

Pendletons Share A Love Of Oriental Motif

Story by Elizabeth Stewart

Photos by Tom McIntyre



Figurines from a friend, a painting and Oriental chest by Mrs. Cecil Pendleton's mother-in-law

Mirror-Herald Thursday, January 13, 1977 Living Today At New Orleans Confab

As you read this column this morning I am in New Orleans, La. attending the annual Southern Area Conference on Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation and Children and Youth sponsored by the National American Legion Auxiliary at Airport Hilton Inn.

North Carolina is among 13 states who will send representatives of the American Legion and Auxiliary, including their state president and commander, to the meeting, which ends on Saturday at noon.

Others attending the conferences are Department Commander J. B. Trexler of Salisbury, Fred Corbett of Charlotte, Mrs. James Callendo of Stanley, Mrs. Joe Benton of Newton, Mrs. Ralph Adcock of Hickory, Mrs. Gwen W. Conkling of Raleigh, Mrs. Dallas Waters of Plymouth, Mrs. Christine Davis of Kannapolis, Mrs. John Moss and Mrs. Christine Talbert of Concord and Mrs. Margaret Bostian of Salisbury.

SOME HISTORY OF THE BALL

Exciting, gala inaugural balls have been a part of North Carolina's history for more than a century. Every four years in good times and bad, in rain and sometimes snow, North Carolinians have dressed in their finest and gone to Raleigh to honor their new governor and council of state members.

Newspaper accounts dating back to 1877 reveal interesting facts about past inaugural balls. Balls have been held in a variety of locations, including a library, two city auditoriums, a hotel, a private club, a college campus and even a downtown Raleigh warehouse.

For example, Gov. Alfred Scales was inaugurated in 1885 in the second floor Metropolitan Hall of the aging City Market on Fayetteville Street. The ball that year was held at Tucker Hall and didn't end until after two.

Four years later, Gov. Daniel Fowle celebrated his inauguration in Stronach's Warehouse on South Wilmington Street. According to newspaper stories, the warehouse was converted by the light of five powerful electric arc burners in those very early days of electric

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lighting into "a scene of the most dazzling beauty."

Stronach's Warehouse was again the scene of inaugural ball activity in 1898. It was a Ball that nearly climaxed in calamity. That year, Gov. Elias Carr and his guests danced until the early morning. "Just as the ball was breaking up" reported the newspapers, "several ladies donned their wraps preparatory to starting home through the snow storm and were standing about the stove in the ladies dressing room. All at once there was a cry and it was discovered that the cloak of one lady had caught fire and she was quickly becoming enveloped in flames."

The reporter hastened to add however, that several gentlemen "With the presence of mind" came to her rescue and smoldered the flames."

For Gov. Charles B. Aycock in 1901 and his successor Robert B. Glenn, the third floor auditorium of the Olivia Raney Library in its old Salisbury Street location, served as the site for their inaugural ball activities.

Beginning in 1913, Raleigh's old City Auditorium, fronting East Davis Street, was the scene of the next five inaugurations and of the inauguration balls for four of them.

Gov. O. Max Gardner's inaugural ball was held at the Hotel Sir Walter on Jan. 11, 1929. Sponsored by the Sphinx Club, newspaper accounts tell us that "a New Year's atmosphere was created by serpentine and confetti distributed for the Grand March, along with the novelty hats and caps."

From 1983 to 1961, the Inaugural

Balls were held in Raleigh's War Memorial Auditorium. It was during this period that the Junior League of Raleigh began sponsoring the balls and using the proceeds to fund worthwhile civic projects.

Since 1965, North Carolina's Inaugural Balls have taken place in Reynolds Coliseum on the campus of North Carolina State University. This year, for the first time, the North Carolina Symphony joined the Junior League in co-sponsoring the ball honoring Gov. and Mrs. James B. Hunt, Jr.

WEATHER SURPRISES VISITORS

Mrs. Roberta Cobb has returned to Detroit, Mich. after visiting her mother, Mrs. Stanley Robert Pearson, Sr. and family during the holidays.

Mrs. Cobb said she was expecting "warmer weather" when she came south to visit her family, a much welcome change from the snowy northern climates.

She was as surprised as Kings Mountain citizens by last Monday's snowfall and Sunday's lighter snowfall followed by very cold weather.

Mrs. Cobb said she was even more astounded that in North Carolina "all wheels stop grinding at the first snowfall," noting that schools operate as usual and there is no halt in business in the city of Detroit.

Two residents of 205 Dilling St. claimed the runner-up award in Ward Two for Christmas decorating but Mrs. David Faunce, chairman, said a check with the judges confirms that the winner was really the house at 205 1/2 Dilling St. in which Mrs. Queenie Williams resides.

Mrs. Faunce said Maryce Borders, who lives at 205 Dilling St., advised she was a winner in the contest, explained that she had not entered decorations.

In checking with the judges, Mrs. Faunce found that the winner's house was decorated with large red candles at the front door.

The judges were not given names of home occupants but used only the numbers of the house to designate and identify the winners, said Mrs. Faunce.

Sarah Beth and Cecil Pendleton have completely renovated their comfortable home at 508 W. Gold St., utilizing family treasures from two families, gifts from friends, and their own abundant creativity to enhance an Oriental motif.

Mrs. Pendleton said she developed a liking for Oriental furnishings over 35 years ago when she was the bride of the late Jim Littlejohn and he gave her their first piece of Oriental decor, a Japanese music box. In fact, the Littlejohns had planned to celebrate their silver wedding anniversary in Hawaii. Jim died in 1964, a year before their 25th wedding anniversary.

It was not until after Sarah Beth's marriage to Cecil Pendleton eight years ago that the Oriental decor became a reality, thanks to the couple's decorating talents of family keepsakes which both had collected over years of marriage.

The former Sarah Coon of Bessemer City, said she always wanted to live in the former Dorus G. Littlejohn homeplace on W. Gold St., recalling that even before she was introduced to the late Jim Littlejohn that she rode by the house, admiring it and longing to be a tenant someday.

Mr. Pendleton, native of Eastern North Carolina, shares her love for the house. His artistic talents are featured throughout the decor as many of the Chinese prints and wall hangings belonged to his family and

both he and his mother and grandchildren have painted some of the beautiful work.

It was "love at first sight" for Mr. Pendleton, who was introduced to Sarah by a mutual friend. They married, six months after their first meeting, and moved to their present home.

Modest about his painting, Mr. Pendleton gives all the credit to his wife for the beautiful home they share and which combine hobbies of both.

Sarah Beth's decoupage, macrame, rock collection, quilts, crochet, and flowers from her own crocheting, and flowers from her own greenhouse in back, complement the spacious three-bedroom house. The couple literally rebuilt the kitchen, adding many cabinets, new tile flooring, etc. and Cecil added a workroom for both of them to store odds and ends, their painting supplies, and bags and bags of yarn that Sarah is using to make gifts for friends on special occasions, among them the beautiful two dozen decorative pillows which were enjoyed by friends at Christmas time and Susan Littlejohn Gibson's old dolls which her mother has lovingly "redone" to present to grandchildren on special occasions.

Sarah Beth recalled that she had approached a professional interior decorator once about living-dining room draperies and upholstery and was given astronomical figure of \$1,000.

"We decided we'd just do our redecorating ourselves," she added. They did, Susan Gibson sewing the draperies and a local upholsterer covering the Duncan Pfyfe sofa and chair in a Chinese print fabric. Real conversation pieces in the front of the house are a beautiful red Chinese chest, the handiwork of Sarah's 84-year-old mother-in-law, Mrs. May Pendleton of Hillsborough, the red framed painting overhead which features Oriental oils done by Mrs. Pendleton, and squares of blue which form a rug in the dining area enhanced by a round walnut table and four chairs which belonged to Sarah Beth's mother in front of striking diamond-shaped windows.

Cecil's sister and mother contributed the rug and his sister also made the macrame hanging and an Oriental bell pull.

Another conversation piece in the master bedroom is a trunk, featuring reproductions of art and Christmas cards from friends, which were decoupage by Sarah Beth's much talented mother-in-law. A four-drawer chest which belonged to the late Lottie Goforth, Margie Hord's former rocker and pitcher and bowl has a special place in the living room, Susie Souther's green crystal bowl and a silver tea set presented as a 25 year present to Sarah Beth from Southern Bell Telephone Co. are among prized possessions. When Sarah Beth retired from Southern Bell as a switchboard operator in 1975 she also received numerous mementos which she treasures and are prominently displayed in the living room and den. Mr. and Mrs. Charlie Cash contributed Oriental figurines to the Chinese decor in the living room and the bell pull created by a sister-in-law is on red background with charms for good luck, longevity, double happiness, etc. Bamboo framed pictures, fan-shaped jade and pearl wall hangings she bought at Chinese gift shops, rocks etched by her grandchildren from some of the interesting places they've visited over the years, lamps in crystal vases which were wedding presents, highback chairs with rollers from the Pendleton homeplace, an antique chest from the Littlejohn family, and Chinese poems in wall hangings which have special meaning for serenity and quietness.

The greenhouse in back of the house was begun by the late Jim Littlejohn and Norfolk pines, camellias, azaleas, ferns, candlestick, poinsettias, begonias, geraniums and hanging baskets are featured. The Pendletons planted 60 pines last year and their garden features also a U tree and a Smoke tree, as well as a rock collection. Jimmy Littlejohn, Jr. stores his vintage 1940 red Ford at the back of the spacious back lawn.

Mr. Pendleton is father of three children and there are six grandchildren. Mrs. Pendleton is mother of two children and there are two grandchildren.

Mr. Pendleton is employed by Armtext of Kings Mountain.

The house is enhanced by two fireplaces and the couple recently paneled the den and renovated it, adding their own touch to the decorations. A conversation piece is the Charles S. Lawson floral wooden gig saw, a floral arrangement constructed by a former Kings Mountain man now living in Orlando, Fla. Now 77, Mr. Lawson used wood from not only the United States but also from many foreign countries, dyeing the green leaves and stems poplar and other natural colors.

Mrs. Pendleton's late mother in 1899 pieced her quilts using old newspapers and Sunday School papers from that period. Some of the interesting prices from that period: peaches, two pounds for a quarter; pink salmon, two tall cans for 28 cents; field peas, No. 2 can for a mere dime; and pancake flour for ten cents a package. Sarah also was handed down a log cabin purchased by a brother and filled with peanuts, vintage 1937 when President Hoover visited Kings Mountain.

A lot of history lives in the Pendleton house.



Mrs. Cecil Pendleton relaxes in livingroom near a large Oriental painting