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PRESERVATION SOCIETY

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N E W S L E T T E R

April 1957

VOL. III NO. 1

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Those members who did not attend our last meeting which took place at Hobby Acres near Siler City missed one of the most interesting held so far. The W. B. Carrolls are excellent hosts. Dr. Blomquist's lecture on ferns, alone, was worth all of the preparation for and the trip to this gathering.

Due to the fact that my work takes me out of the state for a while, I must leave the remainder of my unexpired term as president to your first vice-president, whom you will find in every way capable. I hope all of you will render Mrs. Pegg the same wholehearted support that you have given me.

As president, my contributions to the activities of the society have been brief, but I have really tried in that short time to enlarge upon the preservation phase of our aims, and in doing so I have learned that only through the constant watchfulness of organizations like ours can some of our rare, interesting and often beautiful wild flowers and native plants be preserved for posterity. Our landscape is changing so rapidly now that entire species may be exterminated overnight. The average man is not conscious of the destruction he creates. It is up to those of us who are interested in and know our wild flowers to prevent their extermination and assure their preservation.

Lionel Melvin

SPRING MEETING

Our spring meeting will be at Tryon, N.C. on May 18 and 19. Headquarters will be at Oak Hall where we held our spring meeting in 1952. So make your reservations for Saturday night with Mrs. Clara Edwards, Oak Hall Hotel, Tryon.

We will have our business meeting Saturday night at 8:00 or 8:30 depending on when members arrive. We will have our hike on the trails at Pearson Falls on Sunday morning right after breakfast, and our picnic and program at the Herbarium where tables, benches, and outdoor fireplaces are available. Since we will eat both supper and breakfast at Oak Hall, we think it will be more interesting to carry a picnic lunch and have it at the Herbarium picnic grounds. This time we will have to select food that will keep and make up our sandwiches and salads on the spot.

Dr. Oliver Freeman will speak on "Rhododendrons and Other Noteworthy or Rare Plants of the Tryon Region". Rhododendron is used in the broad generic sense which includes the azaleas.

Let's make this a good meeting and plan to enjoy every minute of this trip to the North Carolina mountains and the beautiful Tryon region.

Eleanor Pegg
1st Vice-Pres and
Program Chairman

Winston-Salem, N. C.
March 2, 1957

To all Members of the N. C. Wildflower Preservation Society:

Greetings and a hearty Springtime Salute!

Elsie and I had just unloaded heavy coats, boots, sweaters and other accountrement on the evening of Feb. 27 when the telephone rang. It was May Reed Plaster asking me if I would write something about "Conservation" for the Club Newsletter. I began wiggling out of it, of course, but after resting a bit my pen seems not unwilling. I think I shall scramble the subject with a simple narrative account of our late adventure into the Blue Ridge Mountains.

We loaded the old Chevrolet and left Winston-Salem directly after lunch on Sunday, Feb. 24. It seemed almost no time at all before we were crossing the Brushy Mountains in Wilkes County. The sun was bright, the sky was deep blue, the air was motionless, and we rolled happily along with the windows of the car wide open. Many of the fields were beautifully green; the homes in the valley were frequently brightened by flowering plants; and vast areas of leafless trees on the hazy mountains in the distance spoke eloquently in complete silence. Soon we reached the scenic highway at the top of the Blue Ridge.

At this point I wish to say that the Blue Ridge Parkway shows a wonderful job of conservation and the idea seems to be "catching". There are many areas now covered with a young growth of white pines and the eroded hillsides are disappearing. By the middle of May thousands of beautiful azalea and rhododendron bushes will be in full bloom and enjoying the protection of the federal government.

We spent two and one-half days with Judith and Nancy Lindau at Gideons Ridge, near Green Park. In addition to the home on Gideons Ridge, they have 27 acres of woodland stretching along May View Ridge and dipping into "China". This tract joins the Park lands, formerly the Cone Estate, which pioneered the way to "Conservation" in Watauga County. Near a tumbled pile of chimney rocks we found a large patch of "Creeping Myrtle". It was beautifully green, pushing up through a great carpet of brown leaves--for the entire area has now gone back to forest (unmolested for 75 years. We presumed that this patch of myrtle represented an ancient transplant from South Carolina. It was trying hard to unfold its tiny blue blossoms. We looked about for the trailing arbutus, formerly so plentiful there on the southwest slope, but it was not in evidence.

On February 26 we drove through the Johns River Valley and were thrilled by many joyful sounds. At some points the "peepers" were sounding off so lustily that the music was almost deafening. This river valley is only now recovering from the dreadful flood of 1916. First the mountains were devastated by the lumber mills (1904-1908). Then came the forest fires leaving the rocks and scorched earth--then the flood which carried away homes and all the fertile soil of the entire valley. Much of this barren waste was taken over by the government (1934-1935). An efficient fire prevention system was developed with roads and fire breaks and no serious fire has occurred now in over 25 years, so the timber is being restored and the valley land is once more becoming productive.

Elsie and I have had a very pleasant peep at Mother Nature before spring arrives. We particularly admired the wonderful forest floor of the deep woods, the thick

The next spring there will be "umpteen" seedlings which may bloom the second year. The above mentioned varieties are dwarf, blooming in early spring, 4"-6" high with 2-3 stems carrying bell-shaped blue flowers.

Most members of the Corydalis group are spring flowering and notorious for their numerous offspring which appear in every nook and cranny in the garden. Others to be included in the fall sowing group are: Anemone, Clematis, Callirhoe, Aconitum, Dodecatheon, Gilia, Liatris, Phlox, Trillium, Penstemon, Verbascum, and violets. To this group may be added Oenothera missouriensis (yellow) and O. caespitosa (white) which are western natives but gems in any wild garden. Because Gentiana acaulis refuses to stay with us, we substituted Phacelia campanularia with clusters of miniature cups of the gentian's sapphire blue. These should be sown now (about March 15) for late spring bloom; they will germinate in 10-12 days. The plants develop rapidly when given a warm place in the sun.

For many years many of us have carefully collected and planted the dust-like seed of various varieties of our charming lady-slippers, but our efforts have met with bitter disappointment. An average-sized pod of lady-slipper contains many thousands of minute seed without endosperm, or food supply for germination. A very successful German gardener, transplanted to North Carolina, once recommended a successful method for raising Cypripedium from seed. He scattered finely chopped sphagnum moss around the adult plants and sowed the freshly gathered seeds on this moss. The variety selected was of small importance as long as the seeds were sown where germination could take place on the roots of adult Cypripediums. He further advised leaving the small seedlings in their family circle for at least two years before transplanting. It really works! Try it!

Emerson once said, "Never miss an opportunity of seeing anything that is beautiful, for beauty is God's handwriting, a way-side sacrament, welcome it in every fair face, in every fair sky, in every fair flower and thank God for it as a cup of blessing."

Mrs. J. Robert Chrisman

IMPORTANT

As you may have noted in the report from the last meeting, the Society year runs from May 1 to May 1. Consequently dues for 1957-1958 are now due. Those whose dues are in arrears have been notified by letter (first class mail). If you are unable to come to our spring meeting, please send your money to our treasurer: Mrs. Ray Nance, 701 Summitt Rd., High Point, N. C. It is important that this be done during May, for early in June a complete list of all members in good standing will be mailed out. Dues are a dollar per year.

Mrs. G. O. Doak
Editor

Mrs. Phil Wicker
Associate Editor