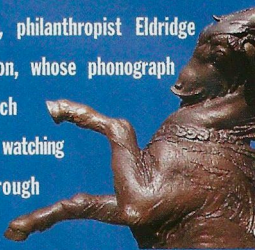


A Park Reborn

FRIENDS OF JOHNSON PARK
TOOK THE GOAT BY THE HORNS.

On hot summer afternoons in the early 1920s, philanthropist Eldridge Johnson, whose phonograph helped launch RCA, enjoyed watching kids run through a fountain



from his office window, a stone's throw from the Cooper Public Library and its grounds in Camden. A few years later, he purchased the park, added a wading pool, and commissioned whimsical sculptures for children. Renowned British sculptor Sir George Frampton created three copies of Peter Pan as a piper in bronze, one of which was for the newly named Johnson Park and another for London's Kensington Gardens. Philadelphia sculptor Albert Laessle contributed a menagerie of his own: goats, frogs, a turtle, a duck, and the Greek god Pan.

But by the 1980s, the park—acquired by Rutgers—Camden in 1985—had slipped into disrepair and the sculptures had either disappeared or fallen apart. Four years ago, the Friends of Johnson Park, including John Giannotti, professor emeritus of art, won a \$186,000 grant from the New Jersey Historic Trust

and hired a Massachusetts firm

to recast and reinstall four of

the sculptures

this spring, in-

cluding Pan and the

dancing goat.

