

Hospital Expansion-Facts, Figures

The following are facts and figures related to the Craven County Hospital expansion project: Total contract - \$4,000,000. Consists of 36 beds, 10 intensive care units, new kitchen and dining room facility, 50,337 sq. ft.,

four floors, underground utilities, service tunnel, exterior walls-red brick veneer to match existing brick; completion in 18 months; mechanical contract-Electricon of Kinston, North Carolina \$600,000; plumbing

contract-J.J.Barnes of Fayetteville, North Carolina \$550,000; electrical contract-Watson Electric of Wilson, North Carolina \$300,000; elevator-Dover Elevator of Greensboro, North Carolina \$170,000;

Tom Cole-project manager; Ed Garland-general superintendent. Architects-Odell Associates.

Ground breaking ceremonies were held Tuesday.

The Second Annual Coward Family Reunion



THE HUMAN PICNIC TABLE—Betsy Ann Coward Wilson of Vanceboro agreed to lend a lap to several relatives needing a place for their plates during the Coward Family Reunion last Sunday at Glenn Franks Landing along the Neuse River. Except for a strong wind that came up at one point, the weather was perfect.

It's not often that you can stand before a group of over 150 people and call them a bunch of Cowards - and have them agreeing with you.

That chance came last Sunday during the Second Annual Coward Family Reunion at Glenn Franks Landing off of River Road.

It was an afternoon of good food and priceless conversation under the sturdy oak trees laced with green-gray spanish moss along the brown Neuse.

The food was plentiful and good thanks to chef Lonnie Long who served fried chicken, barbecued pig, chicken and pastry, endless covered dishes of baked beans, potato salad, cole slaw, creamed corn, deviled eggs, and oceans of sugar-sweetened iced tea.

One center of attraction was the original rocking chair used by grandma Mattie Coward as several of her decendants posed for pictures aside the well-preserved yellow rocker.

There was also a surprise 51st birthday party for Melvin Adams of River-Road highlighted by the singing of "Happy Birthday" by many of the womenfolk in perfect harmony.

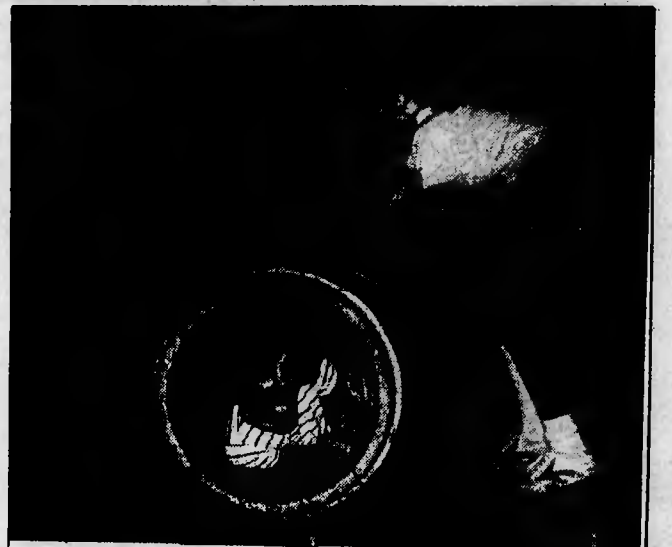
The oldest member present was 90 year-old Johnny Smith of Shelmérine.

Reunion organizer Helen Coward Gaskins said that her grandfather Sam Coward was born in 1859 and later married Martha (Mattie) Fleming and they had seven children.

One of Sam's grandsons is George Coward and he grew up on a farm near Epworth. George said, "I got teased a lot when I was a youngin' goin' to school with a name like Coward but it made me a better fighter than I woulda been otherwise and I went all the way through World War II with the name Coward and many of the women in the service didn't believe me when I told them my last name."

People came from as far away as Hopewell, Virginia to sample such delights as collards and home-made lemon pie.

Edna Robinson of Vanceboro tickled everyone when she reported that she had started going to church regularly but that she couldn't get on Social Security because husband John was too young.



ROLLIN' AND REELIN'—Beth Johnson, 8, of Vanceboro may have been a bit dizzy after getting pushed around by brother Bobby, 10, and Heather Martin, 9.

New Businesses In Vanceboro

One of the new businesses is Farm Life Florist and Gift Shop. It is owned and operated by Ray and Elva Matthews of Route 1, Vanceboro.

Ray and Elva are planning to bring to the Vanceboro community the latest in gifts, crafts, and floral arrangements for all occasions. Elva recently attended a floral workshop where she was instructed in how to put together various types of floral arrangements. Wire service will be available to area residents. This service is used for sending flowers to friends and loved ones

outside the Vanceboro delivery area.

When asked why the name Farm Life Gift & Florist was picked, Elva said, "I named it after the Farm Life School which has been a part of Vanceboro for so many years. I debated whether to name it "Farm Life" or "Millstream", but remembrances of our old school finally won the decision."

Other businesses that have recently opened in Vanceboro are B&N Auto Service, Vanceboro Fish Market, Wachovia's New banking facilities, and Nobles Restaurant.

Question of the Week: What was it like living in Craven County before World War II?



Mack Mills of Chips

"It was tight times back then, life wasn't nothin' fancy—we lived by the mule and the plow. Most of the town had electricity but there were places in the country that didn't and we had cars but nothin' like now."



Ethel Purser of Vanceboro

"We didn't have supermarkets back then, just Cleve's and Peed's, and people came to town in cars and horse drawn carts on narrow roads. House and garden work was the same—farmin' was by mule teams."



Clyde Ewell of Vanceboro

"Came here in 1920's, remember a wooden bridge over Swift Creek and Ed Barrow's station and I went fishin' off the bridge, caught blue brim, perch, catfish and eel. I worked at Vanceboro Theatre."



Virginia Tyre of Vanceboro

"Things were hard but we were happy because family members looked to each other, children obeyed parents, and if you got in a tight, neighbors would help. If we went dancing, we were all poor together."