

THE WENONAH PARK

"In 1888 the land company deeded to the Borough Commission the square in front of the hotel between Clinton and West Jersey Avenues, with the provision that the same should always be maintained as a public park for the Inhabitants of Wenonah".

This is a quotation from "Wenonah's Background" written by Constance Cowell. The hotel was the Wenonah Inn which later became the Wenonah Military Academy.

The square has been faithfully maintained as a public park by the people of Wenonah and various improvements have been made over the years. In 1946 a project was started to renovate the park. A plan was drawn up which describes a large parade ground to be continued at the southern end of the park and a smaller open area at the northern end; a broad north south avenue to be lined with trees and ornamentals, terminated at the northern end by a stepped entrance to the park and at the southern end by tall evergreens and a semicircle of benches; an east-west corridor entirely enclosed by trees which will be suitable for outdoor meetings; curved walks along the south and east sides of the park to be suitably landscaped with flowering trees and shrubs; the gradual replacement of the old and deteriorating silver maples and sycamore maples with more permanent trees; and finally to create a beautiful display of flowers and foliage.

Some progress has been made each year toward accomplishing the objectives of the plan. The open areas have been preserved! some progress has been made toward lining the avenue and corridor with suitable plant material. The curved walk at the southern end has been placed. Considerable progress has been made toward removing the old silver and sycamore maples. The oaks in the park have been increased from two to twenty-four, representing ten different species. The new plantings also include sugar maple, red maple, honey locust, beech, yellow wood, oxydendron, red bud, hawthorns, hemlock, Douglas fir, and holly. Much progress has been made in providing flowering trees and other ornamentals. These include four varieties of dogwoods, flowering cherries, flowering apples, rhododendrons, azaleas, laurel, taxus, lilac, crepe myrtle, rose, evergreen barberry and Japanese holly.

Much of the improvement in the park has been accomplished thru the assistance of organizations and individuals of the Borough. With money raised by the Wenonah Woman's Club, fifty dogwoods and many other ornamentals were purchased. A group of rhododendrons and azaleas was donated by the Wenonah Cardan Club. The Wenonah Junior Garden Club contributed five American hollies and three Japanese hollies. The Explorer Scouts held four work parties at various times at which they planted twelve oak trees and painted the park benches. The Wenonah fire Co. has on several occasions saved the young trees by watering the park during droughts.

Work parties involving twenty-eight citizens placed the curved flagstone walk at the southern end of the park. The park benches were made by volunteer labor. Many individual citizens of Wenonah have made very valuable contributions of trees and shrubs.

With the maturing of the plant material already placed, and with additional improvements in the future, the park will become more attractive each year and will contribute more and more to the beauty and peaceful atmosphere of our town which, to quote from the last sentence of Constance Cowell's paper, is surely "a refuge from the industrialism which has sprung up in the area around it."

George Eldredge

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