



Photo By Tom McIntyre

THE FIRST SHOVELFULL - Mayor John H. Moss and members of the city board of commissioners, Humes Houston, Bill Grissom, Jim Childers and Corbet Nicholson, officiate at the groundbreaking ceremonies for the first phase of construction (site preparation) of the new Governmental Services Facilities Building on W. Gold St. A photo of the proposed building is at the left.

First Phase Begins On City Hall Building

Groundbreaking ceremonies for the first phase of construction on the new city hall site were held last Friday morning when Mayor John H. Moss turned the first shovelful of earth.

The first phase of construction is the actual site preparation before construction on the building proper. Bradley-Jenkins, Inc. of Gastonia was awarded the contract at a special meeting last Tuesday night and work actually began Monday.

Bradley-Jenkins was the lowest of three bidders, with \$22,272, and a 40-day time limit to complete the work.

Moodye Clary, architect for the new Governmental Services Facilities Building (city hall), said "The beginning of site preparation actually gives compliance with the Economic Development Agency guidelines under grant conditions."

Clary said the guidelines also give the city one year to complete the project, which would be a deadline of April 4, 1978. However, Clary said he and city officials feel the construction can be completed before that.

Construction on the city hall is

expected to begin by mid to late summer.

The city hall is being built under an EDA grant of \$90,250. With funding under urban beautification, the total to be spent on construction and landscaping will exceed \$1 million.

The new structure will house the city administrative, business and tax collection offices and the fire department. The present city hall will be renovated and used entirely by the police department once the new structure is completed, furnished and moved into.

During the ceremonies last Friday morning, Mayor John Moss told the gathering "we (mayor and commissioners) feel that all of our citizens have contributed to the progress Kings Mountain is making and we know that you are as pleased as we to see the new city hall becoming a reality."

Clary, of Peterson-Clary, Architects, PA of Charlotte, com-

mented Friday, "We feel this (city hall) will be a tremendous asset to the community. We have tried to design a structure that will be a source of beauty and a reflection of your community. And we hope you will continue to make the facilities building a place you visit often. Our firm is very pleased to be a part of this project."

Also attending Friday's ceremonies were Commissioners James Childers, Humes Houston, Corbet Nicholson and Bill Grissom; Redevelopment Commission Chairman Carl F. Mauney, executive director Gene White; KM Housing Authority Executive Director Tom Harper and directors M. L. Campbell and Brooks Tate; zoning and planning board chairman Fred Plonk and former mayor Kelly Dixon.

Rev. Clyde Bearden, pastor of First Baptist Church, offered the invocation.

Footo Raises

Wages, Benefits

W. E. Cooke, Operations Manager at Footo Mineral Company, announced an improved wage and benefits program covering the hourly employees at its Kings Mountain operations.

Wages were increased 8 percent effective April 4, 1977. The average hourly rate prior to the adjustment was \$4.80.

Benefit improvements consisted of improved pensions, life insurance, accidental death and dismemberment insurance, and short term disability.

A comprehensive dental program was also put into effect for both the hourly and salaried groups, effective April 1, 1977.

'Noah's Ark'

Program Tonight

Mei Barcelo and John Bartels of the Holy Ground Mission will present a program on "The Rediscovery of Noah's Ark" at the National Guard Armory tonight at 7 p. m.

Barcelo and Bartels have been on eight expeditions to Mount Ararat in eastern Turkey to view what is reported to be Noah's Ark.

The object is perched atop a 2,000 foot precipice and was photographed by Barcelo through a telephoto lens. This photo and other photos and data gathered by the Holy Ground Mission, as well as commentary by Barcelo and Bartels, were used in the recent motion picture "In Search of Noah's Ark."

The program tonight is free to the public and will include slides of the Holy Ground Mission expeditions and interpretations of the artifacts that have been found. The formal program will be followed by a question and answer period.

Church Requests

Zoning Rescinded

First Baptist Church has officially requested the city board of commissioners reconsider a prior decision on rezoning near the church.

A letter from the board of deacons was presented to the commissioners last week asking the board to rescind approval of rezoning the Mauney and Shuford properties adjacent to Kings Mountain Hospital and across the street from the church from Residence-Office to Light Industry.

The board approved the applications against the recommendation of the zoning and planning board.

First Baptist deacons feel the rezoning is too broad to protect "the worshipful atmosphere" of the church should industrial growth develop in their area.

The commissioners have taken the request under advisement and may act on it at the April 11 board meeting.



Photo By Earl Lloyd.

SMILE, GYPSIES, SMILE - Last week about 200 gypsies encamped at the KOA Campground here. But, unlike the group that hit town several months ago, this group was driving Cadillacs and pickups and hauling

fancy trailers. However, very much like the former group, the new group had a scam going - painting and roof repair. One local citizen was skinned of \$150.

Gypsies Come And Go, Take Citizen For \$150

By TOM MCINTYRE
Editor, Mirror-Herald

The gypsies hit town again last week.

This time, according to Police Chief Earl Lloyd the gypsies, numbering about 200, stayed for two days at the KOA Campground at I-85 and Hwy. 161.

"They were driving Cadillacs and expensive pickup trucks and hauling fancy trailers," Chief Lloyd said. "And we only got one report of any local person being film-flamed."

The chief said an 80-year old Kings Mountain man was taken for \$150, which was supposed to buy him a roof repair job.

"The diluted sealant was sprayed on the roof and does nothing toward repairing leaks," Chief Lloyd said.

"This same group took a man in Cherokee County, S. C. for \$400 for a house painting job. They got the cash, set up a ladder and some paint cans, then said they had to go get more paint. They didn't bother to come back."

This group was caught by Hugh Buff of the Cleveland County Sheriff's Department, who was working at the request of the Cherokee County authorities. The

\$400 was returned to the victim and charges were dropped.

"We were notified the gypsies were staying at the campground," Chief Lloyd said, "and I went down to talk to their leader. While there I saw trucks loaded down with ladders and diluted paint and roof repair sealant. Also copper wiring in great rolls. We have no report on whether any of this equipment was taken illegally somewhere down the line."

Chief Lloyd spoke with the group leader and informed him that the first hint of trouble here and the police would be down to either make arrests or see them on their way.

"The leader, who's name sounded Hungarian and was unpronounceable, asked why we were being so tough on them and I told him about the trouble a few months ago," Lloyd said. "He asked if the other gypsies were pulling trailers and when I said no, he replied, 'Then they were riff-raff.'"

After the report about the \$150 roofing job scam came in Chief Lloyd returned to the campground last Friday morning, but the gypsies had already pulled out, heading north in I-85.

"We sent the information out on the Police Information Network

(PIN) to alert other departments in other areas about the caravan," Chief Lloyd said.

Police reports show the license tags indicated the caravan vehicles were from Ohio, Alabama, Georgia, Florida and Tennessee.

"As soon as we learned the group was in the area we put messages to be repeated often on WKMT to alert the public about possible rip-offs," Chief Lloyd said.

"The group likes to hit older people, promising them paint jobs or roof jobs for \$8," Lloyd said. "What they mean is \$8 a gallon. They speak in broken English to confuse the issue and they comprehend English only when it is beneficial to them."

Chief Lloyd said he took photos of the gypsies and their vehicles, but only shortly before they would group around the trucks and cars to block the camera view. Police were also told by a campground employee that the group spent a great deal of time switching license plates from one vehicle to another to keep the confusion high.

Chief Lloyd said the PIN message also contained the description of one vehicle and occupants which is wanted back in Kings Mountain in connection with the \$150 film-flam.

New Personnel Policy Considered

A restructuring the Kings Mountain Personnel Policies has been offered for consideration to the board of commissioners following many weeks of study and redesigning.

Humes Houston, commissioner of district 2, served as chairman of the personnel committee which redrew the personnel policy manual.

In presenting the manual to the board last week, Houston said the committee (James Childers and Norman King) spent "many, many hours working on this. We studied comparisons of city's both larger and smaller than Kings Mountain and we have come up with we feel is a very good personnel policy."

The 33-page manual contains seven headings, including the personnel system, recruitment and appointment, personnel actions, conditions of employment, leaves of absence, fringe benefits and classification and pay.

Houston said the personnel policy guarantees that applicants and employees will be treated fairly without regard to political affiliation, religious creed, sex, national origin, color or race. Individuals will be treated with proper regard for their privacy and constitutional rights as citizens.

Employees are to be recruited, selected, trained and advanced on the basis of their relative ability, knowledge and skill. Employees will also remain on the job on the basis of their adequacy of performance. Steps will be taken to correct inadequacies, but if this fails the employee will be dismissed.

Employees will receive equitable and adequate pay and benefits subject to the availability of funds and employees will be protected against coercion for partisan political purposes.

Humes said the personnel policy further guarantees current employees qualified to handle certain jobs will receive first consideration when higher positions are available within the city.

The policy gives the mayor final authority to hire employees recommended by department heads. The mayor and the personnel committee have final hiring authority of department heads and first line foremen. All public safety personnel will be approved by the board of commissioners.

The proposed policy gives greater latitude to recruit employees. They do not have to be from Kings Mountain or Cleveland County, but when equally qualified persons, one local, the other away, apply for a job the local person will be given first consideration.

Police officers and firemen employed by the city will have to reside within a four-mile distance from the city, however, all department heads must be city residents.



HUMES HOUSTON

On Personnel Policy

Houston said it is more desirable to have all city employees living inside the city limits, but the committee agreed it was not always possible, so the policy gives greater latitude in this area. With the exception of police officers, all new employees will serve a probationary period of six months. Policemen will serve a one year period of probation.

During the probation period employees can accumulate vacation leave, but are not eligible for a paid vacation. The mayor can authorize this if he determines it will relieve a particular hardship situation.

Any employee dismissed during the probation period is not eligible for terminal pay for accumulated vacation.

Hiring of relatives by any member of the governing or administrative body will be discouraged, according to the new policy.

Commissioner Houston said, "We will also offer job descriptions and pay scales so employees will know exactly what their duties will be and what their potential earnings are within their job classifications."

"Productivity is the thing we are after," he continued. "Advancement and higher wages for each employee will be determined by how productive each employee is within his or her job."

The personnel policy will be on the April 11 regular city board meeting agenda for further discussion, adoption or rejection.