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Notable Trees of the West End:
Deodar Cedar



Going up Fourth Street from the hustle and bustle of Peter's Creek Parkway, you are greeted by a magnificent Deodar Cedar (*cedrus deodara*) as you enter the West End. It is a welcome change from the car lots, mini storage, strip clubs, and pedestrian unfriendly zone of the parkway. This tree is in the yard of Dorminy Studios just as you cross over Business 40 going up Fourth Street. Deodars are large trees with bluish gray needles, graceful pendulous branches and a pyramidal shape. They are fast growing when young, but become wide, flat-topped and slow growing with age. The cones, which are visible now, are light blue and look to me like some kind of cocoon. This tree is not native because there are no true native cedars in the Americas. To find this tree in its natural habitat you would have to go to the western Himalayas. What people around here know as the red cedar is actually a juniper (*juniperus virginiana*), another fine evergreen. Although deodars are not native, they do quite well in our climate. This one is 60 feet wide and at least that tall - definitely a mature specimen, and the nicest in the neighborhood. There are other deodars on the left as you come down Glade Street by Hanes Park, as well as beside La Sima at the northern end of the park. These trees can be excellent screens for large buildings, parking decks, highways, etc. They also seem to be drought tolerant once established, and tolerant of urban conditions. Plus, nothing will grow under them, which is nice when you want something that is low maintenance. When planted in mass they remind me of mountain peaks. Sure beats looking at a parking lot.

If you know of a notable tree that you think should be featured or would like more information, please contact Kevin Lindsey at 722-2881.

For minutes of the June West End Assoc. meeting, please visit thewestend.tripod.com (NO www in this web address)

West End Association Membership Application

Join the West End Association and help create a friendly and beautiful neighborhood. Membership is as low as \$15 for families in 2002. You will help support the newsletter, park and roadway enhancements, and monitoring of zoning and the Historic District Commission. You can join the West End email list (<http://www.thewestend.tripod.com>) to receive information on houses for sale and their prices, notes from your Alderman, crime statistics, invitations to monthly gatherings, and much more! **Annual Dues for 2002 are due NOW. Send to: WEA, POB 10055, W-S, NC 27108**

Name _____ Phone _____

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() New Member () Renewal **Enclose \$15 for Family Membership; \$75 for Business Membership**

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July 2002

CELEBRATE INDEPENDENCE DAY WITH THE WEST END!

Thursday, July 4th, 11AM-3PM

Grace Court and Tice House

Parade!

Hot Dogs!

Live Band!

Dog Parade!

Kids Games!

Pot Luck Lunch!

Apple Pie Contest!

Fire Engine and Dancing Firemen!

Prizes for decorated bikes and wagons!

Celebrate the American spirit with the wonderful West End community! The parade, led by the Fire Station #1 fire engine, starts at 11AM at the corner of 4th St and Forsyth St (one block from the intersection of First and Fourth). This year, for the first time, dogs will be included (on a leash, of course)! The parade will end up at Grace Court where a live band will be playing and a pot luck lunch will be enjoyed by all (Please bring a dish!). Drinks and hot dogs will be provided. There will also be an apple pie contest, so please step up to the plate with your best effort!



JULY 2ND - WEST END ASSOCIATION MEETING
7PM, Tice House, 4th St (near Grace Court)



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A Letter From our Co-Presidents:

Put your flags out and hang your banners – July 4th is coming to the West End! I hope your children and dogs are ready for the parade. Our dog, Stuart, is practicing wearing a hat! We look forward to seeing you on the 4th.

The South Central Area Plan is nearing completion. We attended all three of the presentations around the city. I was impressed with the interest shown by the Sunnyside and Washington Park neighborhoods. Each had a large audience present at the meetings. The West End has a number of suggestions for the draft Plan. We will be discussing some of these issues with the Planning Staff. We would like to see the dreams and opportunities that you as residents have been discussing reflected in the Plan that will guide development in the area over the next 10 years or so.

Exciting parts of the Plan include: a greenway from Jarvis to Peters Creek, sprucing up the Burke-First commercial area, trying to entice a local farmers market, façade renovation, and uncovering some cobblestones. There are many, many more ideas that we will need to guide over the next years. Once the draft is approved it will go to the Planning Board and then to the Aldermen.

St. Paul's is readying for their expansion. There are a number of small changes that continue to happen and we will try to keep you as neighbors up-to-date via email (email us at bryandoherty2@yahoo.com).

George Bryan and Ann Doherty

WEST END HOUSE TOUR
Celebrate your home!
Celebrate the West End!

Two additional homes are needed for the Holiday Home Tour in December. The tour committee also seeks help with PR and advertising. If you can help in either regard, please contact Nora Garver at 722-3626 or Lee Ann Manning at 748-0105.

“No Fleas” Flea Market
Saturday, August 3
9AM-2PM
Budget Self Storage (near Filly’s)
550 Peter’s Creek Parkway

The Forsyth County Humane Society and other animal welfare groups will be holding a giant yard sale on August 3rd. Join the fun and help the animals!

THESE OLD HOUSES!

Seen any pesky cracks creeping down your walls lately? Is your ceiling showing signs of strain? Neighborhood resident Bill Wise has become an expert in plaster repair. Below, Bill provides tips on tackling a challenging task.

The old houses in the West End were built by a variety of craftsmen, using a variety of plans, without either the plans or the craft skills being audited in any way. Maintenance over the years has been equally random, so we need to study any problems, especially those involving plaster, with a good flashlight and plenty of patience! Originally, plaster was applied over wood laths. A lath is a rough sawn (not planed smooth) piece of wood about one and one half inches wide and about 3/8th of an inch thick. The laths were nailed to the ceiling rafters or the wall studs at about 45 degrees and spaced about 3/8th of an inch apart. This pattern is critical to the life span of the plaster job. The space between the boards permits the wet (“brown coat”) plaster to be forced through the gaps between laths where it can “droop” behind each lath. It then hardens and forms the “keys” that hold the plaster in place.

Sand plaster is heavy, brittle and “brown coat” will soak up water like crazy. If wet plaster freezes, it reverts to sand. The normal vibrations of walking (or jumping, in the case of children!) and moving furniture, causes the keys of ceiling plaster to break off. Once this damage starts on the ceiling, it’s not if a section will fall but when. If you have unlimited financial resources, you can call one of the few plastering companies that do restorations. Then you need to go on vacation and stay away until the whole house is DEEP CLEANED, painted and even the inside of the refrigerator has been cleaned of the @#\$%&? plaster dust. A month’s vacation would be a good start. If, however, the damage is localized to an area of three or four square feet, it is quite easy to repair these spots because you can use the old plaster as the “grounds” that we do-it-yourself folks need to get a flat base for the white coat finish.

Plaster walls are a totally different game than ceilings. Here, failures are usually caused by a structural problem or by water and /or freezing damage. First you must discover and correct the problem. The problem may be the original plaster job, but it is far more likely a structural failure in the wall support system. Repair starts with gentle but thorough removal of the old plaster and getting rid of the old keys behind the laths. A good “key ripper-outer” is a power hacksaw blade used with the cutting teeth directed toward the “puller”. Wrap the handle with duct tape and clean out the slots between laths.

Patching material depends on the size of the hole. If it is two square feet or more, you need Structo-lite plaster base (now available at Guildford Builder Supply, 1621 Battleground Ave, GSO, tel 378-9406). It comes in 80lb bags for \$14 a bag. One bag covers a very large hole! Mixing Structo-lite is a learn-by-doing experience. The goal is to have the consistency soft enough to be pressed through the lath to form the keys, yet hard enough to stay on the surface of the lath without sagging. It must “stand” when placed, but melt down when shaken. Mix small batches until you get what you need. Add a measured amount all at once and mix in an unhurried manner. It simply takes a few batches dumped into the trash to learn the game! When it is ready, it will look smooth rather than grainy. It should stick to your trowel when you “set” it by giving it a little sharp shake with the trowel parallel to the floor. You need the mud to stick to the trowel for a smooth stroke. As you apply it to the wall, you need a heavy pushing stroke until there is a little left on the trowel. At that last minute, before the trowel is empty, you must turn the bottom edge hard into the lath to seal the mud to the lath. I will guarantee that the first trowel-full will unroll and fall on the floor. People who laugh should be given a turn immediately. Then you get to laugh.

Two errors are common. Either the mud is too thin, or there is not enough mud on the trowel when you “seal” the spread. Always start on the previous spread and work toward a new area. Once you cover the hole, apply a second coat after a couple of hours (or more) to let the first layer “set-up”. Once in a while you need to remix the mud that you have put back in the pan with the original batch. How much brown-coat do you put on? Fill the area only about 60-75% deep, not full! A pro would fill and strike it to the ground as he goes, but part-timers do not have the skill or the muscles to do it all at once.

When this first mud is dry (the next day), mix a slightly thinner batch of mud. Bring the area up to the level of the surrounding plaster and “strike it” to the exact level of the ground. (The “ground” being the surface of the old plaster). The patch is only a base, and the surface need not be perfectly smooth, but it must not stick above the adjoining plaster. As the base coat dries, it shrinks. That shrinkage is just enough to let you apply a thin coat of drywall joint compound (“white coat”) to finish your patch. Finishing drywall can be difficult, but one item that helps is a drywall trowel. Off to Lowes again!

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