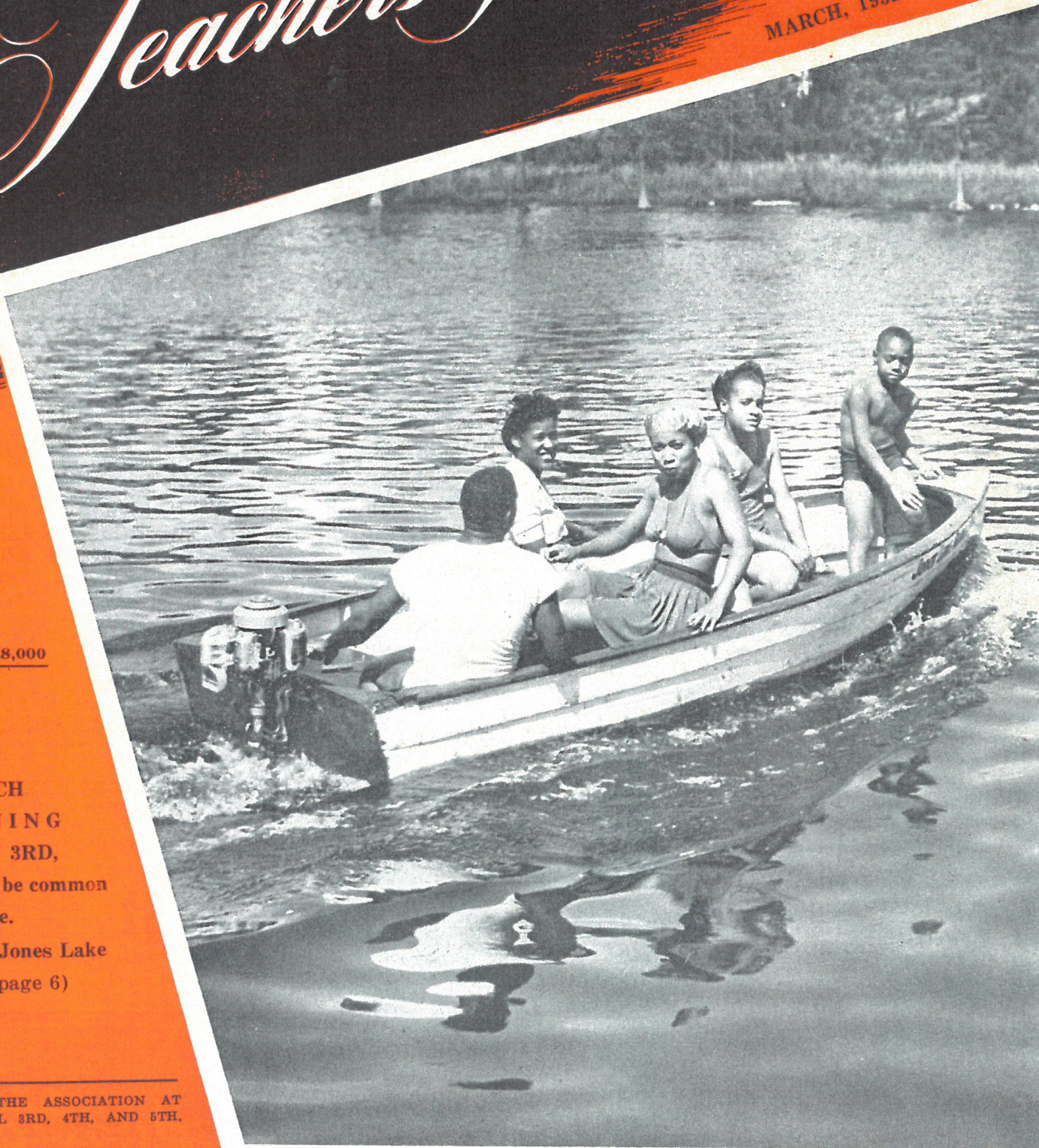


NORTH CAROLINA

Teachers Record

MARCH, 1952



MEMBERSHIP OVER 8,000

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MOCKS BEACH
AND OPENING
URDAY, MAY 3RD,
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g the soundside.

scene is from Jones Lake
(See story on page 6)

MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION AT
HIGH, N. C., APRIL 3RD, 4TH, AND 5TH.

From Black Magic To Recreation Education In Bladen County, North Carolina

By ALLEN ERICSON WEATHERFORD, II, *Professor of Physical Education and Recreation at The North Carolina College at Durham, and Recreation Specialist for the North Carolina Recreation Commission*

In 1936, a Master's thesis—*The Negro's Religion and Its Effects Upon His Recreational Activities in Bladen County, North Carolina*—was completed for the M. Ed. degree "With Praise" at Springfield International Y.M.C.A. College in Springfield, Massachusetts. At that time, citizens in Bladen County seldom mentioned Jones Lake other than that it was an isolated, useless, dark or black body of water surrounded by a thick over-brush, thoroughly inhabited by mysticism, superstition, and fear. It should be mentioned also that religion played a significant role in the recreational pursuits of the people in the County.

One may ask, "What were the legends that had developed around Jones Lake and how did they come into being?" The author will present only a few illustrations in this report. A story was told, in several versions by young boys and girls, that 400 years ago evil spirits began to grow in rows of cypress trees around the Lake. These trees came to life after midnight, destroyed whatever they could find alive, washed their branches in the Lake, and then resumed their original form before dawn. This was one of the reasons why their trunks were so large or swollen at the bottom and the water surrounding them so dark.

As another story goes, there were black crows, lead by several larger white ones, all of which had the wing span the height of a man six feet. These crows were strong enough to carry away a two year old child. Early in the morning, if that day was going to be a clear one, these crows could be observed "talking and discussing among themselves" their various activities.

Still another story is told that Jones Lake was a place where

types of witch-craft and voodooism (hoo-dooism). Disappointed and depressed men and women went there in an effort to obtain "hands of magic," "goofer dust," and "man and womanhood waters." These items were absolutely necessary if one were to be successful in turning "tricks" or to conjure (put a "spell" on one) or to rehabilitate the lost youthful ways of behavior.

One night, about 11:30, the Assistant Superintendent of the Wild Life Commission was called by phone. He was informed that a little boy had lost his leg to a very large alligator that inhabited Jones Lake. The Assistant Superintendent told the author that he was quite concerned about this report to the extent that he did his best to trace its origin. Neither was he successful in doing so nor was there any truth in the report. One may easily understand why it was formerly believed that Jones Lake was no place for children. But today it is different. Magic, superstition, and fear have given way to recreation activities for all ages through good organization, administration, and supervision.

The State Conservation and Development Program

Governor A. W. McLean, in co-operation with the North Carolina Legislature of 1925, created the State Body of Conservation and Development. In 1939, through a lease from the Federal Government, Jones Lake, which is approximately 230 acres with 1,000 acres of wooded land, was established as a recreational area. As a State Project, Jones Lake Recreational Area was established with the following aims and objectives in mind:

1. To serve the people.
2. To provide greater outdoor recreational opportunities such as camping, boating, fishing, swimming, and picnicking.

3. To preserve and protect scenic and natural areas of State-wide importance for present and future generations.
4. To preserve and protect historic and scientific areas.
5. And, to provide greater opportunities for outdoor field education in the study of plant and animal life, geology, and other natural features.

The Lake

Jones Lake is only 34 per cent of its former maximum size. Better than 21 per cent of its bottom is sand. The sandy shores of the Lake provide excellent opportunities for recreational activities for little children as well as for adults in that there is a gradual slope toward the deepest part of the water.

Twelve different species of fish may be found in Jones Lake. Types most frequently caught are rainbow trout (red fin) and bass (jack fish).

Operation and Administration

Jones Lake Recreational Area is operated only through the three summer months, June, July, and August. For the months of June and July, 1951, attendance reached 27,082 persons.

Outstanding events of the groups that visit the Area include picnic activities of fourteen 4-H Clubs which hold their annual outing during the month of July, summer camping of the Cape Fear Council of Negro Boy Scouts, recreational camping for Negro soldiers from Fort Bragg, Sunday School picnics, and outing for different social groups.

Extended Areas and Facilities

Some of the most impressive features of Jones Lake Recreational Area are its three picnic shelters—one large and two small—and a new pier 250 feet long,

(Continued on page 20)

**From Black Magic to Recreation
Education**

(Continued from page 6)

substantially constructed from
lumber which has been treated
under pressure with creosol. Toilet
facilities are exceptionally good in
that sanitation is practiced to the
fullest extent.