

The NEW BERN

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Yesterday was when folks never seemed to be in a hurry, but whistled more and smiled oftener. Pause in your rat race, and ponder the lines of this little prayer that we came across the other day.

"Slow me down, Lord. Ease the pounding of my heart by the quieting of my mind. Steady my hurried pace with a vision of the eternal reach of time. Give me amidst the confusion of my day, the calmness of the everlasting hills.

"Break the tension of my nerves and muscles with the soothing music of the singing streams that live in my memory. Teach me the art of taking minute vacations, of slowing down to look at a flower, to chat with a friend, to read a few lines from a good book.

"Remind me each day of the fable of the hare and the tortoise, that I may know the race is not always to the swift, that there is more to life than increasing speed. Let me look upward into the branches of the towering oak, and know that it grew tall because it grew slowly and well.

"Slow me down, Lord, and inspire me to send my roots into the soil of life's values, that I may grow toward the stars of the greater destiny."

Yesterday was when Flea Bag enacted a canine Cinderella story by winning honors in a pet show held at the Tryon Village playground. It happened a dozen years ago, on a bright summer morning.

It was foolish to sell the loose jointed, nondescript mongrel short, even though there were some fancy thoroughbreds competing against him. In fact, no dog could have been more of a dark horse.

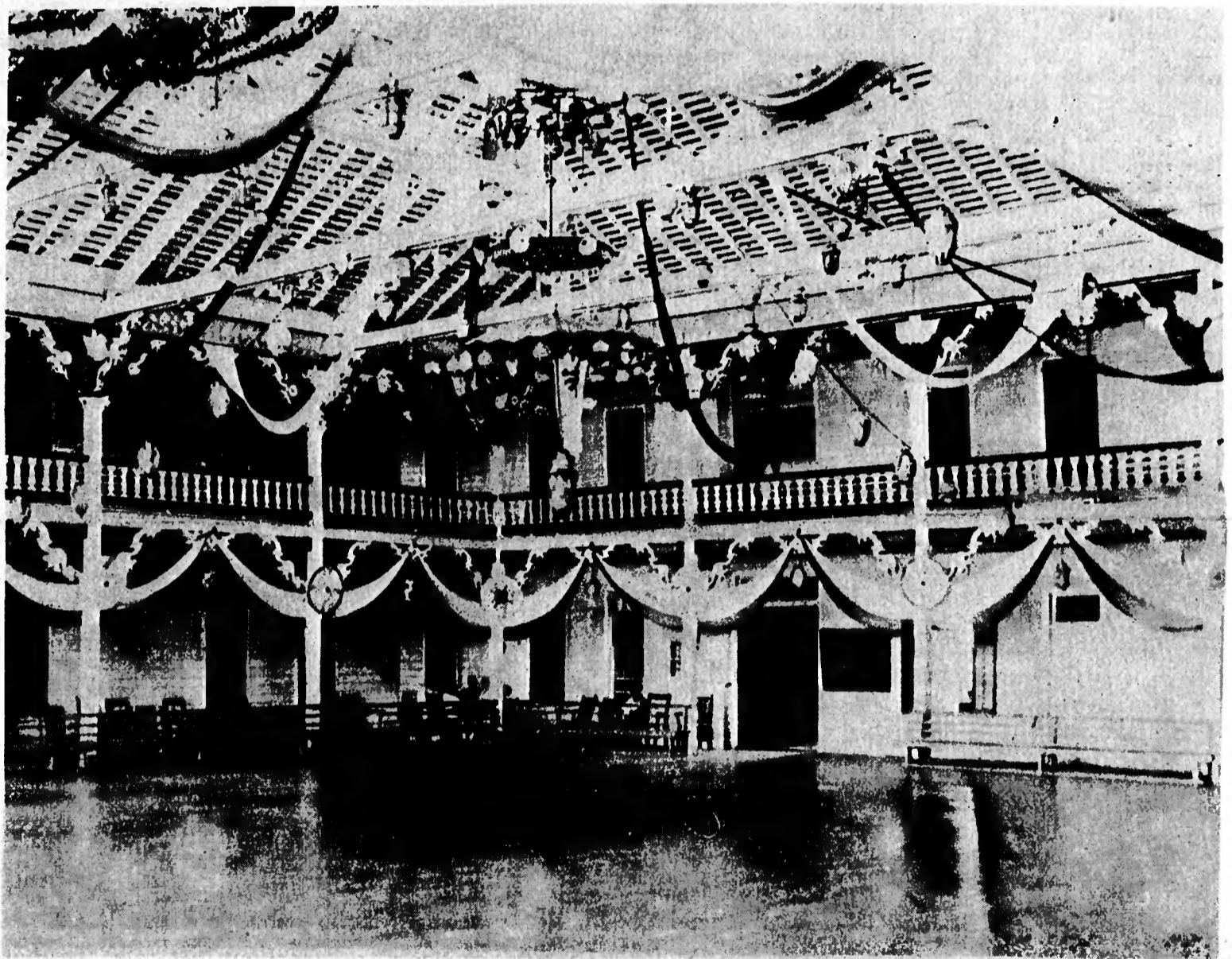
Flea Bag's big chance came because two young ladies, 10 years old, had the insight to see his hidden qualities. Trudie Walker and Lisa Blades picked him up as an unwanted cur on the street, and turned him into a champion.

They took him to the Blades home, plopped him into the bath tub, and worked wonders with an abundance of soap and water. When he emerged, his exterior was spotless and his inner spirit soared.

Off to the Tryon Village playground the three of them went. All entries in the show had to have a name, so for reasons already obvious to Trudie and Lisa they named their entry Flea Bag.

This didn't intimidate him in the least. Before the show was over, he had been adjudged the most graceful walker and the most graceful barker of them all. Graceful walking we can figure, but what constitutes graceful barking isn't exactly clear. Anyhow, Flea Bag was tops at it.

When Trudie took the mongrel home, the rest of the family displayed a complete lack of enthusiasm about adding him to the household. They liked canines, had their share in the past, but weren't quite as impressed as the



ONCE UPON A TIME—Again our thanks to Albert D. Brooks, whose persistent search for old photographs pertinent to our city and section has uncovered this excellent view of the famed ball room at Morehead City's Atlantic Hotel. Governors, for generations, and other notables through the years, tripped the light fantastic on this polished floor. So did thousands of lesser known North Carolinians, including New Bernians of all ages. A ball at the rambling frame hotel, destroyed by fire after its nights of tuneful joy were no more, was a many splendored thing. Not only for the dancers, but for spectators in the surrounding balcony. A million memories hung over the ancient ball room, and in the era of big bands, some of the greatest played there. The good old days weren't altogether good, but much of what lifted hearts for moments too precious to forget could be found here

on an enchanted evening. Today's generation, as set in its own ways as any before it, can neither envision nor appreciate the glamor of such a scene. The past has buried its dead, and flames that consumed the Atlantic with the gait of a racing thoroughbred made it final. Only the few oldsters who remain, and still dance in their hearts, hear in their quiet hours the haunting strains of Alice Blue Gown, Three O'Clock In The Morning, I'm Forever Blowing Bubbles, and The Waltz You Saved For Me. Who among the young with you now cares that Paul Whiteman, Cab Calloway, and Ben Bernie and All the Lads once made music in these parts, or that Gene Austin sang Melancholy Baby and Blue Heaven, when in his brief prosperity he brought his yacht to anchor at Morehead City? But believe us, you youngsters, it was a good time to be living, though this you'll never really know.