

IMAGES

...THEN AND NOW

From the Indian Hill Historical Society



Buckingham Lodge-1861

A History of the Bird Sanctuary

In November 1959, the Indian Hill Garden Club proposed planting a garden at the northeast corner of Drake and Shawnee Run Roads. Previously the Garden Club has installed plantings at the southeast corner of that intersection, and had collaborated with Village Manager Warren Parks on other civic projects.

After a study to determine if it was feasible, the Garden Club recommended the establishment of a Bird Sanctuary there. They dedicated funds “not to exceed \$1000” which included a memorial planting for longtime member Mrs. George Eustis. In spring 1960, the existing trees on the land were planted, and Helen Black’s committee developed a proposal for additional plantings. Village Council approved the plan in May, and agreed that the Village would prepare and grade the land and maintain the property in the future.

By September, the Village had installed steps and staked out paths. Some plants had been removed and others were pruned. Eleanor Christie developed an elaborate plan with cover and food sources for native birds. Specimens of Washington Thorn, Oriental Spruce, River Birch, and Laurel Oak were planted, and birdfeeders were installed.



Replenishing the birdfeeders at the Sanctuary was done by loyal volunteers from the Garden Club, with the club purchasing the bird seed. Plantings were added, using some shrubs acquired from the Village nursery. Cuttings of Euonymus were grown and planted, plus seedlings of unique trees (e.g. Grey Dogwood) were donated by Dorothy Rowe. A water line was installed, and specimens of White Pine, Pyramidal Oak, Tartan Honeysuckle, Bayberry, Witch Hazel, and Redbud were added. Two concrete benches were placed in the Sanctuary in 1963, and a birdbath was added in 1965. Later two wooden benches were donated – one as a memorial to William Pease, and second one as a gift to the Village from all the Indian Hill area garden clubs (Buckingham, Clippinger Woods, Dirt Daubers, Indian Acres, and Village) during the Bicentennial Year (1995). Today only two concrete benches exist on the property.

In the early 1970s the Bird Sanctuary was enhanced by the addition of a fountain. Marjorie Applegate’s sculptures were featured at Closson’s, and one, “North Wind” was selected by friends of the Village to be converted into the fountain. Many residents contributed funds for this project. The 20” by 30” limestone head was purchased and presented to the Village of Indian Hill. Stones from an old foundation on Green Areas property were used for the base, and for mounting for the head. The cost for transforming and installing the fountain was \$2500, all of which was donated. In 1972 the fountain was unveiled to the public by Mayor William Kite. After the ceremony, refreshments were served in Council Chambers, with punch served from the historic World War II Carrier Pigeon Bowl.

Over the years, the Bird Sanctuary has been an asset to the Village. Now maintained by the Public Works Department, the plantings have matured, and the fountain continues to flow every summer. Memorial and honorarium trees have been added. Residents have enjoyed this oasis at the center of the Village for more than fifty years.

