

Garden Clubs Get Credit For Town Beauty

BY PATSY TUCKER

In order to fully appreciate the work of the garden clubs of Southern Pines, one must first take a brief look at the challenge they had ahead of them.

Southern Pines 1887—With the development of a new town that was started with enthusiasm and big dreams, a hotel, small cottages, a train depot and other various buildings, this was, of course, only the beginning of what is today a beautiful, gracious town, due in large part to the garden clubs of the area.



Patsy Tucker

The face of the town left little to behold as far as aesthetics were concerned. Described in an account of the situation by A.S. Newcomb who came from Maine to Moore County early in the Twentieth Century, today it might stretch one's imagination to look back at what it was like. "Dignified by being called roads were nothing more than winding trails blazed through scrub oak thickets and the few pine groves then standing—even Broad Street (then called Railroad Street) was merely a sandy route fetlock deep meandering from one side of the right of way through the village to the other like a flattened out puff adder asking in the summer sun."—(Sand and Grit).

From the very beginning John Patrick's corporation, the New England Manufacturing, Mining and Estate Company, had its own plan for an attractive and individual town. As laid out, the blocks would be 400 feet square, with streets 80 feet wide except for Broad Street, down which ran the railroad, as it does today. Broad Street was 160 feet from side to side, with sand-clay surfacing on both sides of the track. Each block was traversed by two alleys, crossing at the center at right angles, with a central parkway.

Patrick's hope had been that these inner parkways would be made ornamental with shrubs and trees, but at the time they became weed-thronged dumping ground, so they were returned to the corporation, which later sold them.

Through the efforts of the ladies in the town his dream is today a reality.

fire hazards from downtown."—(Young Southern Pines, Helen Huttenhauer).

Of equal importance was the project of clean-up day and at the suggestion of the town commission, the Civic Club appointed a clean-up day which was the forerunner of the municipal garbage collection.

They participated in Arbor Day with the planting of trees and shrubs along the median on Broad Street, many of which we are enjoying today.

Garden Club

The initiation of formal garden clubs in Southern Pines began in 1947 when a group of ladies gathered and formed the most active garden club in Southern Pines. At the first organizational meeting of the Southern Pines Garden Club, the group was given advice by Mrs. R.L. McMillian of Raleigh, who was a very active Garden Club member. That advice was to "be dirt, down-on your knees gardeners." And for all of the years since, this hard-working group of women have done just that.

Their original desire was to restore the grounds at the Shaw House which was in the process of being restored. With a treasury of \$48 they took on their first project—to plant the grounds of the Southern Pines Elementary school grounds.

By January of that first year with a treasury of still only \$60, it became evident that they needed to raise money in order to carry out their plans for the beautification of Southern Pines. This was the beginning of the now famous House and Garden Tour, which in the years following has become one of the most well-attended and well-known in the state.

This hard-working group of ladies now have a list of accomplishments that would be the envy of any civic group.

Garden Club Projects

Just a few of their projects include: the Mid-South Resort signs at the entrances to the town; beautification of both school grounds in Southern Pines; instrumental in keeping Midland Road clean from debris; kept the Library decorated for Christmas, though in later years other clubs have helped with this project.

They have planted azaleas and dogwoods in bare spots throughout the town; decorated the first Christmas tree on Broad St.; planted the area around the Boy Scout hut and Banksia roses at the Shaw House.

One of their more charming projects was the planting and care of the patio garden at the Southern Pines Library.

They have given camellia bushes to Sandhills Community College, and done planting on the roadside on Morganton Road by the town dump and also contribute to Arbor Day.

Their projects over the years are too numerous to mention, but in the spring if you see blue jean clad women digging in the dirt and raking leaves on Broad Street—they are the members of the Southern Pines Garden Club being "down-on their knees gardeners."

The addition of a new garden club, The Garden Club of the Sandhills embellished and added to the beauty of the whole area. Established in 1966, this group of garden lovers has put its touch on many projects throughout the area, including the beautiful plantings at Moore Regional Hospital and the establishment of the Patient Garden at St. Joseph of the Pines Hospital.

One of their most impressive projects was a gift of 1000 books and pamphlets to Weymouth Woods Nature Preserve, covering subjects on Sandhills native birds, reptiles, small animals and other environmental subjects.

They donated 57 shrubs to the Southern Pines Elementary School and over 100 American hollies and nandinas were given to Pinecrest High School.

Several community institutions have benefited from the club's philanthropic projects: Camp Easter, the Taylortown Day Care Center, the Sandhills Nursing Home among others.

Their major fund-raising project is the looked-forward-to luncheon and fashion show held each year in Pinehurst.

With funds realized from this project and others they funded a \$5,500 sprayer for the town of Southern Pines and the enthusiastic group of members contribute to making our area beautiful during the Christmas season.

Men's Garden Club

The Men's Garden Club organized in 1961 who proclaim to be "Brothers of the Order of the Green Thumb," is composed of 50 men in Southern Pines, who devote their interests not only to keeping their own yards sights to behold to those who ride through our residential sections, but also to encourage others with homes to do the same.

One large project that encourages

"Over the years we have had contests to help raise money, but there are so few of us now that we have to depend on donations. It costs \$250 a month to keep the grounds up and in good order, and this is one thing that we hope we can continue doing."

This club also donates a tree on Arbor Day.

Sir Walter Raleigh Garden

Last, but by no means the least is the exciting project started when the 400th Committee for the state asked counties to take on a project in commemoration of the state's 400th anniversary. While not all counties took on a project, Moore County investigated the wonderful and interesting project of the Sir Walter Raleigh Garden, now in the process of being formed as a formal English garden, located at Sandhills Community College. The Garden com-

mittee headed by Jane McPhaul, in cooperation with the college, and students who are doing the actual installation of the plantings will commemorate the end of the first stage of the garden, which is a three stage project, with a granite marker to be placed in the garden in October of this year, as an ongoing part of the Centennial celebration.

All of the Southern Pines garden clubs have given generously towards the building of the garden and that plus individual contributions have made this historical celebration possible. The committee urges anyone who is interested in contributing to this outstanding memorial to contact Mrs. McPhaul, as a great deal of effort is needed to make this unusual and beautiful project a reality: a project that will enhance the whole county for many

years to come as a public viewing garden.

Sandhills Community College has an outstanding Landscape Design program and the college features one of the largest holly collections available, the Ebersole Collection, that can be seen at the Sandhills Horticulture Gardens.

Though not a garden club the college and the Sir Walter Raleigh Gardens are contributing greatly to the beauty of the area.

It seems John Patrick's dream of a beautiful, attractive individual town has over the years come into being—through the efforts of the very people who live and work and raise families in Southern Pines and the entire Sandhills.



EARLY SCENE IN SOUTHERN PINES

CAN NOW SLEEP

S.N. Rockwell of Pennsylvania, a sufferer from insomnia caused by a severe accident, had not been able to get a night's sleep without the use of sedatives for nine months before he came. Is now able to discard all sleeping potions except draughts of pine night air.—Pine Knot, April 23, 1887.

TRIPS ON LUMBEE

Charles Macauley reported that in 1923 the Southern Pines Hunt Club was offering "picturesque canoe trips down the Lumbee River; wild turkey, pig and quail; expert Indian guides for those who wish." Also bowling, billiards and pool at the Casino.

NAMED FOR GRAPE

Niagara was named for the vast quantities of this variety of grapes shipped from its platforms.—Macauley, Passing Years.

BURPEE VISITORS

Macauley lists Mr. and Mrs. W. Altee Burpee among the 1904 visitors to Southern Pines.