



## The Four Seasons come to Woodruff

BY KEVIN GARING

**J**AMES O. WOODRUFF'S ORIGINAL 1872 plans called for Woodruff Place to be a Victorian version of Italian renaissance gardens. In keeping with that vision, there were grassy esplanades with fountains, planted urns and statuary as the town developed through the end of the 19th century. These same fountains, urns and esplanades are still a focal point of Woodruff Place today – but the statuary somehow disappeared over the years.

In recent time, the planted urns have seen considerable efforts toward renovation; however, the missing statuary simply cannot be found. (Old-timers still talk about how the City of Indianapolis pilfered much of the artwork when Woodruff Place was forcibly annexed in 1962.) The Historic Woodruff Place Foundation is now pursuing *new* statuary as part of the effort to restore the Indy Parks-owned esplanades back to their original glory.

As a result of that effort, the Four Seasons statues were purchased and recently placed on the esplanades.

Why these statues?

They are cast-iron reproductions of statuary

"Summer," located at the south end of East Drive. ►





▲ “Spring” sits at the north end of East Drive.

common to 19th century gardens and are believed to be very similar to statues originally placed in Woodruff Place. The Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission agrees that they are appropriate and issued a Certificate of Appropriateness allowing them to be placed.

This work was spearheaded by Bob Clark and funded largely by private donations specifically intended for these statues. Bob researched and ordered the statues for the Foundation. Special thanks to Billy Vantwoud, Rob Dickinson, Bill Longest, Greg Selke, Cliff Bradley, Chris Pleak and Bruce Pleak for the hard work in building footers and placing the statues.

Each of the statues is a classical representation of one of the Four Seasons. “Spring” is holding flowers, “Summer” is holding fruit, “Fall” is holding wheat, and “Winter” is holding a torch.

The locations and funding sources of the four statues are:

□ “Spring,” on the north end of East Drive. It was obtained through funds generated by Woodruff Place children in their annual Wheel Rally.

□ “Summer,” at the south end of East Drive. It was obtained



▲ “Fall” sits at the south end of West Drive.

through gifts in memory of Dorothy Dougdale.

□ “Fall,” at the south end of West Drive. It was obtained through gifts in memory of Jeffrey Hammond.

□ “Winter,” at the north end of West Drive. It was obtained through gifts in memory of James R. Galbreth.

The Historic Woodruff Place Foundation plans to pursue more artwork in the near future as part of the overall plan to renovate the esplanades. Additionally, restoration of the historic street-lights is a primary goal for 2009, and the missing statuary in the small fountains is being investigated for possible replacement in the near future. ■

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▲ "Winter" sits at the north end of West Drive.



▲ The statues are adorned with clever detail, such as this torch on "Winter" and flowers on "Spring" (below ▼)

