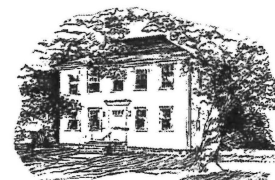


IMAGES

...THEN AND NOW

From the Indian Hill Historical Society



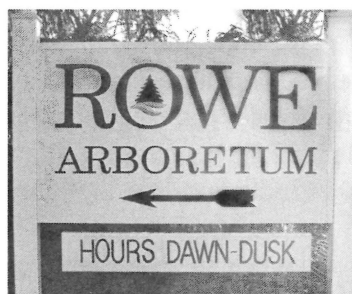
Buckingham Lodge
1861

The Story of the Rowe Arboretum

Many great public gardens began as hobbies for their original owners. These include Callaway Gardens (GA), Longwood Gardens, (PA), and the Morton Arboretum (IL). Indian Hill is fortunate to have the Rowe Arboretum at 4600 Muchmore Road.

It all began in 1924 when Stanley and Dorothy Rowe began acquiring land in the portion of the Village known as *Hard Scrabble*. Eventually they owned 200 acres, and built their family home, Annesdale. They decided to convert overused pastureland to woodlands. In 1926, 4700 seedlings were purchased from the state of Ohio. They were designed "for the purpose of holding up hillsides", and included pines, larches, tulip trees and red oaks. An amusing story goes that two large trucks were dispatched to the railroad station to pick up this vast quantity of tree seedlings, but the order arrived in a small box light enough to be carried by hand. Some of these original trees are still thriving.

After a trip to Knoxville to visit their friend, Alfred Sanford, who had a 175 acre private arboretum, the Rowes determined that they would create an arboretum of woody plants, trees, and shrubs at their Ohio property. They began accumulating all types of horticultural specimens. They traveled to other arboreta and nurseries in the US, and traded plants. They tried each plant three times, and if it still did not survive, they did not bother with it anymore. All new introductions to the arboretum were recorded and labeled. Zinc labels contained the common name, botanical name, source, a code number, and the date of planting.



The Rowes wanted to make their plantings look as if they were naturally occurring, so they did not plant in rows. Instead, various families were grouped together, and a grid was established, with lilacs in one segment, weeping conifers in another, and so forth. The couple experimented with many varieties, investigating what could live in this climate. Mrs. Rowe learned the Latin genus and specie name of every planting, and Mr. Rowe cleared trails for exercise. They opened their arboretum to college professors, graduate students, and horticultural enthusiasts. They collected four to five thousand types of trees and shrubs over the years, as well as two unusual

artifacts: a petrified log from the Triassic Period, and an ancient slice of a giant redwood tree. To preserve a substantial part of the arboretum, the Rowes donated 9 acres to Indian Hill Village in 1979, and agreed to sell their residence (Annesdale) to provide an endowment for the collection's upkeep.

The Rowe Arboretum is currently a nonprofit organization funded by the endowment and the support of members and visitors. It is open from dawn to dusk everyday. Admission is free. Changes have been made over the years, including the installation of an irrigation system, an 8 foot tall deer fence, spring-loaded gates at the entry, and a cattle crossing on the driveway. Additional specimens have been added, and the grounds have been mapped. A brochure was created by the arborist, Chris Daeger. The Arboretum archives contain horticultural periodicals and records dating back to the 1930s. Bulb forcing workshops are held annually.

A stunning place to visit at any season, the Rowe Arboretum is a Village gem. Its paths wind around unusual specimens, providing a haven for all who enter. Mr. and Mrs. Stanley Rowe, Sr. left a green legacy – a treasure for future generations.

