

THE GROWING FAMILY OF GREENE'S WOMEN'S CLUBS: They Take The Time To Do Ten Thousand Tasks

By MARTHA FORBES
Sun Staff Writer

In every family, at any given time, there is an oldest member and a youngest member. So it is with the "family" of women's clubs in Greeneville and Greene County.

In the 25 clubs that are presented in the fifth annual club woman's supplement of *The Greeneville Sun*, each is a separate entity; yet they are all united through a common bond of service. Each one was born out of a need to fulfill some function in the community, and certainly the lives of the people are enriched in some way because they exist.

It has often been said that the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world. To paraphrase that adage, one can state that the women who are organized into clubs "rock" the complacency of the environment in which they exist and sometimes seem literally to turn the community upside down in order to accomplish their purposes.

If a group of clubwomen set their minds, hearts and collective strengths towards achieving a specified goal, they are determined to succeed. They will tackle almost any project to

The women's clubs in Greeneville and Greene County, as a whole, fall into four major categories. There are the educational or professional clubs such as the Alpha Delta Kappa or the National Secretaries Association. There are eight clubs which are in this group. They are Alpha Delta Kappa, American Association of University Women, Delta Kappa Gamma, Epsilon Sigma Alpha, Business and Professional Women, League of Women Voters, National Secretaries Association and Girl Scouts. Perhaps the latter is somewhat different from the others, but the whole scouting program is programmed to train girls in citizenship.

Then there is a rather large group of civic and service clubs, whose primary aim is to offer specific help in community projects. Many of these are also delightfully social, meeting for luncheons and having programs that are entertaining, pleasurable and, perhaps incidentally, educational. Among these are the Andrew Johnson Club, Grandmothers' Club, Garden Clubs, Home Demonstration Clubs, Junior Woman's Club, Negro Women's Civic

members in a special way. They are limited in membership to new women who move to Greeneville from another place. They are called Welcome Wagon and Newcomers' Club.

And then there are four organizations that are "sister" clubs to men's groups. They are the American Legion Auxiliary, Jaycettes, Women of the Moose and the VFW Auxiliary.

The Daughters of the American Revolution stands alone in its dedication to patriotism. As the name indicates, it too is an exclusive club in that membership is limited to women who can trace their ancestry back to the American Revolution.

However, all these clubs have one thing in common: contributing to and touching nearly all areas of life in their scope of influence. When funds are being sought for any civic project or drive, the clubs contribute—United Fund, Heart Fund, Cancer Drive, March of Dimes—all find a ready response from the clubs. If a new library needs to be built, or a tennis court, or a recreational area, hands are extended to the clubs. If any underprivileged class needs assistance, or special

Home Demonstration Club—not necessarily any individual club but the organization as a whole.

In 1914, the County Court made an appropriation for the salary of a Home Demonstration agent. But it was not until January of 1916 that Mabel Moore came to Greene County as a "home demonstrator." Quoting from an account of her first years of service, the following was said:

"Greene County had very bad roads and traveling was hard—that was in the horse and buggy days. But our faithful agent plodded on from house to house meeting the farm wives.

"Later she traveled in a roadster car, now known as a Model T. In the rear of this little car, bouncing over rough roads, Miss Mabel carried a canner, the first thing of that sort to be brought into our county.

"She met with groups of women at community centers; she taught the women that cleanliness and sterilizing their cans rarely resulted in spoiled fruit. Her first lessons were in canning tomatoes, corn and beans.

"We country women thought this a great advancement, the idea of having home-canned green beans in the winter months where previously we only had dried ones, and canned corn where we had used old time lye hominy as our only method of using corn."

In a history of Home Demonstration work that was written in 1939, it was stated, "Although many changes have taken place during the last quarter of a century we are still working toward the same goal: 'Better Homes on Better Farms

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Do Ten Thousand Tasks

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If a group of clubwomen set their minds, hearts and collective strengths towards achieving a specified goal, they are determined to succeed. They will tackle almost any project to improve or contribute to the elevation of standards in the community, whether it is the furnishing of playground equipment for a new park or cleaning up Old Harmony cemetery or making possible new educational opportunities for those who strive to widen the horizons of the mind.

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The first federated club in Greeneville to be organized was the Cherokee Club, back in 1902. But the oldest club in the area, which is still functioning, is the

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They Take the Time to Do Ten Thousand Tasks. Martha Forbes. The Greeneville Sun. October 19, 1973. Negro's Women's Civic Club.