

Highlights in NCWFPS History Charlotte Patterson 2001 The search for information regarding our honorees provided an opportunity to review the activities of the Society over the first 25 years. It was gratifying to learn the integral part that the Society played in the preservation of many of our state's parks. The Society worked with other preservation organizations to help bring about the establishment of several state parks and the establishment of several native gardens. The Society was the brainchild of Mrs. C. A. Graham, Sr., Director of the Sixth District of the Garden Clubs of North Carolina, and Mrs. Conner Smith. Together, they contacted everyone they could think of whom they thought would be interested in forming a society, including many of our illustrious charter members. The Society and the Garden Clubs collaborated on several gardens around the state. The Asheville- Biltmore Botanical Gardens, the Daniel Boone Native Gardens, the Country Doctor's Museum gardens at Bailey, NC, and the Elizabethan Gardens at Manteo all benefited from the Society's influence.

The following notes were taken from a review of the minutes recorded in the newsletters. The writer made an effort to record events that were reported as having occurred, but some events were recorded as planned. The writer believes that these events are an accurate representation of the Society's actions. The dates that are recorded pertain to the dates of the events as reported in the newsletters or the date of the newsletter itself. If there are errors or if others have other clarifying information to add, the committee would appreciate clarification so that the history can be recorded accurately. We feel that you will find the following points interesting:

Nov. 1952 - The program of the meeting was a discussion of the lilies of the state and conservation of the dwindling supply. April 1955 - F. H. Brandt of the NCDOT discussed erosion control and preservation of existing plants for the Spring program.

May 1956 - Dr. B. W. Wells, Dr. O. M. Freeman, Dr. H. R. Totten, and Dr. Hollis Rogers were appointed to a committee to prepare a conservation list for North Carolina

May 1956 - Dr. Hollis Rogers of WCUNC (later UNCG) discussed the destructive practice of having school children and college botany classes to collect wildflowers. Instead, he recommended group camping to foster a sense of appreciation for the natural surroundings.

Sept. 1956 - The committee for action on preservation of the Sand-Hill Pyxie moss discussed the necessity to incorporate in order to hold a title to the land. The Babcock Lumber Company of Sanford had promised a gift of 4-5 acres to be deeded to the Society in order to preserve the site.

Oct. 1956 - Lionel Melvin reported the incorporation to be complete. The plan to acquire the land eventually failed, but the Society became a 501(c)(3) organization.

Oct. 1960 - A committee was appointed to study Mae Reed Plaster's suggestion to encourage garden clubs in NC to enroll their conservation chairs in the Society and to encourage local wildflower clubs to become chapters. Also a motion was passed to request that the Garden Clubs of NC revise and republish B. W. Wells' "Natural Gardens of NC"

October 1960 - The NCWFPS helped to support the Daniel Boone Botanical Garden that originated with 6 acres being leased for 49 years from the town of Boone. The project originated with the Garden Clubs of North Carolina and was supported by other organizations. The NCWFPS supported the Garden both financially through cash donations and through contributing native plants. Lionel Melvin contributed several rare plants. Other Society members also contributed plants.

March 1963 - Dr. Roland Totten presented a resolution in opposition to the use of poisonous chemicals along the right of ways of roads and utility lines. The resolution was sent to the Governor of North Carolina, to members of the Board of Conservation and Development, to NC Garden Clubs, and to State Legislators, utility companies, newspapers, radio and television stations. Copies were also sent to the Highway Commission.

Oct. 1965 - Mrs. Charles Prall made a motion that a letter be written to Pres. Lyndon Johnson recommending passage of the Wilderness Bill, for the beginning of highway beautification, and for the beginning of the clearing of pollution from rivers, and to encourage home builders, developers, and homeowners to leave native plants on their land.

Aug. 1965 - Mrs. Herbert Smith suggested that the NCWFPS contribute to the wildflower section being developed in the Elizabethan Gardens in Manteo.

May 1966 - Viola Braxton requested action on a letter from a member of the Wild Acres and Conservation Committee of the Carolina Mountain Club in Asheville, asking for support against the transmountain highway from Bryson City to Townsend, TN. The Society resolved to support the fight and wrote a letter expressing concern that the Great Smoky Mountain Park remain intact. Letters were sent to Secretary of the Interior, Stewart Udall, and Senators Sam Ervin and B. Everett Jordan. Individual letters from members were recommended.

April 1967 - Dr. Roland Totten received a request from the Wilderness Society for the Society's support in obtaining Wilderness Preservation Category for the Okefenokee

Swamp. Dr. Totten wrote letters to Senators and Representatives, and it was recommended that individuals write to their congressmen.

June 1969 - President Herbert Hechenbleikner went, along with two busloads of conservationists, to Washington, D. C. to urge the Secretary of the Interior to build a road around the Great Smokies instead of the Trans-mountain Road, which was proposed.

August 1969 - The NCWFPS, along with other organizations, successfully obtained money to purchase 2200 acres of Stone Mountain for a State Park

October 1969 - Dr. Herbert Hechenbleikner reported that he had sent out 100 postcards to urge people to support the idea of the state acquiring Bald Head Island by writing letters to public officials.

October 1969 - Mrs. Robert Conner urged members to attend the meeting of the Conservation Council of North Carolina to be held in December for the purpose of coordinating local, state, and regional programs of conservation and conservation education.

April 1970 - Robert Conner, Society member and President of Conservation Council of NC urged members to write to Gov. Bob Scott Legislators, and the Chairman of the Board of Conservation and Development requesting immediate action on part of the state of NC to acquire Bald Head Island as a state preserve for use as a state park and scientific research center. A petition was circulated for signatures to be sent to Governor Bob Scott. They also voted to donate money to the Association to Preserve the Eno River Valley.

Fall 1970 - Mrs. Holger Nygard presented an overview of the need to save the Eno River and to create a state park of the area in the fall newsletter. She encouraged members to write to state and city officials encouraging the preservation of the area

March I, 1970 - Mrs. Charles Hubbard and Elizabeth Lawrence were appointed to a committee to work with museum staff to help develop the medicinal herb garden at the Country Doctor Museum in Bailey, Nc. Advice and a donation of plants were requested of the Society by the Museum. Elizabeth Lawrence drew the plan for the garden.

Spring 1975 - Concerns over the need to preserve Jockey's Ridge, Nags Head Woods, and the New River noted in the newsletter.