

Progress Report Of Warren Memorial Forest, Inc., 1958 - 1966



BUILDING WHERE COUNCIL WAS FORMED IN 1958

For several years four rural church groups adjacent to each other and located in the Hecks Grove School Community were working cooperatively to improve the civic, educational, religious, and social life of the families in the area.

This cooperative venture took on a new dimension early in 1958 when Rev. G. E. Cheek and his brothers N. A. Cheek and G. C. Cheek, dedicated one hundred five acres of land for the development of a Memorial Forest.

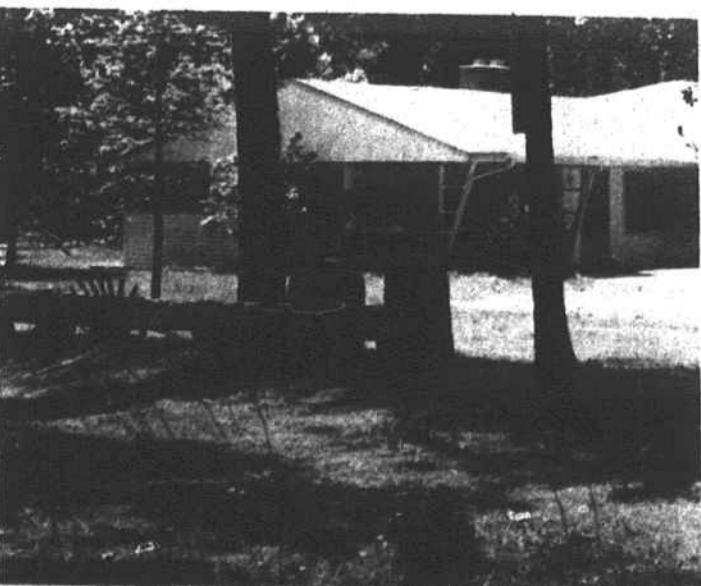
Each of the four churches appointed a committee to form a Recreation Council. At about the same time the Shiloh Association, made up of 30 rural churches, in a five-county area, appointed a special committee to also study recreational possibilities within the geographic five-county area of the 30 churches of the association. These committees requested the North Carolina Recreation Commission to appraise Memorial Forest as to its educational, cultural and recreation potential.

Mr. Hubert Henderson and Miss Virginia Gregory of the North Carolina Recreation Commission made an on the spot study of the area and on May 28, 1958, presented their findings to the joint committees, representing the four local churches and the committee appointed by the association. Their report was very favorably received by the joint committee on May 28, 1958. Two representatives from the North Carolina Recreation Commission suggested to the committees present, that a special committee be appointed to carry out the following objectives:

1. "To provide suitable grounds and facilities for constructive leisure - time activities for individuals, the family, and larger groups; also, to provide a natural laboratory for nature study of native trees, shrubbery and flowers."
2. To enhance the aesthetic, cultural and recreational appreciation of both old and young.
3. To provide and care for upkeep of the Forest through the cooperative efforts of the Council with the suggestions of the N. C. Recreation Commission and the Federal Government (through the local A. S. D. Office). The North Carolina Forestry Division, The Agricultural Extension Division of N. C. State College, and any other individuals, agencies or organizations who may be interested in working with the Council to sustain its objectives.
4. To work with the Recreation Council in keeping fully informed of the leisure time that creeps upon the old and the young of the communities, and shall therefore keep a well-planned program five years ahead that would offer the youth and aged cultural and Recreational Opportunities the year round.
5. The Recreation Council is a non-stock and non-profit organization whose membership working cooperatively together, shall bring as many likeminded people together in membership as possible, to carry out the above objectives. After deducting current expenses whatever cash remains will recur to the project to make it bigger and better.



After eight years the following has been added: Studio, Head Start office, A fine athletic field, Family play ground area, (An unspoiled natural forest for nature study), (Sunday School retreat), Suitable picnic grounds for the family and larger groups. The foundation is now being laid for Neighborhood Youth Corps office building to give 100 Warren County youth summer employment.



Stone Seats and a bell that was shipped from Cincinnati, by Miss A. L. Cheek, a public school teacher from that Ohio city.

Rev. Cheek And Mr. Davis Visit Washington To Obtain Vista Funds

June 6, 1965, G. E. Cheek, Executive Director, and S. A. Davis, President of the Council and two other members drove to Washington to have a special conference on Rural Vista Projects. We were treated most royally and were introduced to other divisions of OEO.

During the following summer three Vista workers were signed to Warren County. They were young people who did not fit into our area so well. They were transferred and in their stead, two elderly Vista workers were sent to us. Mr. and Mrs. Burnds. They were consecrated workers and did a most effective job in our three county area, especially in Warren County where they met the entire Health, Education and Welfare staff. Here they got a picture of the counties needs and how to use their time most effectively in meeting these needs. Mrs. Burnds is an artist in her own rights, during her leisure time, painted a picture of the late Anna Pritchett's homestead and the Old Brodie Post Office. Mrs. Burnds had planned to paint a picture of the remains of the Old Jones Spring Hotel, where Mrs. Robert E. Lee and her daughter, Annie were visiting during the war between the sections.

Mr. and Mrs. Burnds, because of sickness in their family in the far Western state, Oregon, was called home before she completed this last painting job. We were indeed sorry to see the Burnds leave during the first of April, 1966.

During the weekend of April 22, S. A. Davis President of the council, G. E. Cheek, Executive Director and Charles A. Cheek, Secretary, were called to Washington to complete NYC program to meet the deadline April 30th.

Washington has approved a 50,000 dollar package to give one hundred young people of Warren County between the ages of 16-21 summer jobs to aid them in a successful returning to school in September. A hundred percent of these young people must come from low income families.

On April 20, 1966, a year round Head Start program was approved by OEO in Washington, and on May 12, Governor Dan Moore embracing the total grant of 166,969.00 dollars to be spent in our area for the next six months.

The Recreation Council of the Memorial Forest Inc., is Grantee Agent for eleven Head-Start Child Development Centers; Seven in Warren County, two in Franklin County and two in Vance County. The age emphasis is the five year olds from low income families. This program embracing \$166,969, was endorsed by Governor Dan Moore, May 12, 1966.

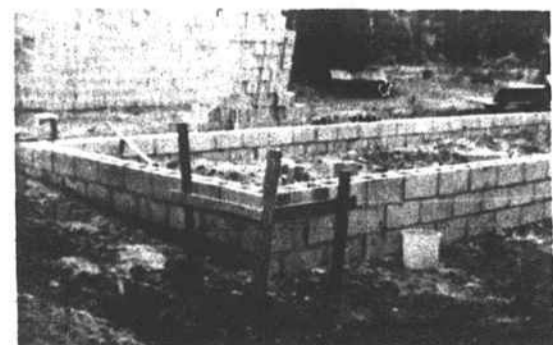
During the week of May 23-27 a Head-Start Training Institute was held in the three county area. Dr. N. M. McMillan, professor of Education at Shaw University, Mrs. Kathryn Y. Shepard, A. B., M. A., Associate professor of Education at Shaw University. Mrs. Anita Thompson, R. N. were Professional Consultants.

Visitors To Memorial Forest

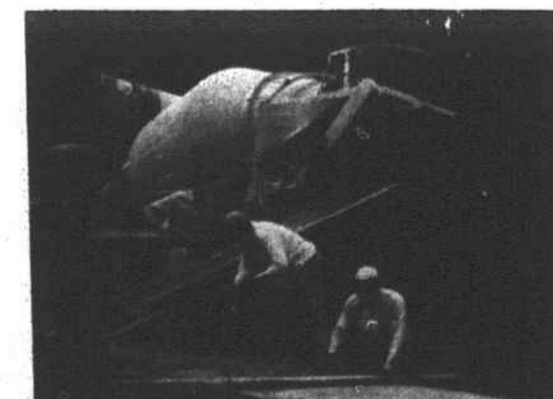
In 1962 persons visited the Memorial forest from the following places in the nation:

1. Morris Mitchel's Group representing Vermont, New Jersey, New York, Ghana, Africa, Puerto Rico, and Mexico.
2. Group from Kenya East Africa, Sierra Leone, West Africa.
3. Camporee - Sapont, John Penn, Vanwarco, Boy Scouts of America.
4. Camporee - Girl Scouts from Louisburg, N. C.
5. Camporee - Boy Scouts from Raleigh, N. C.
6. S. S. picnic group, 125 from Nash County.
7. Picnic Group - High School Class from Perry's High School, Franklin County.
8. Picnic Outing Group from Oxford, N. C., Granville County.
9. YWCA Women from Hampton and Newport News, Va. - Sp chartered bus
10. July fourth-County-wide picnic-500.
11. Halifax County group-125.

In 1962 individual visitors (two or more on cars), to the Memorial Forest were from the following



The Foundation is now being laid for Neighborhood Youth Corps Office building to give 100 Warren County youth summer employment.



The Rev. C. E. Cheek and helper are shown spreading cement for the foundation of stone seats.



Dr. N. M. McMillan of Shaw University talking to his class of HEAD START teachers, May 25, at Mitchell Baptist Church.

places:

- Maryland-Baltimore.
 - Ohio-Cincinnati.
 - Connecticut-Bridgeport.
 - Vermont-Putney.
 - Pennsylvania-Philadelphia.
 - Michigan-Detroit, Flint, Ann Arbor.
 - North Carolina-Durham, Greensboro, Charlotte, Winston-Salem, Reidsville, Oxford, Franklin, Raleigh, Chapel Hill, Zebulon, Selma, Rocky Mount, Greenville, Garner, Roxboro, Louisburg.
 - New Jersey-Englewood, Lakewood, Patterson.
 - New York-Manhattan, Brooklyn, Bronx, Mt. Vernon, Garden City, Springfield Gardens, Jamaica.
 - Virginia-Norfolk, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Richmond, Newport News.
 - Tennessee-Nashville.
 - Florida-Tallahassee.
- Number of countries who know about the forest through correspondence: England, Sweden, Denmark, Africa, Columbia, Ceylon, Canada, and U. S. A. - Tenn., Ky., Ohio, Kansas, Mo., Mass., Conn., Vt., N. Y., N. J., Md., Pa., Va., S. C., Ga., Fla., La., West Va., Texas, Ala.

Life Members

Mr. Oscar Williams, a 1929 graduate of the Warren County Training School (now North Warren High School), has a \$100 life membership in MRF's Recreational Council, Inc., as does Mr. Spencer Skipper of Ridgeway.

The scale of memberships into the Recreation Council is:

- Contributing member-\$5.00
- Sustaining member-\$10 or more.
- Lifetime membership-\$100
- Gifts-any amount.



MR. OSCAR WILLIAMS
Life Member

The foundation or influences which made the Recreation Council of the Memorial Forest possible began to be laid during the early 20's. (Story continued in next issue of the Record.)

Advisory Board Is Appointed

In 1960 the Recreation Council selected the following persons as an advisory board to the Memorial Forest Council, Inc.:

R. E. Jones, State Farm Agent, Chairman, Greensboro; Dr. E. Norfleet Gardner, Chairman, Southern Baptist Missionary Board; Dr. Paul Green, Dramatist, Honorary Chairman, Chapel Hill; Virginia Gregory, Assistant Director, N. C. Recreation Commission; Mrs. Ada M. Jernigan, President, State Conference of

Parents and Teachers; Dr. W. J. Kennedy, Jr., member Higher Board of Education; Dr. John A. Larkins, State Welfare Consultant; the Honorable Claude Philpott, Lieutenant Governor; Dr. John W. Parker, Director, Carolina Playmakers, Chapel Hill.

The above Advisory Board was approved by Governor Terry Sanford in a letter to Dr. Paul Green, the noted dramatist in Chapel Hill, dated Feb. 24, 1961.



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE
RALEIGH
February 24, 1961

TERRY SANFORD
GOVERNOR

Dr. Paul Green
Greenwood
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Dear Dr. Green:

Reverend Cheek from Warrenton has talked with me recently about his plans for the development of a recreation center on land he inherited from his father. He tells me that you along with a number of other distinguished citizens of this state are working as members of an advisory board for this project. I think that the objectives of this project are commendable and I found it an interesting and encouraging discussion.

I certainly feel that the efforts of Reverend Cheek and your group deserve the encouragement of this office, and I hope that you will pass along to those present at your meeting on February 27 my best wishes for success in your work.

I understand that Lieutenant Governor Philpott may be with you and that members of the State Recreation Commission will certainly be present.

With best wishes always,

Sincerely,

Terry Sanford
Terry Sanford