

## **Jeanne Cummings**

### **Side 1:**

[1] She and her dermatologist husband, Charles, came to Asheville from New Orleans 30 years ago this month to escape from the frantic social life.

[12] After a short time in another house in Biltmore Forest they purchased their present house (described) and were welcomed by Dr. Camblos. [Dr. Josh Camblos, Dr. Reynolds]

[23] She describes city when they arrived. The people were cautious due to the Depression but welcomed new ideas and new people. She was a Jr. League transfer and the people became the core of her volunteer and social life.

[51] In the early 70's she worked with school education programs using puppets and the nationwide "Green Circle" program to combat drugs and encourage integration. [John Bridges]

[95] She describes League philosophy (to research a community need, fund a project for 3 years and turn it over to the community) and investigation of the condition of the zoo. [Ray Kisiah]

[114] As president in 1972 and 1973 she helped launch the program which became the Nature Center. This project caught the imagination of the city and what started as a small \$60,000 project grew to \$175,000. Businesses, industries, the government and individuals participated in time and funds.

[154] The Building and Construction Trades Council provided free labor, and volunteers solicited donations for material. However, the laborers only worked when they were unoccupied. The Emergency Job Corps., which had just been established, did much of the building and learned the trade on the job. Community support kept coming in. [Joe Hall]

[210] There were many problems due to construction, cost and lack of animal cooperation, but the Nature Center has been a great success. She considers this a "gift from the community to the community."

[254] The County took the center over as part of the "water agreement." City tax payers were hard hit financially in paying for facilities used by the county. (This was a way the city could get county water and the city would fund projects, i.e. library) [Ray Kisiah]

[275] There was cooperation from all groups. The city manager, when the project became overwhelming, said, "We don't look back. We just look forward and see how we can make it work." [Ken Michalove, Bill Cook, Mike Zageir, Sally Rhoades, Dershie McDevitt, Andie Bayer, Melony Hudgens]

[306] The zoo society became the Nature Society and the group is now called "Friends of the Nature Center." These people act as docents, fund raisers and put on programs such as Hey Day.

[330] There is now a petting farm with vegetable gardens, sheep are sheared, honey gathered, etc.

[354] The Discovery Room was built two years ago following another fund drive. There is now a red wolf exhibit which is part of a program to reintroduce the animal into the wild. [Charles D. Owen (Mfg. Co) Bill Moore, Dr. Josh Camblos]

[412] During the summer there are junior curators. During the school year school groups are scheduled for visits Entrance fees go to the county but funds from the shop go to the Friends of the Nature Center.

[440] She describes volunteer jobs she has held and is working on now. She has served on the Red Cross Board, the United Way, and through the Memorial Mission Hospital Board has joined the Bio-ethics Committee. This group concerns itself with patients education regarding living wills, informed consent for treatment, or the withdrawal of treatment. [Dershie McDevitt]

[490] She is Chairman of the Medical Care Review Committee which reports to the Hospital Board.

[497] Recently she had joined the Biltmore Forest Board of Adjustment which handles appeals for variances on zoning.

[517] She had just become a member of the board of the First Commercial Bank.

[528] Her daughter and son in law have children and full-time jobs but she is able to do volunteer work for the League. In the past, all meetings were held at night and the only volunteer work available for working members was in the Next to New shop. [Laura McCue]

## **Side 2:**

[2/2] Her other daughter lives in Charlotte, has a full-time job but worked in the League show. [Priestly]

[2/10] She has a son in Richmond who is a pulmonary physician and a son in Raleigh who is an environmentalist. Two grandchildren live in town.

[2/22] For 21 years she has had children in Country Day School [now Carolina Day School]. She was involved in the merger with St. Genevieve's. [Eileen McCabe, Cornelia Stephens (Mrs. F. Irby Stephens), Bob Henson, Jim Hamilton, Martha Nell Lovett, Winifred Quinn McCabe, Helen Reed]

[2/85] Before the Art Museum moved to the Civic Center and after it was located on Charlotte Street it was temporarily housed on the 11th floor of the Northwestern Bank Building (now BB&T).The first Christmas International was organized by the Junior League to try to get the community involved in decorating trees representing different countries. Just as the show was to open, the fire marshal said that live trees were a safety hazard. Artificial trees had to be

substituted at the last moment. These trees are purchased by an organization and the money goes to the museum. The project died for several years and has been taken on by Hospice. [Mimi Shackelford]

[2/107] She was on the United Way Board when a request for funds came from Hospice. The funds were granted and even more money came from the public without solicitation. "Solace," a rooming facility run by Hospice, accommodates 12 patients. [Michael Keleher]

[2/132] The Junior League started an information and referral service and a volunteer service bureau, now taken over by the United Way and in its building.

[2/150] She was in the League when Harvest House was a project choice. There had been a community center in Kenilworth and the League revamped the building for elderly people.

[2/195] Camp Loquastee for children with learning disabilities (such as dyslexia) was held in the summer at the Christ School. It filled a real, newly-recognized need, and has since been taken over by another group.

[2/213] Integration of blacks into the Asheville School and the Country Day School is discussed. Both schools are integrated now, but she details how difficult it is to find qualified Blacks who are willing to be singled out, given scholarships, and made to feel comfortable. She feels, as did Eileen McCabe, that it is the unusual student who can make this social sacrifice. [Johnny Hampfield, Titus Glover, Darrell Hart, Eileen McCabe]

[2/257] The Junior League is open to minorities and it is not as much of a problem as it was 10 years ago. However, because of lack of friendship groups involving Blacks, it is difficult finding candidates who must be known well and sponsored. She proposed the first Jewish member.

[2/275] The "white glove" image of the League has changed as the members have become more and more involved in unromantic work such as cooking for the shelters, i.e. ABCCM

[2/315] Her present favorite volunteer job is working as research assistant in Earthwatch projects. She gives slide shows to school children of her trip to the Rain Forest, the Coral Reef, and Swimming with Dolphins.

[2/349] Her husband is considering retiring and her life will take a different direction. [Dr. Charles Cummings]

[2/356] She discusses the need for the development of the center of the city and wishes Downtown could be alive again. People from outside the city made things happen. Natives, who had suffered the Great Depression were concerned about spending. People travel to Health Adventure to see the exhibit and buy used exhibits for their own cities. [Roger McGuire, Larry Holt, James "Red" Hoyle, Robert Bunn]

[2/437] She talks about her garden and horseback riding. Horses are allowed in certain areas (grand fathered), and she rides and hikes all over the area - a remarkable lady. [Jane Bingham, Mimi Cecil, Debbie Williamson]