

IMAGES

...THEN AND NOW

From the Indian Hill Historical Society



**Buckingham Lodge
1861**

Village Garden Club Marks 75 Years

This spring, the Village Garden Club of Indian Hill observed its 75th anniversary. The club's founders were sixteen Village residents who met at the then Jefferson School in March 1944 to establish a garden club. Guided by the President of the Ohio Association of Garden Clubs, the women organized themselves, elected temporary officers, and voted to create a club that would be horticultural in aim and purpose.

Within a month, the club chose its official name, applied for membership in the aforementioned Ohio Association of Garden Clubs, and designated committees for the upcoming year. A club constitution and by-laws were enacted. All this occurred while World War II was still transpiring – even D-Day was several months away. The first club project was beautification of the area beside the Village Honor Roll. It was located at the Administration Building and listed local men who were in the armed services. Men who had died had asterisks beside their names. The Roll of Honor paid tribute to those who fought for the USA and Allies.



During its second year of existence, the club attained membership in the Cincinnati Federation of Garden Clubs. It also sponsored a local Girl Scout troop. In 1946 the ladies decided to embark upon a major project on an annual basis. Indian Hill Village was growing rapidly and road signs denoting the approaches to the community were necessary. With the approval of Village Council and the City Manager, the club paid for seven wooden signs which were installed on the perimeter roads of Indian Hill. The next year, two more signs were purchased and mounted, and the Honor Roll plantings were refreshed.



Members participated in local flower shows, sponsored at places like Shillito's department store, the Art Museum, the Civic Garden Center, and later the Cincinnati Flower Show at Ault Park, then Coney Island and Symmes Township. If any member's floral arrangement won a monetary prize, the money was deposited to the club's coffers for specific projects. In the first decade members were required to bring an arrangement to every meeting. If someone didn't comply, she was fined 25 cents.

The Village Garden Club has been active in Indian Hill affairs. It donated bulbs for schoolchildren to plant at Jefferson School; it provided table decorations for the lunch room at the new high school; it donated funds for plantings there; it tidied up the cemetery near Shawnee School; and it contributed more signs marking the 27 entrances to the Village. Additionally, the club gave funds for landscaping at Steppingstones, the Rowe Arboretum, the Indian Hill Historical Society, the Water Works, and the fire station. Members urged Village Council to require landowners of vacant lots to keep their properties' obnoxious weeds cut. Outside Village limits, the ladies participated in plantings at both the Madeira and downtown Hamilton County library gardens. They also were engaged in various activities at the Civic Garden Center, beautification projects at Ault Park Pavilion and Sawyer Point Park, and contributions to Krohn Conservatory.

The club was involved for years with the Cincinnati Flower Show (which debuted in 1990). Members entered judged competitions (and won some awards), and also decorated tents and acted as hostesses for the multi-day event. For decades the group made and delivered decorations to nursing homes in Cincinnati. Back in the 1970s the club focused on environmental issues, such as litter and pollution, and educated themselves about being stewards of the earth. More recently the group has concentrated on various aspects of gardening/nature and continued their civic good works.

On their 25th anniversary, the club held a champagne buffet with skits by members; and on their 50th, it had a luncheon at Kenwood Country Club where a mayoral proclamation was presented as well as a citation from Federated Garden Clubs. The club's 75th anniversary plans are underway.

Through their efforts over 75 years, the Village Garden Club has made an impact in Indian Hill and the surrounding area. Members have contributed their time and talents for numerous horticultural projects and have shared the joys of friendship while doing so. Happy 75th Anniversary!