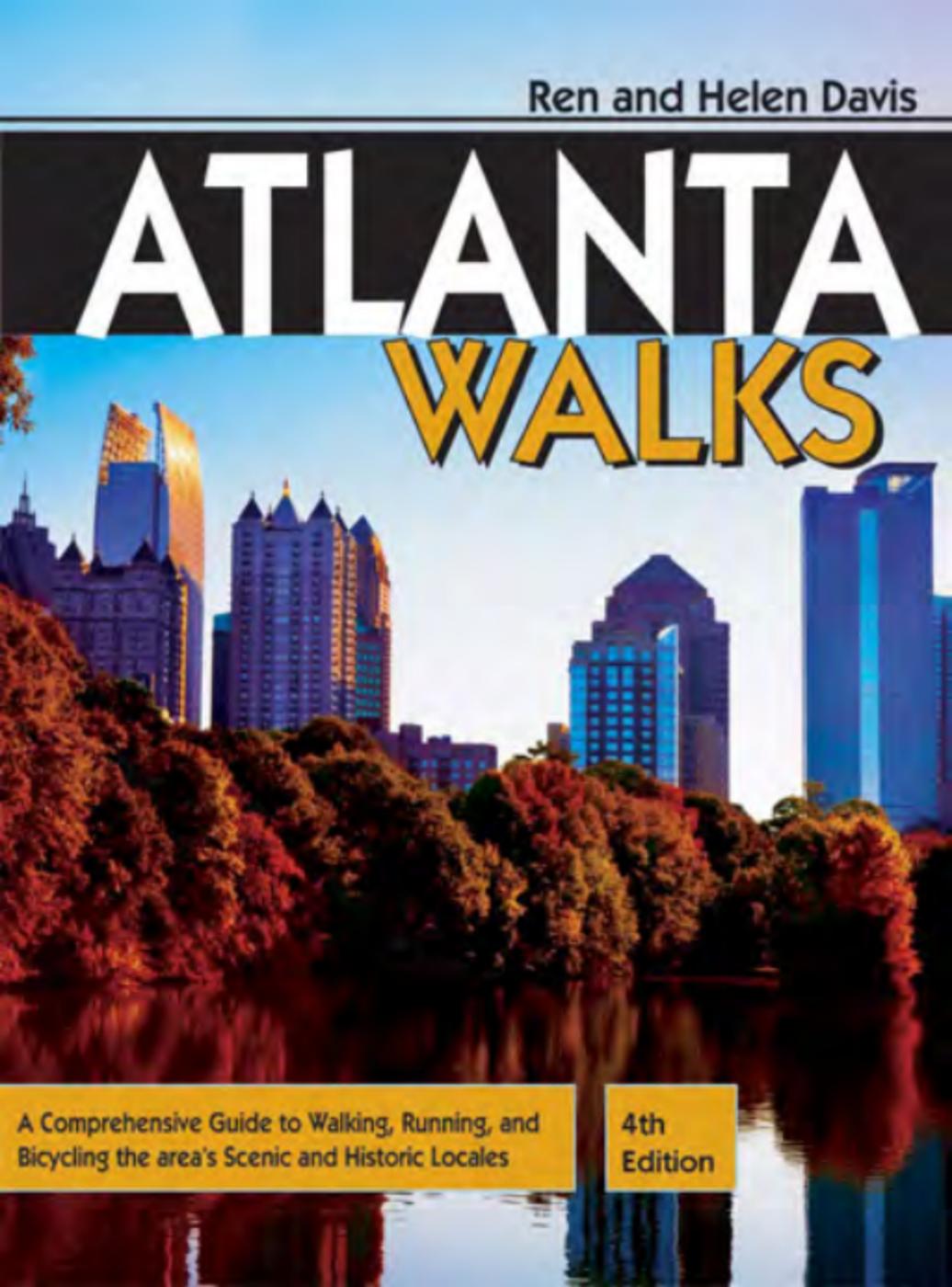


Ren and Helen Davis

ATLANTA WALKS

The cover features a photograph of the Atlanta skyline. In the foreground, there are dense trees with vibrant autumn foliage in shades of orange, red, and yellow. The trees are reflected in a body of water. In the background, several skyscrapers are visible against a clear blue sky. The title 'ATLANTA WALKS' is prominently displayed at the top, with 'ATLANTA' in white and 'WALKS' in yellow with a black outline.

A Comprehensive Guide to Walking, Running, and
Bicycling the area's Scenic and Historic Locales

4th
Edition

4th Edition

Atlanta Walks

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**A Comprehensive
Guide to Walking,
Running, and Bicycling
the Area's Scenic and
Historic Loci**

Ren and Helen Davis


PEACHTREE
ATLANTA



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PREFACE

Revisit Favorite Walks, Explore New Trails

Come explore Atlanta on foot and discover the many facets of this city with its colorful past, fast-paced present, and dynamic future. Walk in the shadows of an ever-changing skyline, stroll quiet streets lined with old Victorian houses, cross the campuses of a half dozen universities, or meander through thick forests abundant with wildlife.

Hear fading echoes of marching troops along the paths of Civil War battles from Kennesaw Mountain to Inman Park, and Utoy Creek to Jonesboro. Or trace the origins of the civil rights movement from Sweet Auburn—the birthplace of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.—to the campuses of the Atlanta University Center.

Walking provides the opportunity to meet people who give a city its

life, and to linger while enjoying sights, sounds, and aromas. The Atlanta area's rolling terrain and moderate climate make it an enjoyable place in which to walk during any season of the year.

We have been exploring Atlanta on foot since 1985, when we began researching our original guide, *Atlanta's Urban Trails*. The debut of *Atlanta Walks* in 1993 provided a selection of the city's favorite treks in an updated, single volume. As Atlanta has continued to grow through the years, we have revisited many areas, updating chapters to make each as timely and accurate as possible. Also, we have not forgotten runners and bicyclists and have noted the routes most suitable to their interests.

Now we are pleased to introduce the fourth, revised and expanded edition of *Atlanta Walks*. In addition to updating existing chapters, we have added seven new destinations, including a trek through historic Midtown, new sections of the Silver Comet and Big Creek Greenway Trails, a signature Gwinnett County Park on Little Mulberry Creek, and a popular linear park near Suwanee. For each walk, we provide Global Positioning System (GPS) coordinates for the starting points (recorded on a DeLorme PN-20 GPS unit using TOPO USA 7.0 software).

Preface

Like so many cities, Atlanta struggles to balance the often opposing interests of growth and preservation. By exploring on foot, we invite you to experience Atlanta's historic places and scenic parks firsthand, offering a true sense of the fabric of the city. We believe this experience is indispensable to those who wish to understand the necessary balance between Atlanta's development and its natural and architectural heritage. We hope this guide will aid in fostering this understanding. We have also launched our website, www.davisguides.com to provide information on our current books, upcoming projects, book signings and presentations, guided walks, photography galleries, and other information to enhance your explorations. We hope you will visit often and share your comments and ideas for new places to discover.

For many years, Atlanta's leaders worked to earn a place for Atlanta among the world's great cities. Vibrant street life, diverse culture, and pedestrian accessibility are hallmarks of these world-class destinations, yet these characteristics were often overlooked in Atlanta's early development. Atlanta moved closer to attaining these qualities when it was selected to host the 1996 Centennial Olympic Games, making the many structural and cultural changes necessary to host such a truly world-class event. Still, much more needs to be done to make the city a genuinely pedestrian-friendly community.

Space does not permit us to individually thank the dozens of people who have helped us create this guide. Representatives from neighborhood associations, historical preservation societies, libraries, state and national parks, and colleges provided invaluable assistance for which we are truly grateful. Thanks also to Margaret Quinlin, Kathy Landwehr, Phyllis Mueller, Melanie McMahon Ives, Loraine Joyner, Jessica Alexander, Kate DePalma, Sarah Doss, and all of the staff at Peachtree Publishers who shared our dream and turned it into a reality. Special thanks also to the many organization and community leaders who enthusiastically helped us gather information and, when needed, gave us directions.

With any project there are always individuals who provide the inspiration to take on the task and the encouragement to persevere. In our case, there were two. The first was our longtime friend and walking companion, the late Dr. Richard Blumberg, who showed us that walking was a mental and physical exercise to be shared by all generations. The second is our son, Nelson. We began this adventure when he was only a toddler. Now he and his wife, Alyson, enjoy using the guide as they undertake their own explorations of Atlanta and share their new discoveries.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Discover Atlanta's Treasures

This guidebook covers 58 walks in 57 chapters, spanning nearly 270 miles around metro Atlanta. The treks are grouped into four sections: Intown, Near Town, Around Town, and the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area.

Each chapter includes: location and directions to the area; trail distance; starting point GPS coordinates; terrain details and orienting area features; parking tips; information about area public transportation (if available); historical background for the area; numbered locations of and information about historical markers and notable houses, sites, and buildings; special features and events listed by month of occurrence; nearby attractions;

and other walks in the area. A map accompanies each chapter with the cardinal direction denoted and each walk route shaded with numerical symbols for historical markers and notable houses, sites, and buildings.

ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

NR National Register
of Historic Places

NL National Historic Landmark



Historical markers
(● designated by number
in circle on maps)



Notable Places
(■ designated by
number in square
on maps)



MARTA



Paved path



Unpaved path or trail

Non-Profit Group Creates Paths for Pedestrians and Bicyclists

Established in 1991, the PATH Foundation is a private, nonprofit organization dedicated to enhancing the pedestrian experience in Atlanta. With the aid of corporate contributions, private donations, and government grants, PATH plans to create a network of trails that tie the city together.

In their own words, PATH envisions “a ribbon of urban oasis winding its way through neighborhoods, shopping areas, and commercial districts . . . alongside streams and woodlands . . . (and) historic landmarks . . .” The PATH network of trails is becoming a reality. By combining newly constructed paths with existing sidewalks, the foundation has created an expanding network of

multiuse trails accessible from nearly anywhere in the city, with more in planning and development.

Their first project was the 18-mile-long Stone Mountain–Atlanta Greenway Trail, stretching from the west entrance of Stone Mountain Park in DeKalb County to Greenbriar Mall in southwest Atlanta. Portions of the trail follow marked sidewalks, while others are dedicated paths meandering through parks and green spaces. The system is marked by PATH signs and is patrolled on foot or bike by both volunteer “trail rangers” and local police officers.

One especially scenic and historic part of the Stone Mountain–Atlanta trail follows the once-proposed route of Freedom Parkway, a highly controversial road project that was planned to link downtown Atlanta with the Jimmy Carter Presidential Center. After years of neighborhood opposition to the major roadway, a smaller-scale project was completed but miles of graded right-of-way were simply abandoned. PATH and the neighborhood groups saw this as an opportunity to create a pedestrian corridor connecting the Center and its adjacent, historically rich neighborhoods of Inman Park and Candler Park with the nearby historic and scenic community of Druid Hills. The resulting footpath winds

THE PATH FOUNDATION

past Victorian homes and along the edge of the Candler Park Golf Course.

Another long stretch of the Stone Mountain–Atlanta trail meanders through woodlands and past residential areas on a 5-mile concrete ribbon connecting Clarkston with Stone Mountain Village. From there it is only a short walk to the entrance of Stone Mountain Park.

PATH continues to expand its network. The Trolley Line Trail follows a southerly 7-mile course that links with the Stone Mountain–Atlanta Greenway Trail near Atlanta Medical Center and Agnes Scott College. A 3.5-mile loop trail in Atlanta’s Chastain Park is also included in this guide. The foundation’s most ambitious and longest trail is the Silver Comet, extending westward nearly 62 miles from Smyrna to the Alabama state line where it links with the Chief Ladiga Trail. Southeast of the city, a paved multiuse trail links Panola Mountain State Conservation Park and Davidson–Arabia Mountain Nature Preserve. To the west, the Lionel Hampton and Westside PATH Trails connect popular city parks with the Atlanta University campus.

Even more important than scenic and historic attractions found along PATH trails are the people. From dawn to dusk, the paths are alive with walkers, joggers, in-line skaters, and bicyclists, all enjoying the benefits of exercise and the renewal of a sense of community that is essential for a healthy, livable city.

For more information about the PATH Foundation, its projects, and trail maps and guides, contact the PATH Foundation, 404-875-7284; www.pathfoundation.org. Maps of the Stone Mountain–Atlanta Greenway Trail and Silver Comet Trail are available for a small fee.

THE BELT LINE PROJECT

Bringing to Life a Vision for New City Parks and Greenspaces

A century ago, Atlanta was the railway transportation hub of the Southeast, with nearly 1,000 trains traveling through or around the city each day. Atlanta was crisscrossed and encircled by a “belt line” of rails. After World War II, highways began to replace these ribbons of steel and eventually, many of the railroad routes around Atlanta were abandoned and forgotten, becoming weed-infested eyesores.

In 1999, Georgia Tech graduate student Ryan Gravel proposed reclaiming these neglected properties, utilizing them to create a multi-use corridor of trails, parks, and light-rail transit lines connecting more than 45 communities surrounding the city. He envisioned the

“belt line” as a vehicle for revitalizing many in-town neighborhoods, providing parks and green spaces, while at the same time offering opportunities for mixed use developments along the 22-mile-long rail corridor.

In 2004, Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin and the City Council endorsed the concept and commissioned a financial feasibility study of the green space opportunities. At the same time, MARTA conducted its own study of the potential links between proposed light-rail lines along the Belt Line with the existing MARTA rapid-rail system.

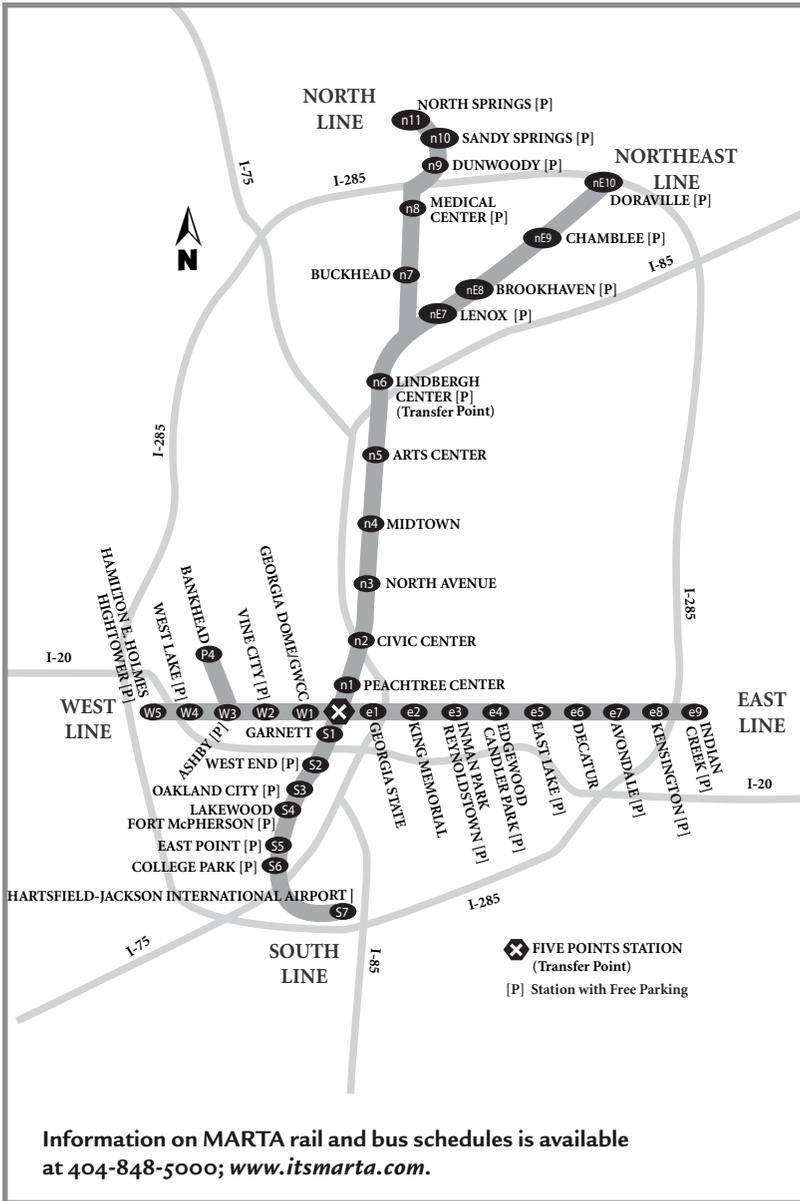
A year later, Mayor Franklin created the Belt Line Partnership to facilitate short and long-range planning, and to develop the sources of public and private sector funding needed to turn the vision into reality. The first five-year plan was approved in 2006. Despite the effects of the financial recession and other complications, development of the first portions of the project are underway with completion of a trail east of Piedmont Park, linking the historic Old Fourth Ward and Glenwood Park; a path near Westview Cemetery that meanders southeast toward Hillside Park; and a paved trail connecting Atlanta Memorial Park and Ardmore Park.

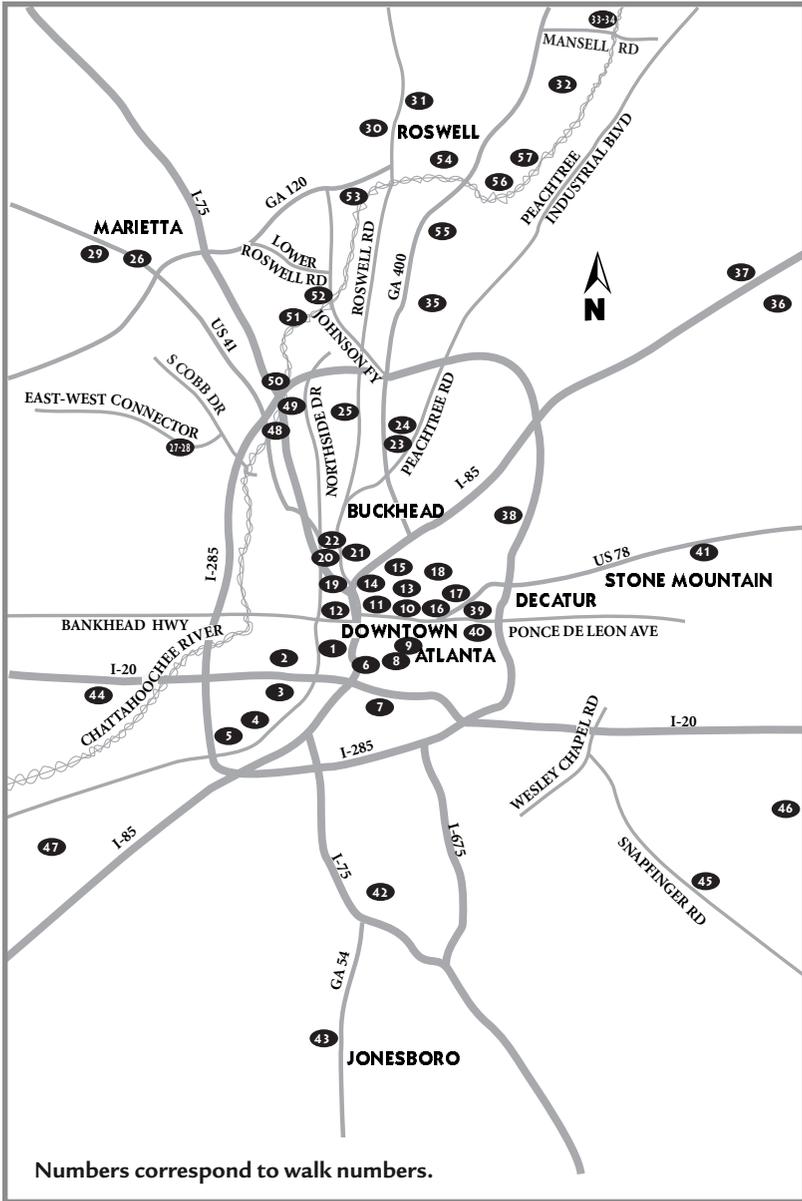
Gravel’s master’s thesis became the genesis for what is, today, a

THE BELT LINE PROJECT

\$2.5 billion, 25-year project that has been described as the “most comprehensive economic development effort ever undertaken in the City of Atlanta and among the largest, most wide-ranging urban development projects currently underway in the United States.” It is certainly our hope that future editions of this guide will profile the parks and trails planned along the Belt Line.

For section maps of the Belt Line, to schedule a guided van tour, or to get the latest information on the project’s development, visit *www.beltline.org*.





Numbers correspond to walk numbers.

Start Your Walk ‘On the Right Foot’

Today, more than 60 million Americans enjoy recreational walking. Whether as part of a planned fitness program or simply for enjoyment and recreation, a long walk can be good for body and soul. Whether you are setting out for a leisurely stroll through the neighborhood or an all-day hike, a little advance planning is needed to ensure comfort, safety, and pleasure.

The following tips will get a good walking program off on the “right foot.”

SHOE SELECTION

For frequent walks or long hikes, a pair of high-quality walking shoes is essential.

Things to look for include:

Strong heel support: Walking puts pressure on the heel as you stride, so make sure the shoe’s heel is well built with quality materials and construction.

Shock absorbcency: Examine the composition of the sole. It should absorb the impact of walking and disperse the shock. The materials should not be so soft as to feel fluffy, nor so hard as to accelerate foot fatigue.

Comfort: Fit is critical. When trying on shoes, wear socks of the same thickness as those you will wear while walking. Shoes should have a snug heel and instep, but not tight, with room in the toe box for the toes to wriggle. Shoes that are too tight or too loose may cause blisters. Shoes should feel comfortable; it is important to walk around the store to check shoe comfort. Different brands of shoes will fit your feet differently.

Traction: Consider the surface of the area you plan to walk. A walking shoe or cross trainer with athletic shoe soles are good for walking on sidewalks, paved multi-use trails, and boardwalks, but the tread of a lug type sole is needed when hiking in the woods, especially on unpaved or rugged trails with changes in elevation.

Workmanship: Examine the shoe’s construction for quality. Look at the stitching between the sole and

TIPS FOR THE TREK

the upper part of the shoe. Leather “uppers” are ideal for flexibility and to promote air circulation.

Value: High-quality shoes range in cost from \$75.00 to about \$150.00.

PREPARING TO WALK

A number of items are important to think about before your walking adventure begins.

Loosen up. Stretching is an important part of a walking program, as it is with any exercise. It is best to first take a short walk to loosen muscles and then stretch for 5 to 10 minutes. While stretching, focus on your lower back, hamstrings, calves, arms, upper torso, and abdomen.

Build endurance gradually. Those who are beginning a walking program should take it easy at first. Walking the routes that are appropriate for your physical ability will yield the most benefit and the most pleasure. It is vital to build up endurance gradually.

Plan for weather and bring water.

A daypack containing a rain jacket, water and snack foods is important for long hikes.

Cool down. After a long walk, it is a good idea to cool down with gentle stretches.

EXPLORING WITH COMPASS, MAP AND GPS

A growing number of outdoor enthusiasts are utilizing compasses, topographical maps, and GPS units to enhance their adventures, whether on well-established trails or across unfa-

miliar landscapes. For most, it is the fun of plotting coordinates and tracing routes as they walk, while others join in more structured activities like orienteering and geocaching.

Orienteering involves navigating a route with map and compass by following a predetermined set of way points. It can be enjoyed individually, in groups, and even in timed competitions. To learn more, contact the Georgia Orienteering Club at www.gaorienteering.org.

Geocaching has become increasingly popular with the availability of affordable GPS units. Like scavenger hunts from days gone by, geocachers provide GPS coordinates and clues to the location of hidden objects (usually a waterproof container with logbook and small objects) in parks and public places in the U.S. and around the world. Searchers are invited to use coordinates to find the cache, sign the book, and trade an object in the box for one they are carrying. While the caches are at or near the provided coordinate, they are often well hidden, and solving the clues is necessary for finally locating them. New geocaches are being added all the time and many may be found along the walks profiled in this guide. To learn more about geocaching and begin your searches, visit www.geocaching.com.

WALKING WITH CHILDREN

Tips for Parents

*We learn some of what we hear;
we learn more when we read and listen;*

Walking with Children

but we learn the most when we experience activities as part of a significant group.

Walking can be great family exercise as well as an opportunity to share time together while learning the history of an area or enjoying the beauty of nature. To make walks a great learning experience, pick a chapter in advance and read it as a family. Pick out sights from the beginning, middle, and end that you know will interest your child. When children are younger it may be the different shapes of buildings or where a trail makes a zig-zag, connects with another trail, or reaches water.

As children prepare for fourth grade's introduction to Georgia history and eight grade's year-long study of Georgia history, it may be the homes or sites of historical figures, locations of the Civil War battles, or places where transportation influenced the development of Atlanta. Turn the walk into the child's adventure by drawing a map with the locations you chose in advance and let the child act as the pathfinder and lead others to the targets. Take plenty of pictures, especially when you reach the marked destinations.

Shortly after you return home, write a family story about what you saw and talked about on your walk. Include downloaded photographs in the stories. For the beginning reader, these stories will be great fun to learn to read. For the elementary-aged student these are a wonderful resource for the assigned essays of

“What did you do...?” For the older student, they provide a great reference for learning Georgia history. For everyone, these are a wonderful keepsake of inexpensive family adventures that will be rich in memories of times spent together.

It is easy to include infants and toddlers in the fun; simply put them in a backpack or stroller and take off. (In cool weather, remember that these children are not exercising and need to be dressed warmly.) Once the children are old enough to walk on their own, involving them in the walk can be both challenging and rewarding. Remember, while adults may walk for both physical and mental fitness, children may not understand these intangible benefits and may need a different motivation. Children do not have the same level of stamina as most adults, so modify the walk time and distance accordingly. Children also have a tendency to run and then rest, so allow ample time for breaks during the walk. Remember to refresh children often with water and snacks to keep their energy levels and spirits high.

Walking with young children may mean compromising on the benefits that adults seek from the exercise, but it can be a marvelous time to share in children's curiosity and wonder about the world around them. Some ways to challenge kids on a nature walk include:

Carry a bird, animal, or plant guide: Spend time identifying things seen along the path, learn about

TIPS FOR THE TREK

different habitats, and if appropriate, bring some specimens home to study.

Take an environmental walk: Carry a plastic bag and pick up trash or collect items for recycling.

When walks are planned to take into account each person's physical conditioning and interests, walking can be a joyful experience for all generations of the family.

A GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

Author's note: Italicized words below are social studies objectives.

Bringing history alive for your students happens best when you experience first-hand the places where historical activities took place. While you explore the walks in this book, take lots of photos and include your pictures in your classroom lessons to tell the stories of *geographic terms*, the *influence of geography on our history*, the importance of transportation in the development of many parts of Atlanta's history, the *effects of man on our geography* and the *location of historic events*.

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In these days of reduced school funds and reduced hours in school, it may not be easy to take a class field trip during school, so consider offering to guide a walk from the book on a weekend day, inviting the students' families to join you. Show the *use of latitude and longitude* with a GPS unit to identify the beginning point of the walk. Have students use *cardinal directions* to read the map

and locate the identified sites. Not only will your students gain the richness of experiences out of the classroom that combine *map reading skills* and viewing sites of historical events and people, but the parents of your students will get to know you better, which always improves the important trust relationship between home and teachers.

Recommend the "Tips for Parents" (see previous section) that are age appropriate for the children. Engage students to use the information from the book to *develop timelines* and *organize events chronologically* that form Atlanta's history. Challenge students to *draw conclusions* and *make generalizations* of how transportation has affected political decisions in the development of Atlanta. Watch the richness of the students' writings develop when they report about a common experience with three of their most significant life groups: their families, their classmates, and their teacher.

A SELECTION OF ADVENTURE WALKS WITH CHILDREN

Chapter 4:

Outdoor Activity Center

Chapter 6:

Oakland Cemetery

Chapter 7:

Grant Park

Chapter 12:

Georgia Tech

Chapter 13:

Piedmont Park &

Atlanta Botanical Garden

Bicycling

- Chapter 17:
Fernbank Forest
- Chapter 18:
Emory University
- Chapter 25:
Chastain Park
[PATH Trail section]
- Chapter 27:
Silver Comet Trail —
Mavell Road to Floyd Road
- Chapter 28:
Silver Comet Trail —
Floyd Road to Florence Road
- Chapter 30:
Chattahoochee
Nature Center
- Chapter 32:
Autrey Mill Nature Preserve
- Chapter 33:
Big Creek Greenway —
Alpharetta Section
- Chapter 34:
Big Creek Greenway —
Forsyth County Section
- Chapter 35:
Dunwoody Nature Center
- Chapter 36:
Little Mulberry Park
- Chapter 37:
Suwanee Creek Greenway
- Chapter 38:
South Peachtree Creek
PATH Trail & Clyde Shepherd
Nature Preserve
- Chapter 41:
Stone Mountain Park
- Chapter 42:
Reynolds Nature Preserve
- Chapter 45:
Panola Mountain
State Conservation Park

- Chapter 46:
Davidson-Arabia Mountain
Nature Preserve
[PATH Trail section]
- Chapter 47:
Cochran Mill
Nature Preserve & Park
- Chapter 50:
CRNRA Cochran Shoals &
Powers Island Units
[Fitness Trail]

BICYCLING

Many of the trails described in this book follow lightly traveled streets or paved multiuse trails that are ideal for bicycling as well as walking. Bike travelers may find it helpful to link several neighboring trails for an extended ride. A few tips for riding in and around Atlanta are important:

Always wear a helmet: Wearing a helmet is an important part of safe bicycling. A high percentage of bicycling-related fatalities are due to head injuries.

Ride with the flow of traffic: Use designated bicycle lanes if they are provided. If you are riding in a group in a heavily trafficked area, travel single file.

Obey all traffic rules: Use hand signals at intersections. When in doubt, give the automobile the right-of-way.

Station adults at front and back of group: If you are riding with children, it is best to position an adult at the front of the group and one at the back.

TIPS FOR THE TREK

Be visible: If you will be riding in poor visibility, wear reflective vests or clothing, and make sure the bicycles have reflectors.

Do not wear earplug audio devices: Avoid any devices that might hinder you from hearing.

Use designated routes. If you are traveling on wooded paths, follow designated routes to minimize damage to the surrounding environment.

Most importantly, *have fun!*

ACCESSIBILITY FOR DISABLED PERSONS

The occurrence and quality of sidewalks in Atlanta is inconsistent: Sidewalk pavement is often broken and uneven because of tree roots growing beneath it, while construction and repair projects often keep sidewalks and streets inaccessible to disabled persons.

Well-maintained curb ramps and sidewalks are generally found throughout downtown Atlanta, but are less frequent in the suburbs. Therefore, for disabled persons, finding an accessible, non-downtown route to explore may pose a challenge.

All government buildings, most commercial buildings, and museums are required by law to be accessible to the disabled, although their surrounding area and approach may not be. For best results, before setting out for your adventure, drive the route you want to explore and evaluate area accessibility conditions for yourself.

Below are a few walks, or portions of walks, from the guide that are most accessible for the mobility impaired due to limited traffic and well-maintained sidewalks and curbing:

Chapter 2:

Atlanta University Center

Chapter 9:

Freedom Park, Candler Park
and Little Five Points

Chapter 12:

Georgia Tech

Chapter 13:

Piedmont Park &
Atlanta Botanical Garden

Chapter 17:

Fernbank Forest [section]

Chapter 18:

Emory University

Chapter 24:

Oglethorpe University &
Silver Lake [campus section]

Chapter 25:

Chastain Park [PATH Trail]

Chapter 27:

Silver Comet Trail —
Mavell Road to Floyd Road

Chapter 28: Silver Comet Trail —

Floyd Road to Florence Road

Chapter 33:

Big Creek Greenway —
Alpharetta Section

Chapter 34:

Big Creek Greenway —
Forsyth County Section

Chapter 36:

Little Mulberry Park
[paved trails]

Accessibility for Disabled Persons

- Chapter 37:
 - Suwanee Creek Greenway
[paved sections]
- Chapter 38:
 - South Peachtree Creek PATH
Trail [section]
- Chapter 40:
 - Avondale Estates
- Chapter 41:
 - Stone Mountain Park
[paved sections]
- Chapter 46:
 - Davidson-Arabia Mountain
Nature Preserve
[PATH trail section]
- Chapter 50:
 - CRNRA Cochran Shoals &
Powers Island Units [Fitness
Trail]