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20 CENTS

Throngs view historic house

PCRA buys first chair

The public has turned out in unexpected numbers to view the Newbold White house since its opening on July 3.

And the oldest house in the state now has its piece of period furniture, a 300-year old chair purchased from a New England antique dealer.

According to Herbert Nixon, project coordinator for the Perquimans County Restoration Association, which runs the house, just under 1,000 people viewed the historic site over the July Fourth weekend. Six hundred saw it on the opening day. Nixon roughly estimates some 1,300 people have viewed the house since its opening.

"The guides didn't even have a chance to go to the bathroom or get a drink of water," said Ann Young of the PCRA, who is acting as a guide. "And we've had 15 or so each day during the week. That's pretty good during the week. We only expected three or four."

Officials from Colonial Williamsburg have viewed the site, and the Smithsonian Institution is also interested in taking a look. Most of the other visitors are from North Carolina and Virginia, but there was one man from Kalamazoo, Michigan and another from Ketchikan, Alaska who signed the house ledger.

The chair that the PCRA just purchased was repaired by John Smith of Edenton — a member of the PCRA — and will be in the house as soon as preparations can be made. The only repair Smith made to the chair was to reweave the seat.

It is a simple-looking, ladder-back, William and Mary period chair of the Banister style, made in about 1690, possibly in New Hampshire. If it appears to be a little short, that's not because seventeenth century settlers were short people. The legs have lost about four or five inches from 300 years of wear, according to Smith.

The chair will be placed in the parlor room in the downstairs portion of the house, and roped off to prevent any damage.

Before the chair can be placed in the house, though, its authenticity must be approved by the state Department of

Archives and History, which approved every step of the building project. Nixon felt sure that this would not be a problem.

The chair was appraised by John Tyler, who runs the Hope Plantation near Winsor, and Nixon said that "if John Tyler approves it, the department will."

The furniture committee of the PCRA is considering other furniture to add to the house. For example, they are now considering purchasing a pair of andirons of the same period. But Nixon said the furnishing would take a lot of time — and a lot of expense.

"We're going to have to go more for reproductions at first," Nixon said, adding that they will indicate to viewers which pieces are genuine and which are reproductions. "Then as we buy the real thing, will put it in here and sell the reproductions."

A fundraising drive for the house will begin sometime in September.

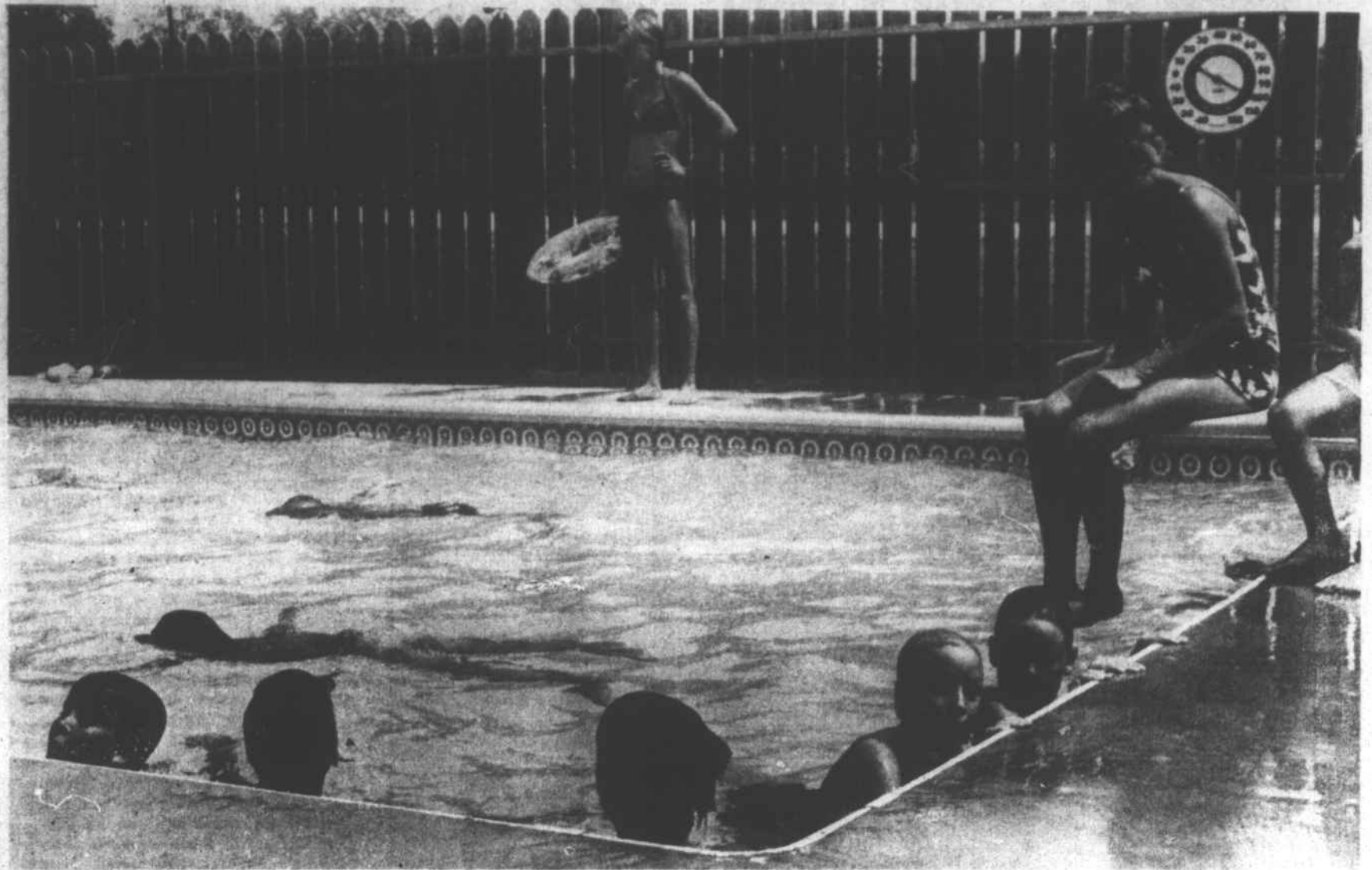
A couple of other notes...

Nixon will add iron doorknobs — actually handle-latch arrangements made after the style of the originals — as soon as he can get approval from the Department of Archives and History. "We're not going to put them in," said Nixon, "until (local Department of Archives historian) Al Hunicutt points his finger at exactly where he wants them put." This, as with everything else about the house, has to be approved as to its exact authenticity.

The house also experience what may have been its first case of vandalism. A round hole about as big around as a pencil was found in the glass of one of the casement windows.

Replacing the small piece glass will be quite a large undertaking. For one thing, the piece of glass itself is not cheap, it being authentic, hand-blown glass from Scotland.

To put the new piece in, Nixon will have to take the window out, take the entire glass out of its frame, cut through the iron strips in the window, take out the broken piece, put a new piece in, and then re-do what he just did. Of course, all of this must be done without damaging the rest of the window.



They're learning

Mary White (on the diving board) of Hertford instructs a summer swimming class at her home with children from Perquimans and Chowan counties.

County begins work on new water project

The Perquimans County Board of Commissioners in their regular meeting on Tuesday of last week awarded the Midgette Well and Pump Co. the contract to drill test wells, after MW&PC made the lowest bid on the project.

The drilling marks the first actual work on the county's Phase II plan to expand its water system. The Phase II water project will eventually include the construction of three new wells, a new water treatment plant, and water lines through the county.

"We're kind of anxious to get this thing started," said Board Chairman Joseph

Nowell in a telephone interview. The project, which will cost \$1,275,000, is jointly funded by a state clean water bond grant, a Farm Home Administration grant, a FmHA loan and county money.

The drilling, which will cost \$9,200, will begin immediately. The test wells will be drilled in the area around the Old County Home near Winfall. "Winfall has such good water," Nowell said, "and maybe we can get some of that water too. The less we spend to get good water, the cheaper we can put it out."

Nowell added that the county expects

to begin to receive bids on the other work in the Phase II plan in about three months.

In other action:

The board approve a donation of \$500 to the Highway 17 Association, a private group which is fighting to improve conditions along U.S. 17 in Northeastern North Carolina. Wayne Ashley of the Industrial Development Commission made the request for donations. Commissioner Lester Simpson gave the only opposing vote.

"I'd love to see 17 improved," said Simpson after the meeting. "I think it would help the economy. But I think it's bad to spend tax money to get the state to do it. It's our money they're (the state) going to use to do it with."

Nowell speaking for the majority, said after the meeting, "I think the board felt we needed someone to beat on doors for us."

The board also approved a \$860 appropriation to Precision Walls Inc. of

Raleigh to do work on the new Farm Home Administration offices in the Albemarle Regional Planning and Development Commission Building.

Another \$1,135 was given to ARPDC for its office improvements, with the reservation that ARPDC will pay for any additional costs.

Finance Officer D.F. Reed reported that this has been the county's most successful year in collecting delinquent taxes.

The board voted to pay its share of the recreation department's funding in monthly installments rather than \$10,000 installments. The county pays \$30,000 to the town of Hertford this year to pay for recreation.

The board voted to spend \$1,500 of its allotted secondary road funds — money the county receives from the state — to buy right of way off state road 1300 for road improvements. The board also heard a financial report from district attorney Tom Watts.

Town meeting

Hertford police make report, lease new cars

The Hertford Police Department made eight arrests and 13 citations during the month of June, according to the monthly report made by Police Chief Marshall Merritt during a routine-business meeting of the Hertford Town Council Tuesday of last week.

In another police matter, the council approved the leasing of two new police cars for 18 months, at a cost of \$200 per month per car. The town will lease the 1981 Ford Granadas from Winslow-Blanchard Motor Inc. in Hertford.

"We think it would be more economical to lease the cars," Mayor and Town Manager Bill Cox said.

In his monthly report, Merritt said there were two arrests for shoplifting, two for assault and battery, and one each for failure to comply with the judgement of a court, failure to appear before a court, resisting arrest and breaking and entering and larceny.

The were 28 reported violations in Hertford last month, two for shoplifting, six for breaking and entering and lar-

ceny, four for assault and battery, seven for larceny, and one each for failure to comply with the judgement of a court, first degree burglary, larceny with a firearm, failure to appear before a court, resisting arrest, malicious damage to real property and probation violation.

The police issued 21 citations for various vehicle-related offences.

In other council action, they approved

a hospitalization policy for town employees. The policy is one offered at a reduced rate to municipal employees by the state's League of Municipalities.

The council also approved the following men for these town positions: Dan Morris, Planning Board; Henry Stokes, Housing Authority; Marvin Hunter, Tax Collector, Town Clerk; Marshall Merritt, Chief of Police; Charlie Skinner, Fire Chief.

The council referred a of unsightly property to the building inspector, and also briefly discussed plans for sewer line repairs along Edenton Road Street.

This week

David Trushlood shows that there can be more to wood than just selling it. Turn to page three.

Weather word

Fair weather Thursday through Saturday. High temperatures in the mid-80s and lows will be in the upper 60s to low 70s.



Christian comedy team spreads the Word

At one point during last Thursday's religious service at First Assembly of God Church on U.S. 17 near Woodville, David Blount stood before the congregation, and told everyone to stand up.

They stood, and Blount told them to splay their fingers out and stick their thumbs in their ears.

"Now look down towards Satan," he told them, "and say 'nanny-nanny-nanny!'"

The congregation did just as he said.

Blount is one half of a touring religious group that calls themselves "Gentle Expressions." He and partner Bill Woods have their own way of spreading the Word. They use a vaudevillian mixture of comedy and song to present Christianity to people who are used to a more conventional form of service — preaching.

The First Assembly of God was the first of several Albemarle-area churches they performed at, and tonight they'll be at the First Assembly of God in Nags Head.

Thursday's show began with their own rendition of "The Good Samaritan." Blount played a novice writer typing out an heavenly-inspired idea, and Woods acts it out as he types. Blount has Woods attacked by thieves and beaten.

"And then they stripped him," Blount said.

(Pregnant pause) "They did what?"

(Pause) "Stripped him."

"Not me boy."

And you know the rest of the story. It was followed by a song, something of a religious tune entitled "The Pits." No more need be said.

In a conversation after the performance, Woods said he thought this was the best way he can reach people, particularly the young, with his message. "The only way we've been reaching people is with preaching and gospel music," he said. "We have to compete with television. People want entertainment."

Woods might be thought of as "the

funny one" of the group. An accomplished actor, he left college just short of a degree in broadcasting in order to spend full time on the road. At 23, he's been doing it for the last four years.

Woods plays most of the parts the require an inspired silliness. He plays Chris Clone, the man-robot created by God for the sole purpose of adoring God. This skit answers the question "Why did God make it so hard for us to believe in Him?"

With his smoothly-timed yet erratic movements, and dressed in a black tie and tails, one soon begins to believe he is indeed a robot. After Blount questions Chris Clone about his beliefs, we find out why God didn't make us all that way: Chris knows nothing of love, beauty, emotions or the message of the New Testament. He adores God because he's supposed to.

Blount, 23 — who joined Woods later on — and Woods are originally from the Phoenix, Arizona area. Home for them now is a station wagon with a small trailer behind it.

It's not Buckingham Palace, but it was once worse. Last year they came to this area with a ten-member group. "It was pretty tight then," Woods said.

In fact, at one point during the ceremony (I guess you could call it a ceremony), Blount asked the congregation to help him pray to God that they would find another, larger trailer.

After they finished for the evening, a member of the church gave them the name of someone who was selling their Winabago. God works in strange ways, as they say.

They have traveled all over the country, but mostly in the Southeast, through Tennessee, Arkansas and North Carolina. Not an easy life, but it's the life for them to think about that now. The two of them are hooked. As Woods said, "I love the road."

They get their skit ideas from the same places most comedians get their ideas — ordinary life. "We'll just be

riding down the road," Woods said, "and we'll hear something over the radio maybe, and it sounds funny to us."

Riding down the road probably inspired the skit entitled "Tommy and Mr. D'Evil." Tommy played,

naturally, by Woods, is a little boy tempted by the devil, played by Blount, and saved by an angel, also played by Blount.

"Mister," said Tommy to the robed-clad angel, "you're wearing a dress."

(Continued on page 2)



Tommy (Woods) is contrasted by his angel (Blount).