



June

Topic of the Month

Professionalism
Recovery
Ownership
Attitude
Communication
Teamwork
Initiative
Value everyone
Efficiency

Growth of Hendersonville - Part 2

The years following the Civil War were very hard as families rebuilt their lives. Everything changed with the arrival of the railroad in Hendersonville on the Fourth of July, 1879. One observer that day counted five hotels as well as 17 stores lining Main Street. In 1885, the City purchased land for a cemetery, Oakdale. By 1900 the county contained 14,000 inhabitants, while Hendersonville's year-round population reached 2,000. 1903 saw the first electric plant for the City located at 7th and Main. It was steam powered and supplied power to 53 customers. In 1913, Patton Hospital opened in the Hyman Heights area.

With the railroad, farmers could ship their crops instead of going by wagon to the markets in Greenville and Spartanburg. The top crops were cabbage, peaches and hogs. The railroad also brought in tourists. During the summer season of 1914, the Southern Railroad reported 50,000 tickets to Hendersonville had been sold. Although many ventured on to other mountain communities and summer camps, numerous visitors stayed in town to reside in local hotels and boarding houses or rent private homes. Families at that time would come for the entire summer and by October 1, all the big boarding houses and hotels would be closed up for the winter.

Starting the mid-teens and into the 1920s, manufacturing brought people from the farms. Three companies in town were the Gray Hosiery Mill, the Wing Paper Box Co., on Whitted in Lenox Park and the Coca-Cola Bottling Company on Locust. Neighborhoods such as Hyman Heights, Druid Hills and Sylvan Heights were platted and built. The Rosa Edwards School on 4th opened in 1911 and the new modern Hendersonville High opened in 1926. City Hall opened in 1928. The 6th Avenue School, which included a high school, opened in 1934 for African-American students from Henderson, Transylvania and Polk Counties. As building and speculation boomed, the Chamber of Commerce had plans drawn up to build a ten story building, with a penthouse, on the corner 5th and Church. The crash for Hendersonville came on November 20, 1930 when all three of the banks closed. Only one was able to give their depositors any payout. The tourists quit coming during the depression and the war.

Around 4,000 men and women served in WWII from the County with 91 known casualties. Following the war, businesses expanded and more people moved from the farms. Through the 50s, dairy became the number one agricultural product followed by beans and apples. In the spring of 1947, the Apple Blossom Festival was held. After a couple of years, the festival would move to Labor Day weekend. Civic improvements included the 9th Avenue School for African-Americans in 1951, Pardee Hospital in 1953 and Bruce Drysdale in 1960. The Hendersonville/Henderson County schools integrated in 1965. Many industries closed during this time, including the Gray Hosiery Mill in 1967. With the start of construction on I-26, the last passenger train stopped in Hendersonville in 1968 ending 89 years of rail service. 1969 would be the first time apples became the number one agricultural product.

With Belks and Penneys leaving downtown for the Blue Ridge Mall, Main Street was remodeled into a serpentine pattern to be more attractive and pedestrian friendly in 1977.

For the person leading this session, please sign below and return to your department head, who then send it to Lu Ann.

Leader _____ Dept. _____ Date _____