

# Gladwyne Blazes a Trail for Swim Pool Builders

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Of The Bulletin Staff

Building a swimming pool when the snow is on the ground or even when the frost is on the pumpkin is a project that rightly calls for the stamina of which pioneers are made.

But there are hardy souls facing the first chill of winter in the Philadelphia area who are right now exploring the surrounding fields and forests to find the ideal locations for the pools of next summer.

It is all because a band of citizens from Gladwyne, Montgomery County, blazed the trail last February. And by July, by their own efforts and with their own money, they had built a swimming pool that became a community oasis during the blistering days of the last summer.

Word of their accomplishment spread through Delaware, Chester and Bucks Counties. And groups from those areas have turned to the Stony Lane Club, of Gladwyne, to learn how it was done.

## Idea of 2 Young Mothers

According to the trail-blazers, the idea for the pool was born one night last February when a few neighbors gathered around the fireplace of Mr. and Mrs. Mahlon C. Remington, at 828 Youngsford road.

It was Mrs. John S. Carlton, of 56 Scott road, who voiced the wish that there was a pool nearby so that mothers of small fry wouldn't have to drive them all the way to Wayne to teach them how to swim.

Mrs. Remington heartily agreed and presto, long before the fire had died down, an idle wish of two young mothers became a vital necessity for every woman in the community.

## Lawyer Helped Project

The following week a larger meeting was held in the home of the Carltons. Robert T. Lane, Jr., a member of the bar of 530 Scott road, volunteered to draw up the necessary paper for a charter.

Committees were set up. Mrs. Fred E. Jones, of 545 9th road, was named chairman and the membership committee of eight women.

Their job was to enroll 100 families, each of whom would pledge purchase of a \$1 bond, with an initial payment of \$100.

Another group was assigned to finding a desirable tract; another to invite bids for construction.

For example, the roster of Glad-

wynits failed to produce an architect. So a construction engineer designed the bathhouses and built them on the basis of time and material without profit.

A landscape gardener, also a member, planned the sodding of the ground surrounding the pool and planted it at cost.

## Measures 30 by 60 Feet

Finally, on June 4, 1953, ground was broken for the pool, shaped like a keystone, measuring 30 by 60 feet, shallow at one end and nine feet deep at the other.

In addition, a half-moon wading pool was begun for the small fry.

The pool was designed for complete filtering every eight hours, with three six-foot tanks filled with sand and gravel, installed at a separate cost of \$7,000.

In the next five weeks, as the pool grew, the bathhouse made of cinder blocks plastered in pastel pink, took form. Floodlights for night swimming were installed and lights placed for underwater rays.

## Opened on July 22

On July 22—just five months after it was first dreamed of—the pool was open to the members of its one hundred families and their guests.

And, of that \$40,000 budget, the treasury contained \$400 — with every bill paid for a total of \$39,-

600. They had brought it in "under the wire."

The cost of operation has been met by annual dues of \$10 for each member of each family, up to a total of \$40 a year. In addition, guests are welcome at a cost of \$1.25 for adults and \$1 for children.

## Everyone Pitched In

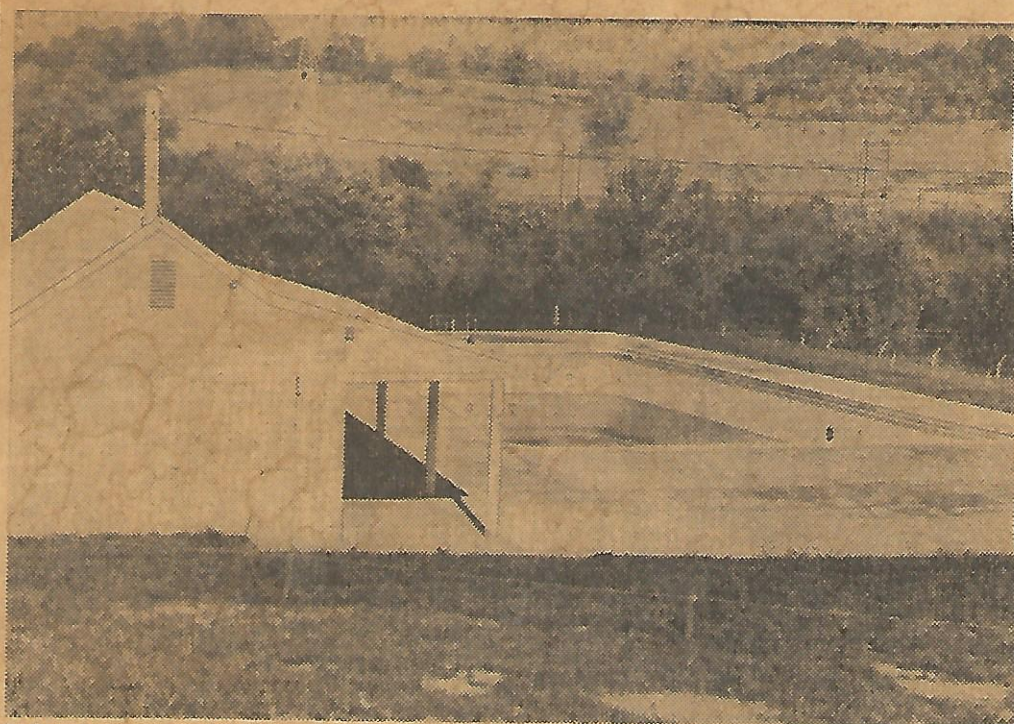
With John Carlton as president and a 12-man board of directors, everybody pitched in. The men declare they looked over every piece of vacant ground in Gladwyne until a three-acre tract was selected at Youngsford and Lafayette roads.

Meanwhile the women were lining up the new members. When 60 of the "100 families" had been signed, the construction contract was let.

With \$40,000 fixed as the limit of the budget for the entire project, every dollar had to be closely allocated. Except for the building of the pool, the members, themselves, provided most of the necessary services.

In only 60 days of operation before the September closing of the pool, \$750 was collected in guests' fees alone.

Income since the pool's opening has allowed for the purchase of attractive outdoor furniture, with large pastel-colored umbrellas to shade the pool-side tables.



Swimming pool at Youngsford and Lafayette roads is a Gladwyne community project.

It has made possible the present plan to pave a portion of the tract as a parking lot for next summer.

## It Was a Lovely Summer

Throughout the short season this summer, and particularly because of the record-breaking heat, many of the member-families simply came to the pool in the morning and spent the day. They brought lunches and had cool drinks from vending machines installed in the house built for concessions.

An average of 100 persons were in the pool area throughout each day, with about 60 persons using the pool at the same time.

The pool opened at 9 A. M., with swimming lessons for the youngsters given until 10.30. After 3 P. M., only children over 16 years of age were permitted in the pool until closing time at 10 P. M.

On the financial side of the picture, the club reserves the right to buy back the bond of any member who moves away from Gladwyne or who wishes to give up membership for any other reason. The number of member families is fixed at 100 but there already is a waiting list of 14 eager to buy any surrendered bond.

From a community standpoint, it seems headed for unqualified success and a model for other pool-less communities.