

1800

"THE FOUR-H CLUB CAMP STORY"

The Development of a Camping Program

By

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Whenever a group of 4-H Club members in North Carolina goes camping, it is democracy in action. This is the underlying philosophy that guides the 4-H Club camp program throughout the State. The history of camping for Negro 4-H Club members in North Carolina dates back to 1933. This first camp, like so many activities in educational work, grew out of a felt need and a given condition. In 1933 the State was suffering from an economic condition which caused the State-wide 4-H Short Course to be cancelled. Agents and leaders in the various counties felt that some activity needed to be carried on in order to give club members additional educational experience. As a result, Bertie, Gates and Pasquotank Counties' club members got together and carried out the first 4-H group camp at Chowan Beach in Hertford County, Winton, North Carolina. This Camp was held July 12-13, 1933. The program was carried out under the supervision of the County Farm Agents in Bertie, Pasquotank and Gates Counties, with more than one hundred boys and girls enrolled. The Camp site was privately owned, but this was the beginning of camping for Negro Four-H Club members in the State. These facilities were used for camping until the early 1940's.

From the beginning of this camp, inspiration spread to other counties and other Extension leaders. As a result some of the home agents felt

that camping for girls would mean much in their educational development. The first Camp for girls was held August 1-7, 1937. Mrs. Fannie T. Newsome, Home Agent in Northampton County and Miss Lillian H. Andrews, Home Agent in Bertie County promoted this first Camp. Arrangements were made by which a little cash as possible might be needed by the girls. They were to bring most of the raw foods and bedding. The agents took oil stoves and cooking utensils. Refrigeration was arranged through the Beach Manager. Meals, according to the menu, were prepared by agents, leaders and girls. In this first Camp there were 18 girls from Bertie County and 13 from Northampton County. Three leaders representing the two counties were Mrs. J. C. Hawkins, Mrs. Nolee Powell and Mrs. Carolyn Pugh. Girls camped at Chowan Beach through 1942.

The first County 4-H Camp was held in Bertie County in 1937. This Camp was held in the Ashland Community on the Chowan River near Colerain. It was supervised by the County Agent of the County. On the first day of this camp, severe rains drove the campers from the river due to poor camping facilities and equipment. The group became discouraged, along with its agent and started home. On the return trip they met Mr. J. T. Mountain, Principal, Ashland School, and he invited them to use the school building as their Camp Headquarters. This arrangement met the hearty approval of the campers, as well as the people of the community in which the school was located. At the close of the Camp, everyone agreed that they would use the school as their camping Headquarters in 1938. At the suggestion of Mr. S. B. Adams, a prominent citizen in the Ashland Community, plans were made to build a permanent

Camp. The plans called for each 4-H Club in the county to give a share of money sufficient to construct the Camp project. This method failed. During 1938 enough money was secured to construct a cook-shed and to get some necessary supplies. Thirty boys attended Camp in 1938. After this manifestation, on the part of the boys, the State WPA was asked to support a public Camp in the county. Plans were worked out and presented to the WPA which were finally approved for construction of the project, at a cost of \$5,200.

The project was known as the Bertie County Rural Recreation Center for Negroes or 4-H Club Camp. It consisted of six cottages, that would accommodate eight people each and an Assembly Hall, all frame construction, and playgrounds. The Camp was built on the Bertie County Board of Education property, in Ashland Community. Before the indebtedness of the Camp was fully paid, there was a change made in the agents in the county and the property finally reverted to the Board of Education; it has not been used for 4-H camping since.

It is significant to know that after the Camp in Bertie County was built, a Scout Troop from Raleigh used it before 4-H members did. Mrs. Annie Gaskin was the first cook to prepare the meals for club members in their new Camp. Besides the cabins and the Assembly Hall of 52 x 24 feet, the boys enjoyed improvised showers from a force pump. This Shower was built by placing a barrel in an elevated position and forcing water into it by a pump. The mattresses were made by the NYA in Elizabeth City. The Victor Phonograph Company gave the Bertie Camp group a Phonograph and 100 records that they used during their camping programs.

Camping for Negro 4-H Club members was further implemented in 1940 when the first Wildlife Conservation Camp was held. This Camp was held July 15-18 at Camp Whispering Pines, in the Crabtree Creek Area, Wake County (now William B. Umstead State Parks). It was held in the facilities developed by the State Conservation and Development Commission. Thirty-one (31) boys and girls from 31 counties were present in this first conference. This Camp was sponsored by the Federal Cartridge Corporation of Minneapolis, Minnesota, This organization having become interested in helping young people develop an appreciation and skills for preserving wildlife in the United States.

The early camping programs held at Chowan Beach and in Bertie County had excellent cooperation from business establishments. Much of the general expense for the Camps was paid by contributions from Oil Companies, Fertilizer Manufacturers, Insurance Companies, Food Chains, Meat Packers, Candy Manufacturers and Newspapers.

The objectives of these early camping programs were basically the same as they are today. Camping then was to offer 4-H members an opportunity to further their education and cultural development through organized wholesome recreation. Other specific purposes were:

1. To meet and learn to get along with other young people in one's age group and develop similar interest through committee work, program planning, living together as well as through sports and trips.
2. To meet the necessity for taking responsibility for one's acts without family protection.
3. To explore subject matter such as nature study, handicraft and music that cannot be given as successfully through local leaders.

4. To train and use leadership abilities as well as to develop intelligent following of leadership.
5. To reward good club work and inspire larger club membership.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CAMPING FACILITIES

Facilities for doing 4-H Club camping among Negroes in North Carolina have always been limited. In the early years they used a Camp owned by a private individual. Beginning in 1940, Camp Whispering Pines was used on a limited basis for wildlife and regular camping for club members. Since this was the best facilities in the State that could be used by Negroes, many agencies and organizations throughout the State used them. Only 62 people could be housed at one time. From the beginning of the first Camp, leaders, club members, parents and agents recognized the fact that in order to have good camping, a 4-H Club Camp would have to be built.

During a meeting of agents in Raleigh in September, 1943, the suggestion was made that agents start a program to provide camping facilities. The plan was that each county would raise \$50 per year, for the next five years. This money would be pooled and an approach made to some governmental agencies, such as the Federal Security Agency, to see if camping facilities could be provided for club members. In 1947 a survey was made among Negro Extension workers to see how much money we had towards this project. The total amount reported was \$1575. During county visits in 1947 and 1948, the 4-H Club Specialist asked for suggestions as to how we might speed up and facilitate our Fund Campaign to provide camp facilities. Formerly ^{formerly} C. W. Foster, County Agent in Wilson County, summed up in a very fine way what he thought were the pros and cons of Fund Raising. He said, "first of all, agents within themselves, have no right to front or go out and actually campaign for funds. Second, if money is raised in the county there should be a State organization to

receive the money, bank it and supervise the expenditures. Third, the organization could serve to carry out an educational program for raising the necessary finances for camp construction, provide the necessary promotional material and coordinate the activities of the people in Fund Raising Campaigns."

The suggestions coming from the agents were analyzed and studied. The By-Laws of the National 4-H Club Foundation and the By-Laws and Charter of the Georgia 4-H Club Foundation were studied as a basis for formulating the basis for a 4-H Club Foundation in North Carolina. The State 4-H Committee, in the summer of 1949, recommended that a State 4-H Club Foundation be established and that a State 4-H Camp be built by the 1950 camping season.

A special Committee of agents and staff members met December 16, 1949 in the Bloodworth Street Y.M.C.A., Raleigh, North Carolina, and outlined procedures for establishing a Foundation. The purpose of the Foundation was outlined and some suggestions made as to the people who would be helpful and serve as Directors. We had the guidance of Mr. R. E. Beam, Director of Foundations at North Carolina State College. One of Greensboro's outstanding corporation attorneys drew up the Charter and provided other legal advice.

Beginning in January, 1950, the 4-H Club Specialist made contacts with every county (51) where we had Negro Extension workers. During these visits individual people were contacted to serve as original charter members of the Foundation. The idea behind this particular activity was to carry on an educational program and have people in each county who would support the Foundation idea. As a result of this particular activity

we secured 256 charter members of the proposed Foundation.

Mr. L.P. McLendon drew up the certificate of incorporation and the Foundation was chartered September 14, 1950.

From the list of original members of the Foundation, certain persons were contacted to serve on the Board of Directors at a meeting held October 11, 1950. The following officers were elected: President, John H. Wheeler; First Vice President, Miss Mabel Powell; Second Vice President, Mr. S. J. Whitaker; Secretary, Miss Idell Jones and Treasurer, Mr. E. R. Hodgin.

Membership of the Board of Directors included Dr. F. D. Bluford, Mr. John H. Wheeler, Mr. W. W. Fitzpatrick, Miss Mabel Powell, Reverend H. B. Floyd, Mr. Wade Paschal, Mr. A. G. Thompson, Mrs. I. H. Smith, Mr. S. J. Whitaker, Mrs. Irene Yates, Mr. Fred G. Greene, Mr. U. S. Hart, Mr. Jesse W. Rogers, Mrs. Emma Johnson, Dr. C. M. Alston, Mr. H. R. Reeves and Dr. H. N. Dowdy.

The Board of Directors on October 25, 1950, approved the By-Laws of the Foundation and set up machinery to begin a Fund Raising Program.

From the time the Foundation was organized in the fall of 1950, until April 25, 1955, the people of the State had contributed a total of \$37,215.16 toward the work of the Foundation and the establishment of a camp.

The objectives of the Foundation are as follows:

1. To establish and maintain a 4-H Club Camp in North Carolina for Negro youth.
2. To provide educational trips and tours for 4-H Club members, based on leadership and project accomplishments.
3. To provide scholarship for deserving club members based on record of leadership and project accomplishments.

4. To provide educational materials such as appreciation plaques to be given to friends in support of 4-H Club work, radio transcripts, and 4-H Club pins, exhibit materials, 4-H Caps, T Shirts, etc.
5. To supplement the 4-H Club program among Negro youth in North Carolina; to further develop the need and skills and techniques of rural youth in the art of farming and homemaking; and to appeal to the citizens of North Carolina for support of such worthwhile activities among Negro 4-H youth, as are described above.

The basic objectives and purposes ~~of~~ which the Corporation is formed are to aid and promote a financial assistance and otherwise, all types of educational recreational research activities now undertaken or which hereafter may be undertaken by 4-H Clubs or other organizations for the promotion of agricultural advancement among young people by whatever name such activities may be known. Also to aid and promote any and all types of education and research in the general field of agriculture within the State of North Carolina. These are the objectives and purposes as set forth in the Charter of Incorporation for the Foundation.

THE BUILDING STARTS AND SO DOES THE CAMPAIGN

Final plans and specifications for construction of a 4-H Club Camp were completed in October, 1954. They were drawn by Mr. R. M. Ritchie, Extension Agricultural Engineering Specialist, North Carolina State College. The blue prints were submitted to several contractors throughout the State. Bids were received and a meeting of the Foundation Executive Committee was held in the Wachovia Bank Building in Winston-Salem, April 13, 1955. At that time the Executive Committee authorized the construction of three units of the 4-H Club Camp, based on the resources we

had on hand at that time. The Bid was let to T. A. Loving and Company of Goldsboro, North Carolina, and construction started April 25, 1955.

The Third Division of the State Highway and Public Works Commission built eight-tenths of road to the camp site prior to building construction. Mr. C. Heide Trask is the Commissioner for this division. The cost of this road or value of this contribution was \$2,760.

May 28, 1955, was set up as "4-H Club Camp Day" in North Carolina at a conference held Saturday morning, April 16, 1955. The Fund Drive called for having a committee in each county composed of businessmen, principals of schools, farmers, bankers, newspaper men, radio people, representatives of the various organizations such as Kiwanis Club, Home Demonstration Clubs, 4-H Clubs, Masons, Ministers, and the various organizations that would effect the educational work to be done among the people. Endorsements from the various organizations and people of leadership were to be obtained by the agents and their committees. These endorsements consisted of such people as the County Boards of Commissioners, Superintendents of Schools, Superintendents of Public Welfare, Bankers, Newspaper men, Mayors of the various towns, Merchants Associations, various civic club Presidents, Judges, Sheriffs, etc. These endorsements were obtained and publicity given to the program through radio, ^{Television} and the press. We were in contact with agents each week ~~week from the week of~~ April 18 through May 28 and twice in June, 1955.

A special brochure was constructed and printed in green and white. This educational material was used to help promote the program in the various counties. The title of this special brochure was "HELP 4-H'ERS BUILD A CAMP." This brochure carried a layout of the camp site showing

the location of buildings fronting Queens Creek. It also had information stating what had been done, amount needed to complete the buildings, and what the camp will mean to the young people of North Carolina. Counties used solicitation containers made from oyster cans and a special printed cover. The cover title was "HELP 4-H'ERS BUILD A CAMP." The amount of money on deposit and the amount of money needed was also a part of the cover information. The containers were sealed and used in public places and by solicitors making house to house canvas and on streets. On May 28, the counties reported \$36,251.41 for the camp building program. At the time the camp construction started, \$31,541.92 was on deposit in the Mechanics and Farmers Bank, Durham, North Carolina. The amount needed to complete construction was \$36,628.08, since the total contract price was \$68,171. Our campaign headlines in each county proclaimed \$37,000 was needed to complete the construction of camp buildings. The organization and work of the agents, leaders and interested people throughout the State resulted in \$50,080.30 from April 26, 1955 through August 10, 1955. This was enough to complete the buildings and allow some toward equipment, insurance and site development.

As of August 10, 1955, thirteen (13) units in the camp area were complete with exception of some painting. This consisted of an 80' x 36' dining-recreation hall with 33' x 29' kitchen attached; eight 32' x 22' cabins to accommodate sixteen club members and two leaders each; two bathhouses 26' x 22' (one for girls and one for boys); one well-pump house and an administration-infirmary building. The latter house will accommodate the camp director, two lifeguards, four instructors, two cooks one nurse and space for four sick beds. Size of the building is 24' x 52'.

The buildings are of cinder block and painted white with red roofs to carry out the color scheme of the Hammocks. All windows are screened with wooden shutters covered with corrugated galvanized iron on the outside. All the buildings are wired and lighted; all wires are underground. A porch 41' 4" x 10' is on the front of the main building; all other buildings have porches. In one corner of the kitchen is an 8' x 6' 6" canteen. Sales may be made to club members inside or outside the building from the canteen. All the windows in the kitchen are glass with screens. When the kitchen is complete it will have a dishwasher, glass washer, an 8' x 8' walk-in cooler, 42 cubic-foot reach-in refrigerator, 200 pound capacity ice maker, two 36" square electric stoves and one bake oven. All the sinks are of stainless steel. They are one two-compartment vegetable preparation, one two-compartment pot, one glass-washing, and one pre-wash for the dishwasher. Three drinking fountains are located on either side of the kitchen outside.

The Camp is located in Onslow County, near Swansboro, North Carolina. It is a part of the Hammock Beach Corporation property that was chartered to the Negro teachers of North Carolina by Dr. William Sharp. The Foundation has a 50 year lease on 31.22 acres of land and also a Quit Claim Deed from the Sharp and Hurst families. The lease is for 50 years at \$10 per annum. The 4-H Club Foundation has an option to renew the lease for additional 50 years as often as it wishes.

The interesting thing about this whole 4-H Club Camp is the spirit of so many people behind it. It has moved from the idea stage to a reality, and it has the contributions of a lot of people in it. In the total amount of money raised to-date, there are many contributions. Numbers of the

larger single amounts received are as follows: 1 - \$2000, 2 - \$1000, 9 - \$500, 1 - \$350, 4 - \$300, 3 - \$200, 1 - \$150, 41 - \$100 and 25 - \$50. The remaining amounts received are in the \$25, \$10, \$5, \$1 and smaller denominations. This means that many people are interested in the work of the Foundation.

The Foundation has almost realized one of its prime objectives - to build a 4-H Club Camp. When the building, equipping and ground developing are finally completed, the Foundation will start working on the other specific objectives.

The success of the 4-H Club Camp Day Campaign is due to the support of the Administrative Division of the Extension Service, including the Directors, Extension Editors, Supervisors, Specialists and County and Home Agents.