1999

A Short History of The Golden Tigers & Class of '42

Clemson University

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A Short History of

THE GOLDEN TIGERS

&

CLASS OF '42

CADET LIFE GARDEN

PROJECT
Presentation Copy

for

Mr. James O. Sweeney

Cadet Life Garden Steering Committee
Heritage Garden Committee

Project Manager, Cadet Life Garden Project
History of the Cadet Life Garden Project

Background

During its Golden Anniversary deliberations in the mid-eighties, a committee of the Class of 1939 conceived a project, the Clemson Heritage Gardens, that it felt would be of unique value to the University. Because of its scope and long-term implications, the project was considered unsuitable for their Golden Anniversary gift in 1989. Sensing its potential value, however, the class urged the committee to continue beyond 1989 to develop the idea. Simply stated, the concept involved a visual presentation, in an open-air garden setting, of those important elements of Clemson’s history and culture that would enable visitors to learn Clemson’s past in easy to swallow doses.

Using funds donated by classmates and friends, the committee employed a landscape architect, Prof. Lolly Tai of the School of Architecture, to develop designs for the Heritage Gardens. By late 1993, after a few iterations, Prof. Tai had produced plans of all elements of the Heritage Gardens except for the Presidents Gardens (which she has now completed).

In the Spring of 1994, representatives of the Class of ’39 Heritage Garden Committee met with Dr. Gary Ransdell to discuss possible funding for the several garden areas. Dr. Ransdell suggested asking the Golden Tigers to fund the Cadet Life Garden project, since all Golden Tigers had been Cadets. To test their reactions, a video about the project was prepared by the Communications Center and presented to the Golden Tigers at their reunion breakfast in June of 1995. Their response was enthusiastic, and so it was decided to make the appeal to all Golden Tigers.

First, it was necessary to draw together a committee of Golden Tigers to steer the effort. This had been discussed in April 1995 with an exploratory group consisting of Ken Vickery, Walter K. Lewis, Walter Cox, Ben Skardon, Jim Sweeny and Ann Smith, and over the course of the next twelve months, an organization finally evolved, and the project was off and running.
Project History

The first meeting of the new committee (see inside back cover) was held in April of 1996. This was an organizational and get-acquainted meeting, at which Walter Cox explained the purpose of the committee. It was to create and carry out a fund drive among Golden Tigers, and to decide on those details of the Cadet Life Garden not yet finalized. A goal of $400,000 was agreed to, which included an estimated $100,000 to be placed in a maintenance endowment. In the absence of a volunteer, Jim Sweeny agreed to act as interim chairman. The committee members were asked to come to the next meeting, set for June 6, 1996, prepared to suggest specific topics for depiction of Cadet Life. T.I. Martin agreed to oversee this part of the committee’s work.

At the second meeting, the committee approved the mailing of an initial solicitation letter, along with a brochure describing the project, to all Golden Tigers. T.I. Martin reviewed the topics suggested for depiction, including a very creative scenario from George Smith, and passed out a list of them, asking the committee to review the list for further discussion at the next meeting to be held on October 18, 1996.

Several things happened in the interval preceding the third committee meeting. First, Richard Campbell, class of 1954, agreed to provide all needed architectural services, and to submit design suggestions for the bell structure and plaque display. The classes of 1932 and 1955, each in executive session, decided to join the effort in very specific ways that were reported in the third committee meeting on October 18, 1996.

At that meeting, S.F. Horton announced that his class was donating the residue of a class project fund, about $6,000, to the Cadet Life Garden, and George Bennett reported that his class would raise the money for the bell structure in the center of the garden. T.I. Martin gave a distillation of the suggestions for scenic plaques, which was followed by much discussion. T.I. agreed to make firm recommendations at the next committee meeting. The Chairman reported that the first solicitation letter had resulted in cash gifts of over $22,000, plus actual and implied pledges of another $20,000 - which, with the Class of ’32 gift and the
Class of '55 pledge, was considered an encouraging start. A second solicitation letter was approved, which was mailed the very next week.

Richard Campbell showed sketches of two possible bell tower designs, which engendered much discussion. The first (at left), with a brick pedestal base and cleverly designed to suggest the bell atop No. 1 Barracks, was generally considered a bit over-powering. The second (at right above) received general admiration and tentative approval - subject to further study.

On February 12, 1997, T.I. Martin conducted a brainstorming session at Clemson to get wider input on Cadet Life topics. This was attended by Dr. Jess Jones '37, LTC Frank O'Neal '39, Dr. William Epps '37, and Mr. Alex Graham '40. The meeting was helpful in confirming ideas already generated in committee.

Meanwhile, in discussions with Dr. Kelly, it became clear that the height of the proposed bell structure would make it too dominant a feature, given the otherwise low profile of the gardens, and so a cut-down version (at right) was presented to the committee at its next meeting on February 14, 1997. This was approved by all, including the Class of '55's representatives. The chairman reported that gifts to date totaled cash of $65,000 plus pledges of over $40,000, not including the Class of '55 pledge. On that basis, the committee decided to go ahead with construction of the Guardroom Bell structure, setting the date for a groundbreaking ceremony for March 18, 1997. As promised, T.I. Martin proposed a final listing of Cadet Life topics, which was approved. He reported also that a search had already begun for suitable pictures to be used for modeling the plaques. Finally, a third solicitation letter was approved, which was mailed to Golden Tigers the next week.
That third letter reported gifts and pledges of over $125,000, and offered two giving incentives: small bronze donor plaques in recognition of gifts of at least $1000, and larger plaques for gifts of at least $25,000, both types to be embedded in the floor of the Cadet Life Garden.

As scheduled, the groundbreaking took place in conjunction with the Class of '39 dedication ceremony for the Grand Entrance to the Heritage Gardens. The groundbreaking program was as follows:

**Introduction - Dr. John W. Kelly**

**Remarks - Dr. Gary A. Ransdell**

**Groundbreaking - Class of '55**

**Appreciation - Cadet Life Garden Committee**

**Benediction - Barham F. Thomson**

Here, Frampton Harper, president of the Class of '55, speaks to the small crowd who gathered for this opening event, while his committee waits at the foot of the steps to turn the first shovelfuls of earth. His committee consisted of himself, Richard Quattlebaum (in red jacket), Chauncey Smith, Dr. Byron Webb (represented by his wife Sybil), and George Bennett (who also had to be somewhere else!).

While the Botanical Garden staff was still in the process of clearing the site, actual work on the project was begun in late April.
April 25, 1997. Forming for the footing of the bell support.

The first concrete, for the footing of the bell base and for the first step, was poured on Thursday, May 15th. From that point, with the onset of good weather, things moved quickly along. While the structure took shape, the big bronze plaques for the bell base were placed on order.

By reunion time in 1997, the basic structure had been completed, some stone work had been done, and the bell, newly cleaned and painted, had been taken out of storage and mounted on its final resting place.

June 6, 1997. Tee Senn inspects the bell in situ.

Meanwhile, the superstructure was being prepared. The roof support was made in a cabinet shop in Highlands and shipped to Clemson. The wooden roof was clad with copper in Spartanburg and sent to Clemson. There, on June 12th, the parts were assembled and mounted on the bell base by members of the Botanical Garden staff.
Following the last committee meeting in February, the chairman was advised by Jim Barton that his class had an endowment fund of over $150,000 for which no use had been specified and which they might be willing to share with the Cadet Life Garden project. Sadly, due to a debilitating illness, Jim’s last committee function was attendance at the groundbreaking in March, but he had set the wheels in motion, and at their June reunion Mike Hubbard proposed giving a significant amount to the project. The class president, Buck Breazeale, demurred, saying that they might want to give it all to the project. They had a good idea of what the garden would look like, because a model was on display in the Madren Center. It had been made by Elton Shepherd, a member of the Class of ’39 Heritage Garden committee, and received much favorable attention.

The fourth meeting of the committee was held on June 5th during the reunion. By this time, gifts totaled nearly $100,000, plus agreed and implied pledges of another $50,000. After approving another solicitation letter (which was mailed a couple of weeks later), the committee reviewed the photographs shown by T.I. Martin as possible models for the scenic plaques, suggesting that several might be improved on. A sketch, prepared by Richard Campbell, showed how the plaques could be mounted on the display wall of the garden. It seemed the perfect choice, and was unanimously approved.

The fifth meeting of the committee, originally scheduled for September, was deferred pending the outcome of discussions with the Class of 1942. However, a fifth solicitation letter was mailed on September 22, highlighting the now completed Guardroom Bell structure. By this time the donations had come up to about $175,000, including cash and pledges.

Finally, the committee met on November 7, 1997 to hear a proposal by Buck Breazeale for participation by the Class of 1942. In return for contributing the full class fund, then amounting to over $185,000, the garden would be known as the Class of ’42 Cadet Life Garden, and would be identified by a large wrought iron sign mounted
over the entrance steps. Neither of these conditions were acceptable to the committee, so the meeting was adjourned without resolution.

Discussions continued over the next month, and by mid-month it had been agreed that the name would be the Golden Tigers & Class of ’42 Cadet Life Garden. Instead of an elevated wrought iron sign, the name would be inscribed in the floor of the garden. On that basis, the Class of 1942 became a full partner in the grand enterprise, with Buck Breazeale becoming co-chairman of the committee as of January 1998 when their fund was officially transferred to the Cadet Life Garden project. All this was conveyed to the Golden Tigers in our 6th solicitation letter in February.

At last the money was on hand to fund the project. Accordingly, bids were sought and materials ordered. On January 5, 1998 a bid was placed for construction of the footings and block core of the wall of the garden, and soon thereafter for the stone facing of the walls. Work began almost immediately. This photo, taken on January 16th, shows the reinforcing steel in place for the footing of the first wall section. Concrete was poured that same day.

From this point, work continued as allowed by the weather. These next pictures show the steel-reinforced block walls gradually taking shape around the periphery of the garden.
The center picture, taken in April, shows work on the fourth of the five wall sections. Some wall shoring is evident in the bottom picture. That was for the purpose of pouring the solid concrete wall tops that would form the base for the capstones. In that picture, two pallets of stacking stone are seen. As soon as the foundation of one wall section was complete, work on the stone wall facing could begin, as seen below.

The foundation walls were completed in May, allowing the contractor to prepare for pouring the floor slab. Here the gravel base is being smoothed just before the forming of the several floor sections.
The floor slab was poured in late May, allowing concentrated attention on the wall stone work. By June, when this picture was taken, the interior wall facing stones were only partially complete.

Meanwhile, the committee had approved the selection of photographs for the scenic plaques, and bids had been received from several plaque manufacturers. The winning bid went to the same bronze founder who had made the plaques for the bell structure, and the order was placed on June 8th. On June 30th the sculptor for the plaques visited Clemson and reviewed all of the photographs with Messrs. Cox and Sweeney, took pictures of various campus sites, and left fully saturated with Clemson culture.

In the committee's 7th solicitation letter, mailed June 22nd, we were able to report to the Golden Tigers that their contributions then totaled some $238,000, including about $25,000 in actual and implied pledges that are still outstanding. This, coupled with the gift of the Class of 1942, assured our meeting all construction costs, although more funds were needed for landscaping and long-term maintenance.

At its 7th meeting on July 20, 1998, the committee reviewed, modified and approved the text for the descriptive plaques, and the material was sent to the plaque manufacturer on July 24th.
The facing stone work on the wall interiors was finished about mid-July, enabling the mason to begin the ticklish and difficult job of mounting the twenty-seven huge cap stones on the wall.

These stones, upwards of 7' long by almost 3' wide, weighed over 750 pounds each. Bolts were embedded in their under surface for holding them on the sloping wall top while the cement substrate cured. A special jig was devised so they could be lifted up at just the right angle and deposited gently onto the wall. Not until this phase was finished toward the end of September could the last major step in the construction of the Cadet Life Garden begin - the task of placing the paving stones in their checkerboard pattern on the floor of the garden.

In August, the 8th and last solicitation letter was mailed to the Golden Tigers. Its purpose was to urge those donors who had not yet decided on the wording of their donor plaques to do so now, and to advise that gifts made after October 1st (except in the special case of Class of '55 gifts) when the plaques would be ordered, would no longer qualify for plaques. This was because the plaque layout had to be determined and the depressions for the plaques had to be sand-blasted in the paving stones before the floor paving could be completed. Most of this work was done off-site. The pavers were sent to a shop in Anderson where the depressions were mass produced to order and the pavers returned to
Clemson for assembly into the floor, as seen in this photo. Of the 287 small recognition plaques in the floor of the garden, all but 38 of the depressions were produced off-site.

Those 38 depressions were sandblasted into the finished floor in a process that resembled an exploration of the moon, as seen below in a photo taken in March of 1999.

Making the plaque depressions around the bell structure.
The last working meeting of the Steering Committee was held on February 2, 1999. By now, the large scenic plaques were beginning to arrive at Clemson, so it was time to decide how they would be arranged on the garden wall. Messrs. Martin and Lindsay had studied this, and presented a plan to the committee, which was accepted without change.

It had already been decided that the dedication ceremony for the garden would be held during reunion weekend, and so a proposed program for the ceremony was discussed and approved. Next, the content of the program brochure for the dedication was decided upon. With these decisions, the committee, which had come together first in April of 1996, completed its work. It had done all that had been asked of it, and had done it well.

It only remained to cement the small recognition plaques in place in the floor of the garden, and to mount the big bronze plaques on the wall. In the last few weeks before June, the Botanical Garden staff put the small plaques in place. And in the last week before reunion, T.I. Martin came to Clemson to supervise the installation of the big plaques. As soon as they were mounted on the wall, they were covered with plastic to maintain as much of a surprise element as possible. Here is how they looked just before reunion.
Preparations for the dedication were undertaken by Ann Smith and her capable staff. She arranged for 700 copies of the program brochure to be made, and planned the physical details of the affair down to the last bugle note.

The plastic sheets over the big bronze plaques were removed and replaced by blue cloth covers, so that the plaques could be unveiled during the program with a minimum of difficulty and a maximum of ceremony.

The large tent in the parking lot of the Botanical Garden was sized to seat 500 persons. Additional seating was at each side. Refreshment tents were placed on the sidewalk.

Busses were arranged to bring reuniting alumni from the several hotels in Clemson. At noon on Saturday, June 5, all was in readiness.
Program

“ASSEMBLY”

1. WELCOME
   Deborah B. DuBose '75
   Chief Alumni and Development Officer

2. BACKGROUND
   James O. Sweeney '39
   Chairman, Heritage Garden Committee

3. CLASS OF '55 GIFT
   W. Frampton Harper '55
   Class President

4. CLASS OF '42 GIFT
   Thomas C. Breazeale '42
   Class President

5. Unveiling by Mrs. J.L. Dusenbury and Mrs. K.S. Breazeale

“TAPS”

6. GOLDEN TIGERS GIFT
   Talbert L. Martin '37
   Class President

7. Unveiling by Cadets

8. DEDICATION & PRESENTATION
   Taze L. Senn '39
   W. Frampton Harper '55
   Thomas C. Breazeale '42

9. ACCEPTANCE - BOTANICAL GARDEN
   John W. Kelly '77
   Director, SCBG

10. ACCEPTANCE - UNIVERSITY
    Constantine W. Curris
    President, Clemson University

11. CLOSE
    Deborah B. DuBose '75

“RETREAT”
Viewing the Cadet Life Garden after the dedication ceremony.
June 16, 1999

MEMORANDUM

TO: Cadet Life Garden Steering Committee

FROM: John W. Kelly, Vice President Public Service & Agriculture and Director, SC Botanical Garden

On behalf of Clemson University and the South Carolina Botanical Garden, I would like to express to each of you and your respective classmates our deep appreciation for all of the support you have given toward the completion of the Cadet Life Garden. This support has enabled us to complete this project well ahead of the predicted completion date and is a very auspicious beginning for the Heritage Gardens.

The Heritage Gardens will enable us to capture and preserve some of Clemson's rich history so that future generations will be able to gain a deeper appreciation and understanding of the early days of campus life. Hopefully, it will also inspire future leaders to continue to advance the University to keep it one of the nation's leaders in teaching, research and outreach services. We hope that you will continue to lend your support to the full completion of this project.

Again, please convey our appreciation to each member of your classes for their support. There is always an open invitation to visit the South Carolina Botanical Garden and especially the Heritage Gardens.

Cc: Neill Cameron
    Ann Smith
    Debbie DuBose
Cadet Life Garden Steering Committee

Mr. James H. Barton '42  Mr. J.C. Mike Hubbard '42
Mr. John E. Beatty '45  Mr. Alan M'C. Johnstone '32
Mr. George U. Bennett '55  Mr. Walter K. Lewis '37
Mr. R. Phil Corker '48  Mr. James B. Lindsay '40
Dr. Walter T. Cox, Jr. '39  Col. Talbert I. Martin '37
Dr. W. Cecil Godley '43  Dr. George M. Smith '33
Mr. S. F. Horton '32  Mr. Kenneth N. Vickery '38

Mr. Thomas C. Breazeale, Jr. '42 - Co-Chm. 1998-1999
Dr. Taze L. Senn '39 - Co-Chm. 1999
Architect: Mr. Richard E. Campbell '54

Mr. James O. Sweeny g'9 - Project Manager 1996-1999

The Steering Committee at the Dedication - June 5, 1999
An Appreciation

This little booklet has been put together as a sincere expression of appreciation to those members of the Golden Tigers Cadet Life Garden Steering Committee who worked so closely together for these past four years to bring about a unique and valuable addition to the Clemson campus. Early on you honored me with the position of Chairman of our committee, and throughout all our ups and downs on the way to the final realization of our joint objective, you gave me all the help I requested and all the support I could have possibly hoped for.

You have every right to feel a deep sense of pride in our joint accomplishment. You exemplify the Clemson Spirit as few do, and I have been privileged to work with you in friendship and trust. I thank you for that privilege.

Sincerely,

James O. Sweeny, Chairman
Class of '39 Heritage Garden Committee