

Shaker Lakes Garden Club

The History of The Shaker Lakes Garden Club 1915-1995

It is with a great deal of pleasure that The Shaker Lakes Garden Club presents this history of our club to its members to celebrate our club eightieth anniversary (1915-1995) as well as our seventy-five years as members of The Garden Club of America.

In the beginning, Shaker Lakes Park was originally part of The Shaker Colony, a disappearing religious sect, which sold several of its parcels along the eastern end of Doan Brook including two Shaker Lakes to John D. Rockefeller in 1889. The park was a natural area including lovely old trees and rare plant material which Rockefeller wished to preserve by transferring it to the City of Cleveland to be used for public park purposes forever.

In 1915, four intrepid ladies gathered around a cozy fire in a home overlooking the Lower Shaker Lake. Having lived near this parkway that surrounds the Shaker Lakes and the northern branch of Doan Brook, these ladies were very familiar with the conditions that existed there and the neglect of the area by the Park Board. Individual complaints to the chairman of the Park Board were ignored, but he finally said, Why don't you ladies organize? If you were to come to us as the representatives of an active and influential organization, I think I can promise you that your request will receive more attention from the Board.

So Mrs. James H. Rogers, Mrs. John Ranney, Mrs. Henry Gardner, and Mrs. Harry J. Crawford organized. They were all planning their own gardens and decided a garden club would be a most appropriate way to spark the Park Board's interest. Therefore, Mrs. Rogers invited a number of women who lived near the Lakes to attend a meeting to discuss organizing such a group. Although only ten women showed up, they went right to work suggesting the name of the group should be The Shaker Lakes Garden Club. However, one of the original four objected emphatically; she had never been a club woman and didn't wish to become one at that late date. So in deference to her sensibilities the name, The Shaker Lakes Civic and Garden Association, was adopted. After a short time, the lady who didn't wish to be a club woman moved out of town and gave up her membership and therefore would no longer be offended; the shorter name originally proposed was quietly restored. However, we remember to this day the civic purpose in the original name.

At the second meeting a month later twenty members were present and they elected Mrs. Rogers their first president. It was no longer necessary to live near the Lakes, but they all aspired to be excellent gardeners. Two meetings later there were forty members, a small enough number to meet in each others homes more or less informally exchanging seeds, plants, and sharing horticultural information helpful with their own gardens as well as those in the community. Dues were two dollars a year!

Before long a large waiting list necessitated slowly raising the number of members to one hundred, using outside speakers, and raising the dues to five dollars. The next step was to adopt a Code of Regulations. Three members of The Garden Club of Cleveland were very helpful with this endeavor.

Two years before our club was organized, a group of Philadelphians started what was to become an extraordinarily successful national organization of garden clubs. Twelve clubs were brought together

to form The Garden Club of America. Its aim was "to stimulate, foster, and promote knowledge and love of gardening among amateurs through conference and correspondence, in this country and abroad; to aid in the protection of native plants and birds, and to encourage civic planting." Since 1913, The Garden Club of America has strived to carry out these objectives through its national committees and member clubs.

In 1919, our club applied for admission in The Garden Club of America with the sponsorship of two member clubs, The Garden Club of Cleveland and The Garden Club of Cincinnati. That year The Garden Club of America had accepted its quota of new clubs, but the next year we were invited to join. That autumn the president of The Garden Club of Cleveland invited our president to one of its Board Meetings to discuss a request from The Garden Club of America to come to Cleveland in the spring of 1921. Our clubs both felt it would be difficult to plan a meeting we would be proud of on such short notice. However, we decided to extend an invitation to The Garden Club of America in the spring of 1922, and we were delighted that they accepted. This meeting was very well organized and thoroughly enjoyed by all. Much information was shared, and many friendships resulted from this and future annual and zone meetings. We also have a combined membership meeting with The Garden Club of Cleveland every year.

On a local level our club has a group of committees whose chairmen report to their respective zone committee chairmen and also receive information from them. Our conservation, horticulture, and flower show committees are examples of this give and take operation. Conservation concentrates on activities like saving trees for wildlife refuges, lowering carbon dioxides effect on the ozone layer and rain forests, preserving marshes and parks from bulldozers, and slowing down the building of dams. There are many ways to attack these problems by joining conservation organizations, by writing letters to government representatives or testifying at hearings, and by raising funds to send students to Audubon Camp or Nature Conservancy programs.

Horticulture committees advocate propagating plants, studying particular species in depth, visiting members' gardens, and participating in various civic garden tours. One of our members had a very lovely wildflower garden and created her own Christmas cards every year by painting a particular flower's seeds, leaves, blossoms, and root system and then writing about the history of the plant and its botanical description. Much of our horticultural activity involves sharing the knowledge and plants of our club's advanced gardeners with those who are just beginning.

Our flower shows started on a very small scale within the club. The club's first flower show asked members to bring an arrangement for a particular location in a member's home. The members voted on the arrangements at each of these locations. One blue ribbon winner at this show had arranged her flowers solely by her sense of touch. There have been shows like this one and shows with entries placed on tables with specific classes of arrangements as well as classes for horticulture specimens. Judging has changed over the years and is a very important part of a flower show since the judges not only award ribbons to the winners, but also write helpful comments which teach us how to make better arrangements and caution us to read the schedule more carefully.

In 1968, our club held its first large show open to the public at The Garden Center of Greater Cleveland. The schedule and decorations followed a presidential election theme. Also a detailed report was written describing the planning that went into such a show. Several plans have been written since updating and featuring the latest changes in arrangements and staging. These latter

shows are planned to comply with The Garden Club of Americas various flower show awards. Earlier shows followed certain standards but included a wide variety of classes. Some earlier shows called for arrangements typical of a historic period, and some even included classes for our husbands and children. We hope our club will continue to have successful and enjoyable shows of both types.

There are other Garden Club of America committees such as the National Parks Committee which promotes the Student Conservation Association, giving young people an opportunity to spend summers learning about the scientific and scenic aspects of our parks. The Interchange Fellowship in Horticulture is sponsored jointly by The Garden Club of America and The English-Speaking Union and provides for a graduate student from England and, in alternate years from The United States, to study in the area of his or her particular interest. Our club contributes to both of these programs.

The Garden Club of America clubs have been divided into zones according to neighboring states and climate. We are in Zone X which includes Ohio, Indiana, and Michigan. Just as national committees meet several times a year, so do zone committees to coordinate the activities between zones as well as the activities of clubs within their zones.

In 1965, The Garden Club of Americas Annual Meeting was held in Cleveland from May 10th through May 14th. The headquarters was downtown at the Statler Hilton Hotel. The two hostess clubs were The Garden Club of Cleveland and The Shaker Lakes Garden Club. On Friday, May 12th, the Akron Garden Club invited all the delegates to Akron for the day. The organization that goes into one of these meetings is absolutely incredible. Depending on each delegates schedule, each one was transported to the proper meeting, the proper luncheon, another meeting or tour of museums, gardens, etc., returned to the hotel, then to cocktails, a different dinner location, and then back to the Statler. All this transportation was provided with running commentary by one of our members acting as a pilot. These annual meetings as well as zone meetings are a delightful mixture of business and pleasure. It would be fortunate if every member of The Garden Club of America could have the opportunity to attend either an annual or a zone meeting. Very few groups could match the smoothness of operation, attention to detail, the seriousness of purpose, the sincere willingness to share, and still enjoy such delightfully gracious hospitality as guests of the hostess clubs. We will all have another opportunity to participate in an Annual Meeting of The Garden Club of America when it comes to Cleveland in the year 2000.

In 1928, our club was one of the seventeen charter members of The Garden Club of Ohio, a newly formed member of The National Council of State Garden Clubs.

The Shaker Lakes Garden Club also has a group of committees which concentrate on the operation of our club. One very special committee is the Charitable Education Committee which was started in connection with our 501 (c) 3 Internal Revenue Service designation as a not-for-profit organization under the laws of the State of Ohio. This committee solicits and receives donations from our members who wish to contribute funds for endowment, for our clubs nonprofit activities, or for other nonprofit organizations. Publicity in the general news or editorial pages of local newspapers, The Garden Center Bulletin, The G.C.A. Bulletin, and appropriate publications about our many projects over the years is important. In the past twenty-three years, The Shaker Lakes Garden Club has been able to donate in excess of \$94,000 through the Charitable Education Fund. Many of the organizations that have received this money also benefit from our volunteers assisting in their

projects.

At this point we should like to shift your attention back to 1921 and our club's first civic project which was, appropriately enough, in Shaker Lakes Park at the western end of the Lower Shaker Lake. The Shakers started their Union Village in 1805, built a dam and erected a saw mill. It was on this site that our club chose to start a wildflower garden to commemorate the work of these gentle, industrious, Christian people. The Shakers made packets of flower and vegetable seeds indigenous to this area which they sold throughout the country to preserve the Shaker flowers and plant materials so that generations to come could enjoy their beauty.

This site was approved by the City of Cleveland's Director of Parks and Public Property in February of 1921, and by the Mayor and City Council in April of 1921, with the understanding that the public would have access to the garden with policing and regulations under the supervision of the City of Cleveland.

The City Forester took over the building of the garden on the three-acre site constructing steps, paths, a shelter house for tools and birdseed, and a wall along Coventry Road between North and South Park Boulevards. They also obtained a permit to lay water lines in 1922.

In 1926, the City Forester helped make a rockery and little pool supplied by a concealed pipe which then drained into a pond. Thus the pond water was always fresh and water lilies and yellow irises flourished. In 1927, a sundial, a statue, and stone benches were donated by one of our members. Other members donated plants which were vandalized and then replaced. A cheerful note in 1932 stated that the garden was very attractive all summer with lots of flowers. Our club gave money for booklets and conservation movies for the Cleveland school children. School botany classes expressed appreciation for an opportunity to study the area's many plants and birds. Our members not only fed the birds in Shaker Lakes Park, but also at Rainbow Hospital on Green Road.

Here we quote one of our favorite stories from an earlier history describing the compost pile. "There is one interesting sideline of the Wild Flower Garden, not romantic, but important, and that is the compost venture. The ladies of the committee asked the proper official of Shaker Heights if the dead leaves could be dumped in an obscure corner of the property for compost. For once the official was delighted to comply, since the accumulation of leaves was one of his major headaches every fall. In time a vast compost pile resulted. The Garden Club members were free to carry off this black gold, and outsiders were allowed to buy it, thus contributing to a maintenance fund. All things worked together for good, including the earth worms, who lived cozily in the compost heap. Before this venture got underway, ardent fishermen of all ages seemed to think that the Wild Flower Preserve was created solely to supply them with fish worms. They came in hordes and grubbed out flowers, vines, and even shrubs to get the coveted night crawlers. The effect was completely disastrous. Then the compost pile appeared upon the scene, and everything was changed. It was literally crawling with worms, and they were much easier to dig out than those in the ground. At once hundreds of hands were turning over the dead leaves and making them, free of charge, into the fine, sifted organic matter which is the desire of every gardener's heart. No one had known just how they could get those leaves turned over and then the miracle occurred. No more clawing of the good earth, the wild flowers could rest in peace, and the compost was ready for the market. Thus it is borne in upon us that even the humble worm may have its use in the vast scheme of nature and of The Shaker Lakes Garden Club."

Unfortunately in 1934 we lost our city gardener because of the Great Depression. Men on relief were not very helpful, and so the club hired other workers to help them with the heavy work. However, there were times when the public descended in droves and picked the flowers or dug them up to put in their own yards as rapidly as they were replaced, which may have instilled love of plants in their hearts but mined our best intentions!

In 1935, our club president and a small group of our members discussed a project to develop the Upper Shaker Lake, known as Horseshoe Lake. \$34,000 was obtained for a beautification program, and landscape architects, Pitkin and Mott, were hired to develop a plan so that many garden clubs could participate by each club selecting its own area to develop around the Lake. Our club chose the point area with landscape architects, Norcross and Teare, in charge. The circle drive off Park Drive between North and South Park Boulevards was relocated, parking space was developed, and the point garden and stonework overlook were started. Bridle paths were rebuilt and joined the extensive bridle paths throughout Shaker Lakes Park. The banks of the point were regraded and supported by retaining walls where necessary, and walking trails were constructed throughout the area. Trees and shrubbery were planted to hold the banks and attract birds. A small sandy beach was developed at the point. It must be noted here that the Second World War started in 1941, and all gardening thoughts and energies turned to Victory Gardens.

Shaker Heights announced in 1947 that they would take over the operation of Shaker Lakes Park from the City of Cleveland for \$1.00 per year, and they are still in charge. A year after Shaker Heights took over, our club wrote a letter to the Mayor of Shaker Heights about the state of the park, pointing out that the police should patrol both the Wild Flower Garden and the point and included suggestions for necessary maintenance. The Mayor responded that he was "turning over the entire matter to the Shaker Park Department for careful study." Unfortunately, there was very little improvement in the maintenance, and vandalism continued. However, thousands of grown-ups and children have enjoyed the woodland trails and wildflowers, it is hoped coming generations will cease to destroy the natural beauty others have tried so hard to develop and preserve!

In May 1947, The Garden Club of Cleveland joined The Shaker Lakes Garden Club in a Flower Market on the Mall downtown, guided by a pioneering lady from each of our clubs. They decided to stage this Flower Market centered on a merry-go-round between Rockwell and St. Clair Avenues. Everyone was dressed in pioneer costumes working in log cabin type flower stalls with large barrels holding up the display tables and cases. Flower carts loaded with cut flowers as well as 12,000 geranium and tomato plants were for sale. There were Amish buggies, a blacksmith shop, wood carving, a potter's wheel, and a maple sugar house. A hurdy-gurdy man cranked music for all to hear. There were refreshment stands with sausages and pancakes served by the Ladies Auxiliary of the Burton Fire Department with Ohio syrup, of course. Maypoles, Indian tents, a calliope, and a replica of Lorenzi Carter's log house built by a couple from Burton, Ohio, and trucked down to the Mall enhanced the festive scene. Hathaway Brown and Laurel School 'Indians' served as messengers at the Flower Market.

Our club was also involved in some interesting smaller projects through the years. One group of five or six members loaded cars and station wagons with flowers from members' gardens and made about fifty arrangements for Crile Veterans' Hospital twice each summer. At Christmas time we made tray favors starting with small wreaths arranged on rubber rings from mason jars,

accompanied by a pack of cigarettes, and given to patients at the Marine Hospital on Fairhill Road. Another year the Christmas Committee recommended gifts of mystery stories. Each member brought two paperback books in Christmas wrapping for the same Marine Hospital trays. In 1950, each member brought inexpensive Christmas gifts for The Salvation Army Home. Today we still make tray favors for the Eliza Bryant Nursing Home at the beginning of our Christmas greens workshop. After they have all been completed, we make arrangements to decorate our own homes!

Some of our members became very interested in "Rapid Recovery" which endeavored to interest Cleveland companies in sponsoring pocket parks along the Rapid Transit right of way. With funds from our Charitable Education Committee, we sponsored a plot for some teenage boys from The Cuyahoga Hills Boys School. They were instructed to clean up, plant, and then maintain it as their own site under the supervision of a young man who was interested in their rehabilitation.

In 1961, another group wishing to preserve natural areas for wildlife refuges volunteered to help The Lake County Metropolitan Park Board to keep Mentor Marsh from being destroyed. In 1995, developers were again trying to destroy it.

A much larger project was started in 1956 at Highland View Hospital, which was a hospital for the chronically ill. Our club provided \$2,500 for a planting plan for all the hospital grounds by Henry Pree and decided to concentrate our efforts on the courtyard thereby adding beauty to a large bleak institution. We planted flowering crabapple trees, pin oaks, red maples, and honey locusts. The beds in front of the main building were filled with geraniums, pachysandra, and many donated bulbs and flowers. Planting is usually fun, but the clay at Highland View was rock solid, needing sand, gypsum, and peat moss in order to use a shovel, let alone a trowel. Maintaining the trees, shrubbery, and beds for at least eight years was a labor of love, but was also very much appreciated by the eight hundred patients and staff. At Christmas we were invited to decorate their modern, nondenominational revolving altar with three pie shaped sections, only one of which was visible from the chapel at a time. There was a section for Protestants, Catholics, or Jews to celebrate according to their own particular customs. We also decorated the display windows on either side of the main entrance.

In 1965, we celebrated our clubs fiftieth anniversary with a black tie dinner at The Cleveland Skating Club to which our husbands were invited. That same year an invitation was sent to our club to join The Conservation Committee of Greater Cleveland to save Shaker Lakes Park from a large scale attack by the bulldozers which were about to start construction of Clark Freeway, a three layer superhighway right through the Park and many beautiful suburban neighborhoods. Naturally, garden clubs were very interested in preserving the natural park area as well as the neighborhoods! Thirty-three clubs joined the Park Conservation Committee, and The Shaker Lakes Garden Club sponsored an Audubon study as an authoritative source on whether this area was indeed of educational value to the community. This study suggested a nature center be built using the surrounding area as an outdoor laboratory for nature study and conservation practices. With the help of generous friends, our club also paid a naturalist \$4,400 during the next summer and full term of the school year to take children on nature walks. Cleveland Heights and Shaker Heights considered this program so successful that their school systems paid his salary for the summer and the remainder of the year.

An advisory committee was incorporated into an Ohio nonprofit corporation called The Shaker

Lakes Regional Nature Center. A Board of Trustees of fifty-four civic, educational, and political leaders from Greater Cleveland was formed with one of our club members as chairman to oversee the operation of this corporation and to implement The Audubon Report. Three Cleveland foundations gave \$43,000 over two years. Qualified teachers from three school systems, Cleveland, Cleveland Heights-University Heights, and Shaker Heights, were hired to write a curriculum (K through 12) during the summer of 1967.

Twenty Cleveland corporations participated financially to ensure the success of a benefit, "Midsummer Nights Frolic, at Horseshoe Lake to raise money for the Nature Center. \$15,000 was raised that year, and "The Party in the Park continues to be held from time to time for the benefit of the Center.

The Shaker Lakes Regional Nature Center was built and received two designations from the National Park Service, Department of the Interior, as "a National Environmental Education Landmark and as "a National Environmental Study Area. These two designations played a large part in preventing the Clark Freeway from ever being built.

Because our Shaker Lakes Garden Club has been closely associated with The Shaker Lakes Regional Nature Center from the beginning, it was natural for our Conservation Committee to consult the Director of the Center on the needs of the lakes, and after conferring with him to undertake the Nut Tree Project, Advice and assistance were offered and accepted from The Holden Arboretum in conjunction with a nut tree expert. Since maintenance of a project is often the hardest part, the members of our Club seized upon the idea of one of our members of using Boy Scouts to plant and maintain the trees. A total of eighteen trees, black walnuts, hazels, butternuts, and Chinese chestnuts were planted on May 10, 1969, on the south side of Horseshoe Lake where Attleboro intersects South Park Boulevard.

The Maybelle Stearns Trail was established at the Nature Center with a generous gift from one of our members matched by a gift from our club for its maintenance. The Kathleen Firestone Whidden foot bridge along the trail was restored by our club after it had been destroyed during a flood. A new wildflower garden near the Nature Center building was planted and is cared for by members with funds from the Charitable Education Fund donated yearly to an account at the Nature Center.

Another downtown project was developed in 1964 by our club pioneer of the "Market on the Mall" fame. She was also president of the Cleveland Public Library Board of Trustees and felt there was an exceptional librarian who deserved special recognition. Between the two library buildings was a vacant lot which she envisioned as a lovely oasis for peaceful relaxation from the hustle and bustle of the city. So the Eastman Reading Garden, named in honor of the librarian, Miss Linda Eastman, was planted with trees, shrubbery, and many pots of geraniums as focal points of color. Tables and chairs invited those who wished a quiet lunch or to read or write or just to listen to soothing music. There was also a sundial given in memory of one of our members and a fountain with water dripping into a large shell given by the originator of the Eastman Reading Garden who also gave generous endowment funds to our Charitable Education Fund for the gardens maintenance and other needs. At this moment the garden is in a state of horrendous abuse as it serves as a staging area for a new building replacing one of the old library buildings which was the old Plain Dealer building. We all anticipate the complete restoration of the Eastman Reading Garden!

While on the Board of Trustees of Dunham Tavern this same civic-minded member planted an apple orchard behind the tavern very much like the original orchard that existed when the tavern served as a stagecoach stop on the old coach road between Buffalo and Detroit. The night after the trees were planted, neighborhood vandals chopped them all down. At this same tavern in 1968, our garden club, with the advice of a landscape architect, planted an historically authentic herb garden with plants donated or purchased by our members. Our club proposed this herb garden for a Founders Fund Award that year, but unfortunately we failed to win.

In 1965, a new building was proposed for The Garden Center of Greater Cleveland. The Center was originally founded in 1930 and used the old Wade Park boathouse as its headquarters. Members of the garden clubs affiliated with the Garden Center have always been encouraged to maintain individual memberships in the Garden Center, and members of The Shaker Lakes Garden Club have served as officers and members of the Board of Trustees for many years. They have volunteered generously at the White Elephant Sale and the Center's other activities including decorating for the Christmas and Spring Shows, particularly in the library. With the help of individual contributions, The Shaker Lakes Garden Club gave \$125,000 for a room in the new building for The Eleanor Squire Library. Representatives from our club serve on the Garden Centers Library Committee. Valuable books are given to the library in memory of our members who have died, and each one is usually on a subject that had been of special interest to that member.

In addition to the original gift for the library room we also gave \$2,700 for an endowment fund with the interest to be used to redecorate the library or to buy new equipment when needed. Over a thirty year period this fund has increased to \$18,000 with the original \$2,700 remaining as principal. This fund may be added to at any time. Some of this large amount of interest could be converted to principal when and if it seems appropriate. A year-end financial report is sent by the Cleveland Botanical Garden to our chairman of the Charitable Education Fund.

One of our members started the Trellis Shop which has expanded rapidly into a delightful shop with unusual and attractive gifts. In 1972, another of our garden club members, inspired by The Bryant Park Show in New York, encouraged our club and The Garden Club of Cleveland to start a non-commercial, educational "Flower Fair" including a flower show which was held in the Eastman Reading Garden. Several years later, The Garden Center of Greater Cleveland, with the help of many of its affiliated clubs, decided to sponsor this Fair, moved it out to the Garden Center in University Circle, and changed the name to "Flower Fanfare".

In 1975, a year before our Nations Bicentennial, The Garden Club of America encouraged its member clubs to plan projects to celebrate this great event. The Cleveland Foundation, with our help, financed a \$50,000 survey of present and future needs of our Cleveland City Parks. This study brought about the decision to establish a Lakefront State Park. William S. Behnke Associates was commissioned to do this study of the history, planning, natural features, climate, geology, water facility, and transportation needs for the present and future use of the area. Recreation, including boating, swimming, and fishing, became a much more important use of this area than using it primarily for industry as it had been in the past. This study received the National Award from the American Society of Landscape Architects and a Citation from the Ohio House of Representatives.

The Cleveland Foundation matched the \$25,000 our club raised at a dinner auction of treasures created and donated by our members for another study by Behnke Associates for a creative –

innovative playground. Project Pride Playground was dedicated in 1976 on Martin Luther King Drive, as our Bicentennial gift to our country. However, wonderful as it was, it was not properly supervised, resulting in much vandalism. It is our understanding that it is now being restored, and we hope it will be appreciated by children of that area in the future.

In 1985, we joined The Garden Club of Cleveland in sponsoring a water exhibit at the newly established Children's Museum because The Garden Club of America was emphasizing water that year. This museum was created to spark the interest of children in all sorts of projects through learning by touching and actively participating in the exhibits. This time we raised almost \$30,000 by charging all members of both clubs \$100, a tax free, no-work, all-profit, donation! As with past projects many of our members were active in planning and volunteering at this museum.

On November 4, 1988, three ladies from The Shaker Lakes Garden Club met with a group of ladies from Emmanuel Episcopal Church on Euclid Avenue to consider organizing a garden club there. The idea was received enthusiastically, and a name was selected – Busy Bees Garden Club. Meetings have been held monthly since then, on programs such as indoor light gardening, growing geraniums from seed, field trips to Kingwood and to Gwinn, a Christmas greens workshop, lectures on herbs and birds, and several outstanding speakers who spoke on horticultural subjects. Hands-on flower arranging, work in the Emmanuel Church garden, and flower shows with Garden Club of America judges are also part of the Club's activities. All members of The Shaker Lakes Garden Club are invited to become Busy Bees. Busy Bees Garden Club is a member of the Cleveland Botanical Garden.

Our latest and perhaps most challenging event was started in 1994 and repeated again this year under a Chairman and Co-Chairman from The Shaker Lakes Garden Club. The Cleveland Flower Festival, now called FloralScape, was sponsored by the Cleveland Botanical Garden, formerly The Garden Center of Greater Cleveland. The year before Advanstar was the show's underwriter. It was indeed an exceptional show both years with many garden clubs affiliated with the Cleveland Botanical Garden joining The Garden Club of Cleveland and The Shaker Lakes Garden Club in participation with all phases of the show which lasted ten days. Landscape companies located in Northern Ohio designed and installed truly breathtaking gardens at the Cleveland Convention Center. A very high standard was achieved throughout, including an elegant flower show with exceptional arrangements and splendid horticultural classes. Patterned after the prestigious Philadelphia Flower Show, in just two years Cleveland, with great effort, has come very close to reaching such a goal.

As we look to the future on September 2, 1995, The Shaker Lakes Garden Club and The Garden Club of Cleveland will share a gala dinner dance and auction at the new Wyndham Cleveland Hotel at Playhouse Square. After careful consideration of possible choices, a group of members from each club decided on the Playhouse Square Plaza project to celebrate Cleveland's Bicentennial in 1996. Committees are presently studying overall plans for the Plaza and selecting hardy varieties of large trees for planting in an urban environment. Others are planning the dinner dance and auction at which we hope to raise \$100,000 for this project. It is our expectation that, when completed, the Plaza will provide a lovely park for all to enjoy and will restore the theater area to its former glory as a Mecca for both tourists and local residents.

We hope this history gives you a very real sense of pride in The Shaker Lakes Garden Club and the

members who accomplished these programs and projects in the past, and we look forward with confidence to you who will carry on in the future. Equally important are the delightful friendships, shared efforts, and successful fulfillment of challenges along with a few disappointments. Our members' collective hospitality, though a bit less lavish than in the past, is still sincere and very warmhearted, and we certainly enjoy our less serious moments together. May your Shaker Lakes Garden Club experience continue to be as satisfying as each one of you had hoped it would be. We wish you a very happy eightieth birthday, Shaker Lakes Garden Club, and many, many, more!

In closing, we wish to acknowledge the sources for this history. A number of members have written histories or partial histories, some with minor discrepancies, but we are especially indebted and grateful for the first history, written by Ada W. Housum, covering the club's first twenty-five years. We have used her actual wording in parts of our report of the early days because her writing gives a definite flavor of the time in which it was written. Other members who have written subsequent club histories are Marion C. Condit, Jane W. Bishop, and Jane M. Bourne. We also salute those who took pictures, clipped newspaper articles, and made scrapbooks. The archival materials are kept in a cupboard in the library of the Cleveland Botanical Garden for all to read and enjoy.

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