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Women Pioneers Launched Work of Beautification 50 Years Ago

Example Set by Village Improvement Society Followed by Other Organizations

By Charles Macauley

Standing with Judge R. W. Winston of Durham, and surveying the green vista of the Broad street parkways and the bright emerald sward of newly planted lawns, and hearing his splendid compliment to the spirit that makes Southern Pines a beauty spot, induces the thought that some need of praise is due the workers who labored so faithfully through many years to bring out of a virtual wilderness the tree lined streets and shrub-bordered avenues now evoking universal admiration from our visitors.

Nearly fifty years have come and gone since twenty feminine settlers pioneering from their prim New England gardens, confronted the sandy trails, myriad black-jacks, scattered pines and stumps that surrounded their new home, and promptly organized a Village Improvement Society. They proceeded to remove the stumps from Broad street, Pennsylvania avenue, and other streets as yet hardly more than lines upon the map thereby instilling a spirit that, fostered and emulated by their successors, has transformed the former wilderness to its present beauty.

They Had a Vision

This pioneering improvement society numbering among its members Mrs. L. A. Young, Mrs. Alice Marks, Mrs. C. B. Grout, Mrs. Philander Pond, Miss Louise Kitchell, Mrs. A. M. Clarke and other early settlers, was followed by another, 1895-1900, numbering among its members many prominent residents, the Rev. H. T. Gregory, John N. Powell, W. M. Saunders, Mr. and Mrs. R. M. Couch and the Rev. G. R. Ransome, who continued to plant the parkways, principally with our present majestic sycamores, and to cultivate floral gardens. The Saunders gardens at West Broad street and Connecticut avenue were deservedly famous, as were those of Dr. Swett with their encircling rows of elms and magnolias.

Just a few years later, in 1907 the Civic Club was organized and under the leadership of Mrs. A. P. L. Dull continued the work of planting the railway parkway on West Broad street, between New Hampshire and New York avenue, a work begun in 1897 by the station agent, Burroughs. They also encouraged the work of planting trees and the general care of the streets. The gardens of Mrs. Dull, E. A. Tracy, Mrs. T. S. Burgess, Mrs. W. N. Crain, Mrs. I. F. Chandler, W. F. Junge and others were the admiration of residents and visitors.

Downtown Planting

Coming down to comparatively modern history is the extensive beautification of the Broad street parkways sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce under the inspiration of Frank Buchan, the absolute transformation of Mount Hope Cemetery by the Relief Society, and the dogwood and pines now lining the highway from Lakeview to Aberdeen, of which the first planting, the block of West Broad street leading into the highway is already an impressive forecast of the beauty of the whole, while the work on the Midland Road from the town border to Pinehurst, in part almost the very latest development of the program is already a serene display fulfilling all our hopes. The Kiwanis Club played an important part in much of this beautification.

The parking of the Country Club was done under the direction of M. G. Nichols, F. F. Travis and J. N. Powell. Quite recently County Forester Alex Fields, with the aid of the C. C. C., planted over 1,200 pines as a border to the entrance to the fire tower west of Mount Hope Cemetery. Within a few short years these new plantings will become a border of greenery matching the growth planted in former years by the devoted pioneers who had the vision and the will to make our town and its approaches beautiful, and whose vision has been fulfilled not only by our trees and shrubbery, but by our many private gardens.

LIGHT FINGERED GENTRY AVOID SOUTHERN PINES

Southern Pines is well policed. Its efficiency both in crime prevention and in the apprehension of law-breakers has been proved on a number of occasions, and the town bears a reputation among the criminal class as a good one to avoid. Chief of Police Jasper A. Gargis is an experienced officer, having come here from larger fields where he ran the gamut of police work. Serving with him are C. E. Newton, who guards the destinies of the village at night, and Irving Morrison.

70 Seconds

Southern Pines School Quickly Cleared When Dr. Herr Rings Alarm

While paying an inspection visit to the Southern Pines School last week Dr. George G. Herr, president of the School Board, accompanied by Frank Maples, another member of the board, asked Principal Frank Webster where the button that rang the fire alarm was. Mr. Webster showed him and Dr. Herr pressed it. Within 70 seconds every pupil was 100 feet away from the building, in lines according to classes, with a teacher at their head. There are 455 pupils in the school.

The school has fire drills once or twice a month, and that the children have learned their lesson in this subject was ably demonstrated to the School Board members. Dr. Herr and Mr. Maples were also much impressed upon their visit with the happy attitude of the pupils in the school.

"I wish more parents would visit the school and see what is going on there," Dr. Herr said this week. Despite some handicaps we feel that the school is running very smoothly. But if we could interest the parents more in the institution I believe we could develop public sentiment for the removal of the handicaps. A number of changes are necessary and we'd like the parents' cooperation in bringing them about."

CAROLINA POWER & LIGHT GIVES EFFICIENT SERVICE

Under the efficient management of Ralph Chandler, the Carolina Power and Light Company, one of the largest public utilities in the south, maintains a modern office on East Broad street, Southern Pines, and this company furnishes power and light for the entire Sandhills. In addition to this service, electrical supplies of all kinds may be purchased from the Southern Pines office, headquarters in this section.

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