

## Club Grew With Atlanta

# Chautauqua Golden Anniversary Reveals Contributions To City

By STANLEY S. SCOTT

During the recent observance of the Chautauqua Circle's golden anniversary, 1913-1963, Mrs. John H. Lewis, one of the fifteen current members of the organization that prides itself in intellectual and cultural endeavor, gave a reminiscence account of this pioneer Gate City club.

In her sentimental journey back to the Chautauqua Circle's founding, Mrs. Lewis recalled that: Woodrow Wilson became the 28th President of the United States; Robert Frost had published his first book of poems; and the grandson of an immigrant named Kennedy, who had fled from the potato famine in Ireland, was becoming a financial power in Boston.

"Woman's world was still rigidly bounded by the four walls of home,

with neither radio or television to beguile the tedium of household chores performed without benefit of modern appliances.

"A dozen eggs could be bought for 20 cent, a good steak for 30 cent. A Chicago firm guaranteed the delivery to any point in the United States of an upright piano, complete with stool and fringed scarf, for \$150.

### FOURTH WARD COMMUNITY

The path of progress that dotted the American scene and was akin to the growth and development of the chautauqua Circle, saw W. E. B. Dubois make his influence on Atlanta and Atlanta University. Atlanta's own Walter White was soon to begin his lifelong association with the NAACP.

The trip down memory lane with this prominent set of Atlanta's pioneer families, prominent, not because of wealth or profession, but because these Fourth Ward ladies of northeast Atlanta, saw a challenge for women of their time, in the mainstream of American life.

These diligent women of public service, as the record indicates, offered summer courses for students, lectures, and bridged the gap that did and still exists in Negro education, on a voluntary basis.

The stained pages of the club's official history book tell of discussions on Woman Suffrage. Their activities also included contributions to charitable and worthy causes, and acknowledgements of

these are to be found among their records.

### STORIED PAST

The Circle's storied past included discussions on Conditions in South Africa, The Mexican Revolution, Agencies Working For Interracial Understanding, Is The Church Losing, all topics that were generally censored among the masses during that period of history in America.

As Mrs. Lewis stated: "For whatever contributions the Chautauqua Circle has been able to make to the social and cultural life of Atlanta during the past half century has been due to the personal philosophies of the forty-two women who have constituted its membership."

Time, the conqueror of all, has taken its toll on the original members, but the Chautauqua lives on in the ideals and traditions which are still being maintained by the present membership.

The founders of this club grew up with the Gate City. Atlanta today is indebted to them for their legacy of community responsibility and their bequest of cultural and intellectual progress.

The present members of the Chautauqua Circle Mesdames Miles G. Amos, Horace M. Bond, Brailford R. Brazeal, Frederic V. Brooks, Hazel B. Cannon, Rufus E. Clement, Walter R. Covington, John H. Lewis, Smith M. Lewis, Albert B. McCoy, Lorimer D. Milton, Homer E. Nash, Charles W. Powell, Jesse O. Thomas, Clayton R. Yates.