

# Azalea Garden Club Noted Nationally For Its Activities; Was Founded In January, 1945

BY MYRTLE HIBBARD

As naturally as women are mothers, so are they gardeners. The tender and loving care of growing plants, pride in their ultimate beauty and growth is the flourishing of the mother instinct. Brookings women find in the Azalea Garden Club, a place to share this interest, and to become better acquainted through the many interesting lanes that lead from garden paths.

It was in the garden soul of Mrs. Vi Johnson (Now of Cave City, Oregon) that the seed of the Azalea Garden club germinated—a seed from which has grown a plant with live branches, bearing fruits of service and beauty. Assisting Mrs. Johnson in the organization of the new club, were Hazel Hendry, Mae Powell and Mabel Stonehouse. It was organized in January, 1945.

Visiting here, was Mrs. Harry O. (Effie) Smith of Cave City, Oregon, then president of the State Federation of Garden Clubs. Effie Smith is the God Mother of the Azalea Garden Club, naming it and standing by when we took our first faltering steps. In her lovely garden at Cave City, there flowers today a beautiful Azalea Altaclarensis, the lift last year of our club, in loving appreciation for her services throughout the years.

In those days, lily gold gleamed from white acres, many new families came and so women were mostly strangers. When Edith Newton, here from Tullake, where she had been prominent in garden club work was asked to be the first president of the club she replied, aghast, "Why, I don't know anybody." Her courage, intelligence and tact made her an excellent president for the new club.

Verlie Babcock was the next president, who left because of illness and Mrs. Newton filled out her term. Mabel McVay, pioneer Harbor resident, was the second president. With the exhilaration of easy money, the organization grew to over 100 members. It was then that one of our outstanding programs was enjoyed. Arranged by Maude Luick, an enthusiastic conversationist of our forest, and through the courtesy of the U. S. Forestry Department of California, a tour of the Redwood forests was conducted by Forester Frank Reynolds. At wayside points, surrounded by the majestic redwoods, lectures were given. The tour made by motor car was educational and impressive.

Three years later, a demonstration of conservation was a happy event in our club program. Combining a pot-luck picnic with the dedication of Loeb State Park, the first myrtlewood state park. This was accomplished with the efforts of the garden clubs of the state, collaborating with the "Save the Myrtlewoods League," of which Mrs. Laura Wilhelm, then state president of garden clubs, was a most active leader. This event was largely attended by state garden club officials and state forestry personnel.

Vivacious and capable Dorothy Lockland was our next president and she demonstrated her usual efficiency in the accomplishments and progress made. She was succeeded by smiling Erma Rice, under whose leadership we also smiled and had a happy year. Conservation-minded Olive Page followed and left us with a real appreciation of our great forests, our teeming streams and our good earth together with a desire to preserve them for posterity.

Clara Kerns brought security and saneness in her firm guidance. Bernice Miller, our next president, radiates the love and good will she characterized. Good fellowship and harmony prevail.

The club meets the second Thursday of the month. Newcomers and all women are invited. After a short business session, a prepared program follows. Then there is a social hour with refreshments. Contributing to the pleasure of the afternoon are the lovely flower arrangements—a bit of loveliness to bring away and treasure. As sometimes a breath-taking centerpiece on the tea table, sometimes on the president's desk—usually it is commented on and studied by the members. Among those contributing arrangements through the years are: Mae Powell, Milly Crissey, Hazel Hendry, Dorothy Lockland, Mabel Stonehouse, Lillian Weideman, Pauline Pallady, Laura Redfield, Edith Newton, Alice Perkins, Maude Sandbo, Wilma Carson, Mabel Maris, Martha Grayshel, Ella Lesmeister, Marie Guerretaz, Meta Hogan, Clara Kerns, Mina Christensen.

Often there is a guest speaker—a state garden club officer, a prominent horticulturist—speaking on a pertinent garden subject. We recall Mrs. Laura Willandhelm, then State President of Garden Clubs, coming from Portland to tell us about herbs, her pet subject. Her personal charm and her love for her sub-

ject, made it a highlight among programs.

Then our own Effie Smith has been on our programs yearly. A gifted speaker, an outstanding horticulturist, she comes in a friendly, simple way and tells us of daffodils and primroses, of her choice rhododendrons and azaleas and other shrubs. Mrs. Smith is National Horticulture Chairman.

Mrs. Daniel Heffner, of Portland, long identified with state and national garden club work, came to tell us about conservation. Horticulturists of our own area have likewise contributed to our program. During the early years, Will Crissey, then a member, gave us advice and featured a number of programs. Incidentally, men who have been members of our club are Frank Pallady, Edwin Wright, Curzon MacKenzie, Mark Wood and Lloyd Moss.

Mrs. Mabel Maris, one of our members and a horticulturist, has shared with us her knowledge of fuchsias and of dahlias, which she ably demonstrates at her state-line garden. She is a fluent and intelligent speaker and a favorite in our club.

Another member, who has given to our club a knowledge of wild flowers, as well as beach flora, is Pauline Pallady. A charter member, a student and searcher of wild flowers, who has brought us specimens, arrangements of her findings in out-of-way places. Garden tours have been a part of our programs. Gardens visited

have been the Robert Swan's, Ray Struebings, the Otto Turley's, the Archie Andersons, Roy Weideman's and the Will Crissey's. Also at one time we visited the fine gardens of our neighbors at Smith River, Calif.

Learning the art of flower arranging and corsage making is one of the accomplishments of our club. Started by Mabel Stonehouse, during the first year, it was later carried on by Edith Newton, who conducted classes at her home, giving generously of her time and talent. Succeeding Mrs. Newton was her protegee, Martha Grayshel whose love of this art has been as much an inspiration as her teachings. Corsage making was first taught us by Mrs. Genener of Medford. Later, two members, Regina Haggerty and Norma Holland Cavitt, who had been proficient in this art, gave us a demonstration in the class. But a name almost synonymous with corsages is that of Maude Sandbo. Her corsages, fashioned out of dry seed pods, cones and other natural material, have gained for her a national reputation.

Gay parties, picnics on the beach, pot-luck luncheons have been happy deviations from our routine programs. The Chinese party with Chinese art in arrangements and decorations, as well as in the dress of Madame Ah Soy (Katherine Duvall) and Madame Fan Lea (Maude Sandbo) as well as the little Chinese coolie with large basket on his arm and from under whose picturesque hat, smile the face of Tex Stonehouse, is one we often enjoy at meetings.

A hobby show, some clever garden skits, a drama, depicting the life of a flower, written and acted by Alice Perkins; and Easter Bonnet contest, are all memories of garden club programs.

Breaking into the limelight for financial purposes, only, with our talented members, was a comedy "It Was a Lovely Meeting" given at the high school gym. It was uproariously received and gave us \$75.00 for our club coffers. In the cast were Helen Christensen, Regina Haggerty, Clara Kerns, Myrtle Hibbard, Maude Sandbo, Margarethe Tisdale, Mabel McVay, Lucius Axford and Mary Cavitt.

Plant sales given at intervals throughout the year are sponsored by the club, where the public may purchase for a nominal sum, slips, cuttings and plants from our gardens. Martha Harbin has been our successful plant salesman for years.

The crowning event of the year is our Flower Show given as a main feature of the Azalea Festival. The flower show chairman in charge is appointed by the president. A big bouquet to these capable and public spirited women, who have through hard work, ingenuity and artistry, helped to establish for our club a national reputation. Edith Newton, Louise Waters, Alice Perkins, Dorothy Lockland, Lillian Weideman, Martha Grayshel have served. Dorothy Lockland will be the flower show chairman for the coming year.

The purple ribbon award, an honor granted by the National Council of Garden Clubs, was awarded the flower show, under the chairmanship of Lillian Weideman. Only two clubs in the state, each year, merit this honor.

Another community project, is the Garden Club float for the annual Lily Blossom Parade, which each year, have won ribbons for the Garden Club.

Wide in its scope and warm in its aim, the club has remembered at Christmas time, its veterans at Camp White—men deprived by war of homes and gardens. We have decked their halls with greenery and forest garlands, fashioning clever and humorous favors for their Christmas trays, helping light their big Christmas tree and so bring holiday cheer.

Contributing to the life of our club but no longer here, having moved elsewhere are these: we remember with regret and gratitude Alice Perkins, Regina Haggerty, Ella Rogers, Bernice Newton, Edith Low, Verna Asche, Helen Dunham and Katherine Duvall.

Then fewer far in number are "those we have loved long since and lost awhile" Margarethe Tisdale, the sweet voice of her lovely lyrics making an ache in our hearts as we hear the echo of "Forgotten." Forgotten? No, we have not forgotten. Emma Neevess, a charter member, gentle

and gracious; a loyal member—never absent. Bertha Wood, a pioneer Harbor resident, the first president of our sister club, The Harbor Community Club—widely known and greatly loved. Lucius Axford, so vivid and charming, here a short time but long remembered. Remembering them, we lift our banner high.

It is not possible to mention all of those who have figured in our development, but among those in recent years who deserve honorable mention in garden club work are Eunice Wollam, Edith Ackley, Dolly Brainard, Marjorie Turley, Elsie Reynolds, Ethel Moss, Mary Mendenhall, Pat Kerns, Mabel Collis and Ruth Smith.

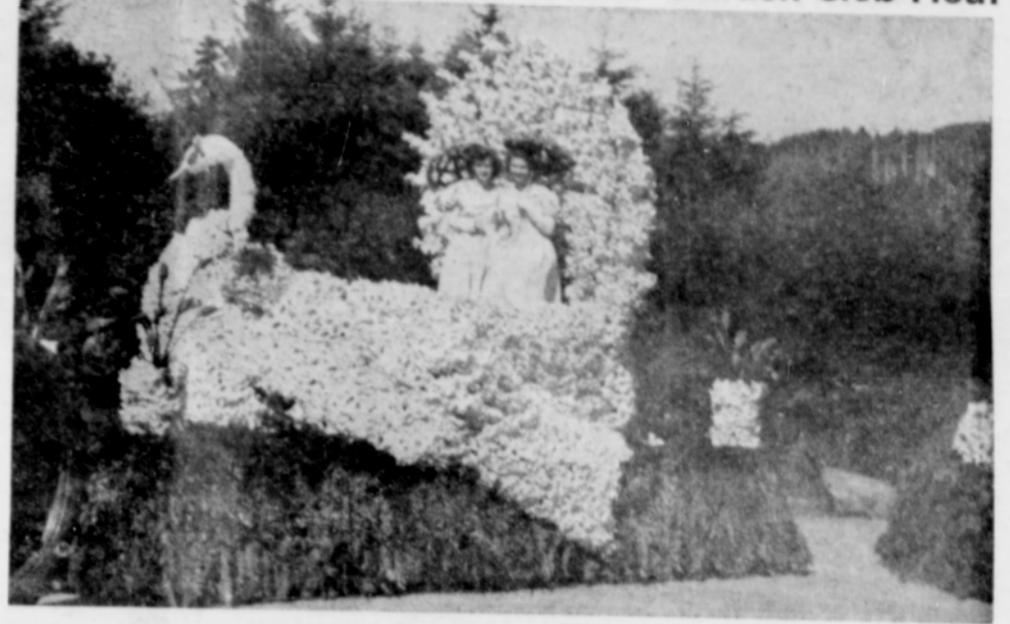
Adding to the variety and beauty of our meeting has been Nell MacKenzie and her Azalea Singers. This fine chorus was started by Mrs. MacKenzie for the enjoyment of the garden club but they have since become a most sought after source of entertainment for many civic affairs.

We have enjoyed the membership of many of our Smith River and Crescent City neighbors—throughout the years. A faithful member, rarely missing a meeting is Clara McDindoe of Crescent City.

Among new members active in the club this year, include Gladys Lindskoug, Elsie Raveks, Enid Hurst, Helen Rice and Faye Sunderland.

Under the splendid leadership of Bernice Miller, the club, today, is not only fulfilling the object for which it was formed—to promote better gardens for better homes—but enlarging its scope and broadening its aims, as we become alert to the needs of our fast growing community. The Azalea Garden Club has become a civic organization, often co-operating and co-ordinating in the needs of our community with those of state and national interests. All interesting lanes—leading from garden paths.

## Queen And Royal Court Ride Azalea Garden Club Float



Carrying the Azalea Queen and her Royal Court is the prize-winning float of the Azalea Garden Club, adjudged by many to be about the most unique and beautiful ever to be entered in the annual Lily Blossom Festival in Brookings. Azalea Garden Club never tires doing good for the community in any way possible, more especially in its general appearance. The community could no more do without this club than the club could do without gardens or flowers.

Each year, in July when the Croft Lilies are at their peak, the annual Lily Blossom Festival attracts people for hundreds of miles to view one of the most extraordinary parades of its kind in the world. Individuals, organizations and business houses compete for prizes in their different classification. All are works of art.

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Mrs. Edith Newton has helped guide the destinies of Azalea Garden club since its organization.