

ANNUAL NARRATIVE REPORT OF HOME DEMONSTRATION WORK IN NORTH CAROLINA 1938

Ruth Current
State Home Demonstration Agent

INTRODUCTION

Someone has said that all great organizations and institutions are but the lengthened shadow of a man. I like to think of our organization's steady growth over a period of 27 years as being the lengthened shadow of a man, Dr. Seaman A. Knapp, and also of all our workers, especially the early pioneers, our present state staff and field workers, and the 66,000 rural women and girls. It has taken all of us.

I feel that the year, 1938, has been the best year's work yet to be recorded in the history of Home Demonstration Club Work in North Carolina. The finest type of cooperation has been given by all groups and cooperation within such a large organization surely means progress.

I have observed the work and appeared in programs in all five of our districts during the past year. The systematic, well planned, and well conducted programs; keen interest shown by club women for the demonstrations; the functioning of well trained local leaders; increased enrollment; all were most inspiring. They have increased my own appreciation for our organization and its membership.

One cannot sit behind the desk and catch the vision, receive inspiration and enthusiasm that he or she needs. It is going into the field, into the homes, attending club meetings, Council meetings, Achievement Day programs that better equip us to help solve the problems and more adequately meet the needs of the people with whom it is our privilege to work. It is a definite challenge to extension workers wherever they may be to continue thinking,

planning, and working to aid in solving, with the farm family, those problems as they affect the economic and social life of the farm family.

Help has been given to individuals in 69,652 families through home visits and to 2,471 communities through monthly club meetings, community meetings, and visits to individuals. Because of extension work, hundreds of farm families have taken a new lease on life. They are living in changed homes where there are more comforts, more color to bring cheer, more reading material, more landscaped home grounds, more water systems and miles of electric lines; we have better groomed rural men and women, boys and girls who are now getting better balanced and more attractive meals. They have more vision, courage and determination; they are ready to blaze a new trail for the good of country life. These things all raise the standard of living for the rural family which is becoming more and more appreciative of what it has.

I like to quote Dr. Seaman A. Knapp. In 1910 he said of home demonstration work. "It is realized also that the great force that readjusts the world originates in the home. Home conditions will ultimately mold the man's life.

"The home is the center of interest and the center of activity on the farm and no extension education for the rural people is complete which does not carry a large portion of valuable information for the help of the homemaker and the girls on the farm."

We are looking forward to the day when all rural homemakers in North Carolina and in the United States are united into one great organization for the building of a great rural people

What the Rural Women Themselves Say

Expressions of appreciation and of the worth of our work come to us often. Mrs. Carl Slagle, of Macon County, says: "Every time I think of what Home Demonstration Work has done for Macon County my heart swells with pride. In some respects we have advanced twenty years in the three and a half years that Mrs. O'Neil has been here. Our whole attitude toward life has changed and we get so much more out of living."

The following comment is taken from the yearly report of the president of the Contentnea Home Demonstration Club in Lenoir County:

"One of the most outstanding projects in which our club women have taken part has been the study of the home and its surroundings. We want our homes to be comfortable and beautiful. We have learned to appreciate the correct arrangement and selection of furniture in our homes. We have tried to create beauty around our homes by planting shrubbery. We have assisted in beautifying our church grounds. We have tried to make our homes and communities better places in which to live. Our lives have been made richer and more beautiful because of our home demonstration club work."

Mrs. Marshall Norwood, of Granville County, says: "Home Demonstration Work has helped me to be a better judge of foods that are essential and palatable both to growing children and adults. I am better prepared to cook and serve them and really enjoy cooking more than I did before attending club meetings. Home Demonstration Work creates interest among country homemakers. It has been said that the farmer is the backbone of the world and the plea of today is 'help the farmer.' The best way to do this is to help the farm wife through Home Demonstration Work."

One interesting comment on home demonstration work came from Mr. D. J. Robinson, a young man in Hertford County who travels over the county considerably and therefore is in a position to observe results. He said, "If no other benefits have been received by the people of Hertford County during the past two years, the improved appearance of the home grounds, churches and school grounds more than pays for all the financial investment the county has made in the home demonstration program."

Mr. M. F. Absher, member of the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners, at one of their recent meetings, said: "I don't know what you gentlemen think about home demonstration club work, but I think it is one of the best projects that this county has ever sponsored."

Home demonstration club work has been organized in Wilkes County for only a year and a half. Mr. Absher is a conservative person though progressive and has the interest of the county at heart. We greatly appreciate his fine spirit of cooperation and interest in home demonstration club work.

We are always happy to get such an expression from a board member. It means that they have studied our work and know just what it is doing for rural women and girls.