Greene neighborhood for 41 years. During these four decades, Mrs. Turner has been an active participant in the life of her community.

While the Ft. Greene community was recently described by New York Magazine as undergoing “a new residential renaissance”, the neighborhood was a different place in the ‘50s and ‘60s when Georgianna Turner first moved to South Oxford Street. Many of the brownstones had been converted to rooming houses and flop houses making everyday life quite a challenge. Mrs. Turner and a committed band of neighbors resolved to reclaim the block and worked tirelessly for decades to establish the Ft. Greene neighborhood, and especially South Oxford Street, as one of the premiere blocks in Brooklyn. Working with Mr. Percy Buchanan who was, then, the head of the South Oxford Street Block Association, along with other long term residents like Nancy Johnson, Hazel Slaughter, and William Turner (no relation). Georgianna Turner went from block to block galvanizing community support, exposing drug activity, and vociferously advocating for the changes that would make the neighborhood a better place to live.

Mrs. Turner remembers the years when she had to endure repeated vandalism to her home in response to her activism. She risked her life on the line by reporting drug activity. Ever fearless, Georgianna Turner and her cohorts in the South Oxford Street Block Association were not to be stopped. They worked hand-in-hand with local politicians, the police department, the sanitation department, the Board of Health, local churches—especially Queen of All Saints (where she has been a faithful member of 40 years), Lafayette Presbyterian Church—and whoever else would help them clean up the blocks from South Elliott to Clinton Avenue. She especially recalls their concerted effort to “get rid of the Atlantic Avenue meat market that was the scourge of the neighborhood, get the burns off the street, and get the trash cleaned up”.

Before real estate speculators and the Brooklyn Academy of Music was envisioned, the quiet, determined approach of residents like Georgianna Turner paved the way for the real-estate and economic boom that Ft. Greene is experiencing today. Though she never sought fame or fortune for her community activism, Georgianna Turner has received countless accolades for her valiant efforts. Her legacy has been to create a clean, safe, stable community of which she and her colleagues in the South Oxford Street Block Association can be proud.

On August 18, 1999, Georgianna Turner celebrated her 100th birthday. I want to salute this “grand old lady” as we end the last session of Congress in the 20th century. She leaves Brooklyn with a legacy that will endure long into the next century. I urge my colleagues to join me in acknowledging the splendid work of one of Ft. Greene’s finest jewels, Georgianna Turner.