

LIVING WITH HISTORY IN NEW ORLEANS' NEIGHBORHOODS

Parkview



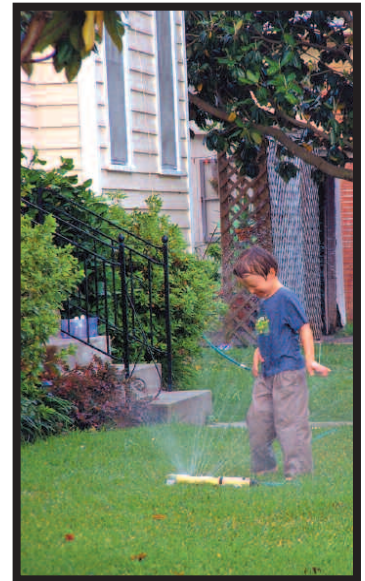
PHOTO: MARY FITZPATRICK

**PRESERVATION RESOURCE CENTER OF NEW ORLEANS
INVITES YOU TO EXPLORE PARKVIEW, THE CITY'S FIRST
20th CENTURY NEIGHBORHOOD TO BE LISTED ON THE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES.**



Each year the annual Endymion parade brings extended families onto the lawns of Parkview for an exuberant, weekend-long Mardi Gras picnic. A few weeks later Mardi Gras Indians from around New Orleans gather on the banks of Bayou St. John for a brilliant display of costumes and singing, known as "Super Sunday," before parading downtown. Both are family events, but their cultures couldn't be further apart. Yet that's the beauty of Parkview, one of New Orleans' newest historic districts. In this 20th-century neighborhood between beautiful City Park and the former path of the Carondelet Canal, different cultures express themselves without clashing.

The Carondelet Canal, dug in 1792 to connect New Orleans to coastal shipping, first put the area now known as Parkview on the map. What that map showed, actually, was *cipriere* or "cypress swamp." Until improvements in drainage after 1900 and the introduction of the screw pump in 1913, Parkview was part of the swampy expanse known as "back o' town." Several dairy farms, most notably the Allard Plantation, occupied what firm land there was here at the edge of the bayou.





Development began in earnest in 1902 and continued through the 1920s, which is also when most of the land that forms present-day City Park was obtained by the city. As a result of Parkview's concentrated development, the houses along the oak-shaded streets have a lot of stylistic consistency, with double shotguns, raised basement houses and bungalows being the favored forms. Pre-20th century houses are rare.

There's a small town tranquility to Parkview caused in part by its irregularly laid out streets and hidden courts, such as St. John's Alley and Bungalow Court. But, at the same time, Parkview is a vital neighborhood that holds on to its residents while also attracting new young families and singles. The 1500-acre park, with its tennis courts, golf course, museum, open-air theaters, lagoons and jogging and biking trails, is a great attraction. A new spur line will connect the area with downtown via the rebuilt Canal Streetcar in 2004.

Restaurateur Ralph Brennan chose City Park Avenue for his newest establishment, which will draw a regular nightly crowd to the park's edge where the live oak trees dripping in Spanish Moss create a shadowy primordial landscape. Delgado Community College bustles day and night with classes, and elementary schools and the New Orleans School of Science and Math are also nearby. World class exhibitions at the New Orleans Museum of Art come literally to residents' doorsteps, and the annual Celebration in the Oaks turns the park into an elaborate exhibit of holiday lights. Thursday afternoons bring the Crescent City Farmers Market to the newly refurbished, and now residential, American Can Company on Orleans Avenue.

TOURS

We encourage you to use good judgment and common sense in taking these tours.

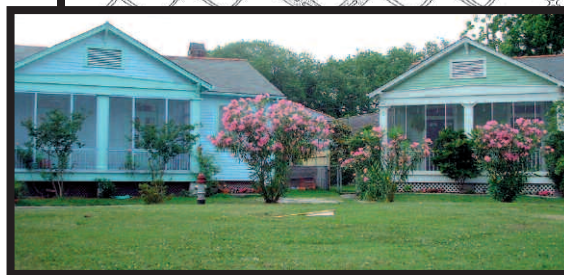
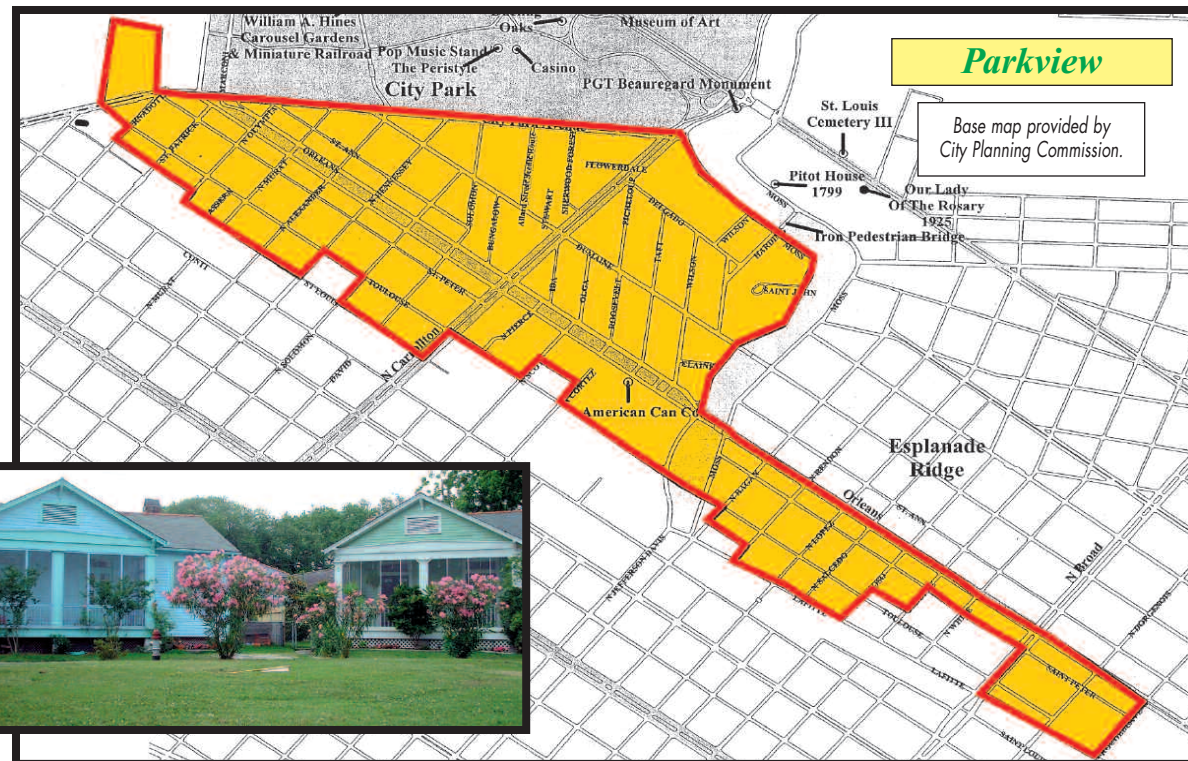
TOUR A

A ride on the railway—the City Park mini-railway, that is—is a great way to survey the park and the neighborhood that overlooks it. The 2.5-mile rail circuit begins and ends in Storyland, City

Park's famed 1950s-era playground. Past Tad Gormley Stadium, a popular venue for track events, you'll come into sight of the Puppet Castle (left) and, across Marconi Blvd. (right), Isaac Delgado Community College. As you round the corner, you'll spy lagoons that are remnants of Bayou Metairie. The bungalows, shotguns and raised basement houses that look over the park from City Park Avenue are visible through the trees. The ancient Live Oaks (several are more than 600 years old) and brooding lagoons are the perfect setting



for the neoclassical peristyle and Popp Bandstand found in this part of City Park. One oak, just behind the New Orleans Museum of Art, is reputed to have marked the spot where Creole gentlemen fought their duels. This part of the park is popular for family gatherings on weekends, but neighborhood residents often find they have the shaded walks and roads to themselves on weekdays. You might glimpse the tracks of the trolley connecting Parkview with downtown New Orleans as the train turns to swing back towards its starting point, passing the New Orleans Museum of Art in its 1911 Beaux Arts building. The museum and the community college you passed earlier were both bequests of sugar merchant and philanthropist Isaac Delgado. Note the Besthoff Sculpture Garden and New Orleans Botanical Garden, two outstanding cultural attractions, as the train returns to its station.



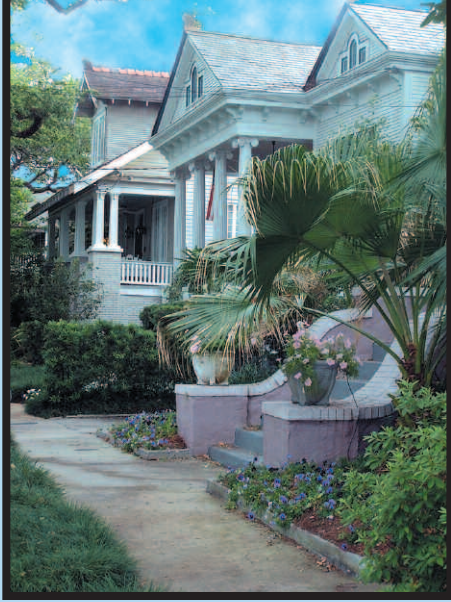
TOUR B

Neighborhood walk Ancient Live Oaks continue outside of City Park. Walk Sherwood Forest, Allard Blvd. and Solomon Street to enjoy the ancient trees and some of the grander houses of the neighborhood.

The area along N. Carrollton Ave. is dotted with small professional offices, restaurants, coffee shops and corner stores. The variety of names on the storefronts attests to the diversity of people who make their homes in this quiet neighborhood. Cross N. Claiborne Ave. to explore the warren of streets tucked between Carrollton Ave. and Bayou St. John. Sheltered beneath great shade trees only steps from the beautiful bayou,



this area is one of the city's secrets. Follow one of the presidential streets (Roosevelt or Taft Place) to Orleans Ave. or follow Harding Drive to the bayou, turn right and detour into St. John's Alley for the feel of a 1920s Gulf Coast resort community, and then back to the bayou and right to Orleans Avenue. Either route will bring you within sight of the former American Can Co. on the corner of Orleans and Moss St. Once the largest can factory in the Southeast, this building was converted to a mixed-income residential complex in 2001. The Crescent City Farmers Market turns the parking lot into a busy marketplace every Thursday evening, when local musicians also perform. The grassy bank across from American Can is the traditional gathering place for the Mardi Gras Indians who march and perform on Super Sunday. Their traditional route takes them down Orleans to N. Claiborne Ave. and then to Hunters' Field on St. Bernard Ave.



- 1792 Excavation of Carondelet (or "Old Basin") Canal provides alternate means of transport from Bayou St. John to rear of Vieux Carré
- 1832 New Basin Canal opens
- 1850s John McDonogh bequeaths much of what is now City Park to city
- 1891 City Park Improvement Association established; starts campaign to develop park
- c.1906 City Park Carousel Pavilion built
- c.1910 City Park Carousel built
- 1912 Isaac Delgado Museum of Art, now New Orleans Museum of Art, opens in park
- 1920s City acquires land to enlarge park
- 1927 Carondelet Canal turning basin filled
- 1930s New Orleans Botanical Garden built as WPA project with William Wiedorn as landscape architect
- 1931-33 City Park landscaped by Bennett Parsons and Frost
- 1936 Bayou St. John declared "non-navigable"
- 1937 WPA project converts Bayou St. John from an active waterway to a park-like facility
- 1938 Carondelet Canal (present day Lafitte St.) filled in
- 1995 Parkview established as National Register Historic District

Annual Neighborhood Events

- August: Night Out Against Crime

Neighborhood Organizations

- Allard Boulevard Association
- Carrollton Avenue Preservation Alliance
- City Park Neighborhood Association
- City Park Improvement Association
- Mid-City Neighborhood Organization



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