

Tales of Early Settlers Enthrall Garden Club Members

By Clare Winslow

Martha Edwards, an active garden club member as well as a member of the town's Recreation Advisory Committee, was the speaker at the February meeting of the PKS Garden Club. She presented a slide show and talk about the very beginnings of Pine Knoll Shores. She brought alive the tremendously courageous undertaking of settling this wild wooded island, made especially personal because her grandfather and great grandfather were among these brave new settlers. Her early family photographs and slides show the soundfront houses first built at approximately the present intersection of what now is Oakleaf and Sycamore Drives. These early builders were cautioned to not only fence their properties, but also to secure wire all around the perimeter base of their houses. These admonitions were to protect them from even earlier inhabitants—deer, pigs, goats, sheep, cows, and alligators.

Ms. Edwards' family came by steamship from Huntington, Long Island in 1908, traversing the waterways that included the Dismal Swamp Canal. Her great

grandfather, a steamship captain named Will Young, and a friend, Fred Eaton, found Bogue Banks around 1908 and proceeded to purchase lots upon which to build. Young, Eaton, and Herb Roselle purchased their lots for \$60 per lot in 1910, the very year in which Ms. Edwards' grandfather was born. The family photographs show these early settlers standing proudly by their simple hand-built houses set amidst thick forest land studded with prickly yucca plants, the children sitting atop alligators, riding in oxcarts along Salter Path, or fishing on Dog Island which lay off Salter Path.

These houses adjacent to the sound were built in 1911. In 1917 John Royal built the first house among the dunes on the beach facing the ocean. In 1917 the family of Theodore Roosevelt purchased a large tract of land and built a home on the sound opposite what is now Hawthorne Drive. Alice Hoffman, Roosevelt's relative, lived in the house and bequeathed part of the family tract to the town as a wildlife refuge. This piece of untouched land lies near the entrance to the aquarium.

"Aibonita" was the name given to this land in the early 1900's. Today that same land is known as Pine Knoll Shores. The name Aibonita appeared on maps, deeds and surveys of the area during that era.

The garden club audience was spellbound during the presentation. Most knew nothing about the origin of our town, with the exception of the history of Alice Hoffman and her grant to the town. To not only see the early slides and photographs, but to realize that these courageous settlers included Martha Edwards' own grandfather and great grandfather, made these past events really come alive.

Derrick Smith of the North Carolina Department of Transportation's Roadside Environmental Unit will speak to the club March 12 about wildflowers in our coastal area. The garden club meets at town hall on the second Wednesday of every month at 9:30 a.m. Visitors and guests are always welcome. Arbor Day 2008 will be celebrated with a program on Friday, March 21 at Brock Basin. The tree being planted will honor the memory of recently deceased member Barbara Evans. Everyone is invited to attend. Twenty-two members attended the Bogue Banks Library's photo exhibit Jan. 18 featuring majestic gardens of North Carolina. On February 6, 16 members enjoyed a Valentine luncheon program

presented by the Surfside Garden Club of Morehead City.

President Barbara Williams welcomed Barbara Miner of Willow Road as our newest member. Joan Smith, ecology chairman shared several environmental tips. She urged change to barbless hooks when fishing. Most fish thrown back after being caught die from grievous mouth injuries. Test programs show no loss of fish caught when these new barbless fishhooks are used. She also suggested using "Bite Block" for battling bugs instead of a DEET solution. This solution

is processed from wild tomato plants and is as effective as DEET. She also shared a photograph of what must be the world's prettiest moth—the Luna moth. It appears on tree trunks for only a few days and looks like a beautiful exotic peppermint green butterfly!

Treasurer Sheryl Woodbury suggested a simple way of training a vine up a brick wall. Simply attach a small glob of silicone adhesive every foot or so, inserting a twistum in the center to hold the new shoots. To remove, just peel off the adhesive. Vivian Macdonald shared an interesting fact: most birds fly at 30 miles per hour; humming birds and ducks fly at 60 mph! No wonder it's so difficult to count mallards as they fly by!



Martha Edwards



Martha Edwards' grandfather's summer place in Pine Knoll Shores Circa 1911

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