



The History of Riverside

Riverside is a burgeoning community, home to both long-time residents who can tell tales of trekking down to Flippins', the local burger joint as teenagers in the 1950s and scoring strikes at the neighborhood bowling alley, and newcomers drawn by the area's charm and its easy, in-town living.

Today Riverside is focused on the future. New homes are springing up beside ones built in the 1920s and 30s for the families of men who worked in the nearby railroad yards. The neighborhood boasts a new elementary school, Bolton Academy, and new developments along its boundaries are bringing in new businesses to serve the community.

While its face is toward the future, Riverside also claims an uncommon past. Two hundred years ago, Riverside and its surroundings were home to settlements of Cherokee and Creek Indians; both, however, were eventually pushed out to make way for new settlers coming to Georgia in search of land. By the time the Civil War broke out, Riverside was a working plantation, known as the Spink's Estate after its owner, Mr. Spink. According to legend, Mr. Spink buried his gold on the estate during the war to protect it from union soldiers, a story that even today brings out the occasional gold-seeker but his gold has never been found.

Following the death of Mr. Spink's daughter in 1914, the grand estate was broken into smaller lots, some for houses and some for farms. In time, the farms gave way to more houses as new families came to the area to work for the railroads. Riverside grew into a bustling community complete with its own grocery store, drug store, movie theater and "feed and seed" store, all in addition to Flippins' and the bowling alley, which hosted many neighborhood talent shows.

The 1960s and 70s brought still more changes to the area as new people moved in while others moved out. Like in many places, as the residents changed, so too did the face of the community. Many long-time local businesses shut down and were not replaced. Riverside seemed to be a forgotten neighborhood, tucked away on Atlanta's northwest side and surrounded by industrial space and railroads lines. There were those, however, who did not forget Riverside - both long-time residents and new neighbors. In part through their efforts to ensure that the neighborhood's needs were met, an influx of new people has discovered Riverside and a fresh energy is spreading across it. The neighborhood now has two new traditions - an annual Easter egg hunt and an annual spring cleanup - and undoubtedly others will be established. Riverside's future, whatever it may hold, is clearly bright and will only add to its distinctive past.