood-Mordecai meeting house.

