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PRESS RELEASE

Shady Park Pioneer Memorial Dedication

WINTER PARK, FL, (July 19, 2024) City officials will join Hannibal Square community residents and stakeholders for the **Shady Park Pioneer Memorial Dedication Saturday, August 3, at 10 a.m.**, in [Shady Park](#) located adjacent to the Winter Park Community Center at 721 W. New England Ave. The new Pioneer Memorial, designed by artist [George Gadson](#), includes four busts of the most significant residents in the history of the beloved African American community, Hannibal Square. A timeline of the community's history with biographies of each pioneer is presented adjacent to the busts on a ceramic tile history wall. Featured pioneers include:

- Mary Lee Depugh (1878-1949), founder of the Ideal Womans' Club.
- Gustavus Christopher "Gus" Henderson (1862-1917), activist and founder of *The Advocate*.
- Frank R. Israel (1848-1925) and Walter B. Simpson (1859-1915), both Town Alderman from 1887-1893.

The memorial construction has been managed by the city's [Parks & Recreation Department](#) and funded by the [Community Redevelopment Agency](#).

According to Mayor Sheila DeCiccio, "The city is very proud to present this beautiful memorial honoring the pioneers of Hannibal Square. It is our hope that residents and visitors will always remember and appreciate the history of our wonderful Hannibal Square community."

Mary Daniels, community activist stated "This project is the conclusion of several years of passionate work from a committed Shady Park committee consisting of neighbors, community residents, city staff and leaders from different key backgrounds to enhance Shady Park. The importance of community history cannot be understated. We are recognizing the significance of the Hannibal Square community and these four key pioneers of many. The impact of this sculpture will be felt for generations to come."

After the ceremony, attendees are invited to visit the [Hannibal Square Heritage Center \(HSHC\)](#) located adjacent to the park at 642 W. New England Avenue. The HSHC was established in 2007 as a tribute to the past, present, and future contributions of Winter Park's historic African-American community.

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