

WOMAN'S ASSOCIATION

FOR THE

BETTERMENT OF PUBLIC SCHOOL
HOUSES IN NORTH CAROLINA



A BIT OF HISTORY.

Prepared at request of Wake County Association by
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This bit of history, relative to the movement for the betterment of public school houses in North Carolina is none the less interesting because very recent. Indeed it is history in the making.

The first step towards this making was taken in March, 1902, when, at the instance of Dr. C. D. McIver, the Woman's Association for the Betterment of Public School Houses was formed.

The object of the Association, as told by its name, was to arouse public sentiment and enlist the energy of our citizens at large in improving and beautifying our public school houses and grounds. The plan was one of lessening circles. The State Association was to organize County Associations and these, in turn, to organize Local Associations, each one thus building over against his own house. When an organization grows out of a need its future is assured.

From the inception of this Association the stars fought for it. In a remarkably short time a number of County Associations were organized and Local Associations began to spring up all over the State. The present officers of the State Association are: President, Mrs. W. R. Hollowell, Goldsboro; Vice-President, Mrs. E. E. Moffitt, Raleigh; Recording Secretary, Miss Marie Bays, Craven County; Corresponding Secretary, Miss Mary Taylor Moore, Greensboro; Treasurer, Mrs. J. A. Anthony, Shelby.

It would be too long a story to even name the results of the Association's work, attained in two short years. How some thirty County Associations have been formed, how the energetic and untiring president, Mrs. Hollowell, has met and inspired the women of every part of the State in this worthy cause, how an officer of one County Association travelled six hundred miles by private conveyance from school house to school house, leaving in her wake Local Associations, and how shortly after, through their efforts, the ere-while bare walls of public schools were hung with beautiful pictures and the grounds began to bloom with newly-planted flowers; how city schools, through whose halls passed some five or six hundred children daily, from being bare temples of learning began to be homes of beauty; how teacher after teacher became ambitious to make her school house the most attractive in her county, or how, best of all, the children grew interested and, as might be expected, interested their parents, until to modernize, to ventilate, to enlarge, to beautify the public school, to make it the center, not only of the educational but the social life of the community became the ambition of the choicest spirits of the neighborhood—all this, I say, would make far too long a story.

Interesting as are these general statements, it may be of interest to know something of the past and present of this movement in one county.

THE WAKE COUNTY ASSOCIATION.

Knowing the deep interest in educational affairs in Wake it goes without saying that she was not long in falling into line. August 8, 1902, only three months after the organization of the State Association, Mrs. E. E. Moffitt, of Raleigh, presented the matter to the Teachers' County Institute. Again the deeply-felt need assured a ready response. The

Wake County Association for the Betterment of Public School houses was at once organized and now has the following officers: President, Miss Edith Royster; First Vice-President, Miss Fannie E. S. Heck; Second Vice-President, Miss Mary Johns; Secretary, Mrs. Pascal Reddish; Treasurer, Miss Daisy Waitt; Chairman Executive Committee, Mrs. E. E. Moffitt.

A campaign of agitation was speedily begun. Numbers of letters were written to teachers and others setting forth the objects of the Association. All interested and willing to give their time and service to the Association's undertakings were invited to become active members, without dues; those who could give neither time nor other service were asked to become associate members by the payment of one dollar a year. Somewhat slowly teacher after teacher became interested. To stimulate further interest the County Association offered a scholarship in the A. and M. Summer School to the teacher who made the greatest improvement in building and grounds during the year 1903-1904. At the request of the Association, the County Board of Education made a similar offer. The officers and active members of the Association made a number of visits to school houses endeavoring to organize Local Associations; articles were prepared for papers kindly opened to us—and in short no effort left untried to awaken throughout the length and breadth of Wake the determination to make her school houses worthy of the capital county of the State. The only drawback, indeed the limitation of the work, has been the lack of funds. Only 27 have become associate members, giving the Association thus a very limited financial basis.

We are aware that there are many who can not spare time for active service, but we can but believe that there are at least seventy-five friends of education within our borders who by becoming associate members and paying

one dollar a year will enable the active members to make this movement for the uplift of the public schools felt to the remotest bounds of Wake. That so much has already been accomplished on so small a sum, is the assurance of proportionate enlargement. And what has been accomplished? Here again a long story must be made short. Interest has been awakened everywhere; the county has been districted, different sections being assigned to active members to stimulate and organize; as has been said, articles have been written and visits made, resulting in Local Associations at Wake Forest, Mount Moriah, Garner, Eagle Rock, Cardenas, Reddish school house, Auburn, besides three in the Raleigh district; the Summer School Scholarships have been won, over several competitors, by Miss Annie Abernethy of Eagle Rock Academy and Miss Alice Penny of Mt. Hope, St. Mary's Township, District No. 6.

So much done—but so much more to be done—and to do it the desired agent is the

LOCAL ASSOCIATION.

What ever method the County Association may pursue to teach its end—letters, visits, leaflets, scholarships—the end is the organization of an active, aggressive, progressive, and untiring Local Association for the betterment of *its own* school house.

We venture to say that there is not a single school house in Wake County either in town or country, which, inside and out, in point of health, convenience and beauty is as good as it ought to be or as it might be. They range from the one-roomed, unplastered, ill-lighted school, without desks and where the children sit on the floor to write, to the newest school buildings, well built and well furnished. None were quicker to see the lack than the citizens of the

capital and there are now three Local Associations in Raleigh—one for each white public school.

What is needed for the schools acknowledged best is without doubt needed for those not so good.

“But”—. Of course. There is always a “but” in the way—something to be overcome when anything worth doing is to be done. Were it not so it would have been done long ago. Be this as it may, we do not believe that there is a single community in our county in which the school house must still sit “a ragged beggar by the way,” nor one in which the public school may not be made “a thing of beauty and a joy forever.”

To aid to this end the following Constitution is suggested:

CCONSTITUTION
of the
LOCAL ASSOCIATION
for the
Betterment of the ----- Public School.

ARTICLE I.

SECTION 1. The name of this organization shall be the Association for the Betterment of the Public School.

ARTICLE II.

The purpose of this Association shall be:

1. To arouse interest in education, especially in the importance of every child being in school every day of the school term.

2. To unite all the people of this community for the improvement of our public school (1) by placing in the school facilities for health, comfort and education, together with objects of beauty; (2) by the planting of trees, shrubs and flowers in the school grounds; (3) by encouraging the establishment and circulation of a public library; (4) by making the school the center of wholesome and instructive amusements—in a word to improve the physical and intellectual environments of our future citizens.

ARTICLE III.*

Any one interested in the objects of this Association may become an active member by the payment of an annual fee of twenty-five cents for adults, ten cents for children. Any

* Each Local Association shall decide for itself on the advisability of changing or including Article III.

one unable to give active service may become an honorary member of this Association by the payment of an annual fee of fifty cents.

ARTICLE IV.

The officers of this Association shall be a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and Librarian, who shall be elected at the annual meeting.

ARTICLE V.

This Association shall meet regularly once a month or oftener at the call of the President.

ARTICLE VI.

That this Association may be in touch with the general work for the Betterment of Public Schools throughout the State and County it shall enroll itself with the Secretary of the County Association for the Betterment of Public Schools and send to her an informal report of its progress at least twice a year.

ARTICLE VII.

This Constitution may be amended at any annual meeting by a two-thirds vote of the members present.

DUTIES OF OFFICERS.

The duties of the President shall be: To preside over all the meetings, keep order and preserve good feeling, and to call special meetings when necessary.

The duties of the Vice-President shall be: To preside over meetings in the absence of the President and to aid her in every way in making the Association useful.

The duties of the Secretary shall be: To call the roll at each meeting, to write the minutes of each meeting, and to keep the County or State Secretary informed as to what her Association is doing. She shall also write to these for information desired by her Association.

The duties of the Treasurer shall be: To keep a strict account of all the money received and paid out by the Association, and to give a report of the same when called.

The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers of the Association and one or more members, and shall have power to act on any question when it is not convenient to call a meeting of the Association.

The bit of history is told. In making it farther reaching, all, into whose hands this may fall, are offered a part. If you cannot yourself organize a Local Association will you not put this into the hands of some one who can? If you can take no part in the local organization you are again and most cordially invited to become an associate member of the County Association by sending your name and annual fee of one dollar to the county secretary, whose name you will find on the first page of this pamphlet.

He cannot build in vain who builds in character.