



Prominent red clay mounds are eerie reminders of big-tree hurricane victims.

PHOTO BY KEN MOORE

FLORA
FROM PAGE 1

At the bottom of the first slope, there's a kiosk displaying a cross section of a 212-year-old white oak victim of Hurricane Fran's devastation 15 years ago. One can feel insignificant while reflecting on all the human history that tree witnessed in a life that began when George Washington was president.

The forest landscape a walker encounters up beyond the fallen giant is a sharp contrast to the undisturbed north-facing slope of mature beech and tulip poplar that's just been crossed. Ahead is a mix of struggling small trees, some

of which may one day be forest giants like the ones that have fallen down all around them. Mounds of rocky red clay soil are scattered about on the forest floor; these remnants of the big trees felled by Hurricane Fran give an eerie, ghostly feel to their surroundings.

An interpretive marker in an area of scattered big trees where saplings fill the canopy gaps causes one to pause and consider the possibility that this may have been an early-settler "wood lot." The forest would have been fenced off to contain the livestock foraging within. Suitable trees would have been selectively cut for building materials or firewood. This was certainly a gentler harvesting of forest resources than the visually

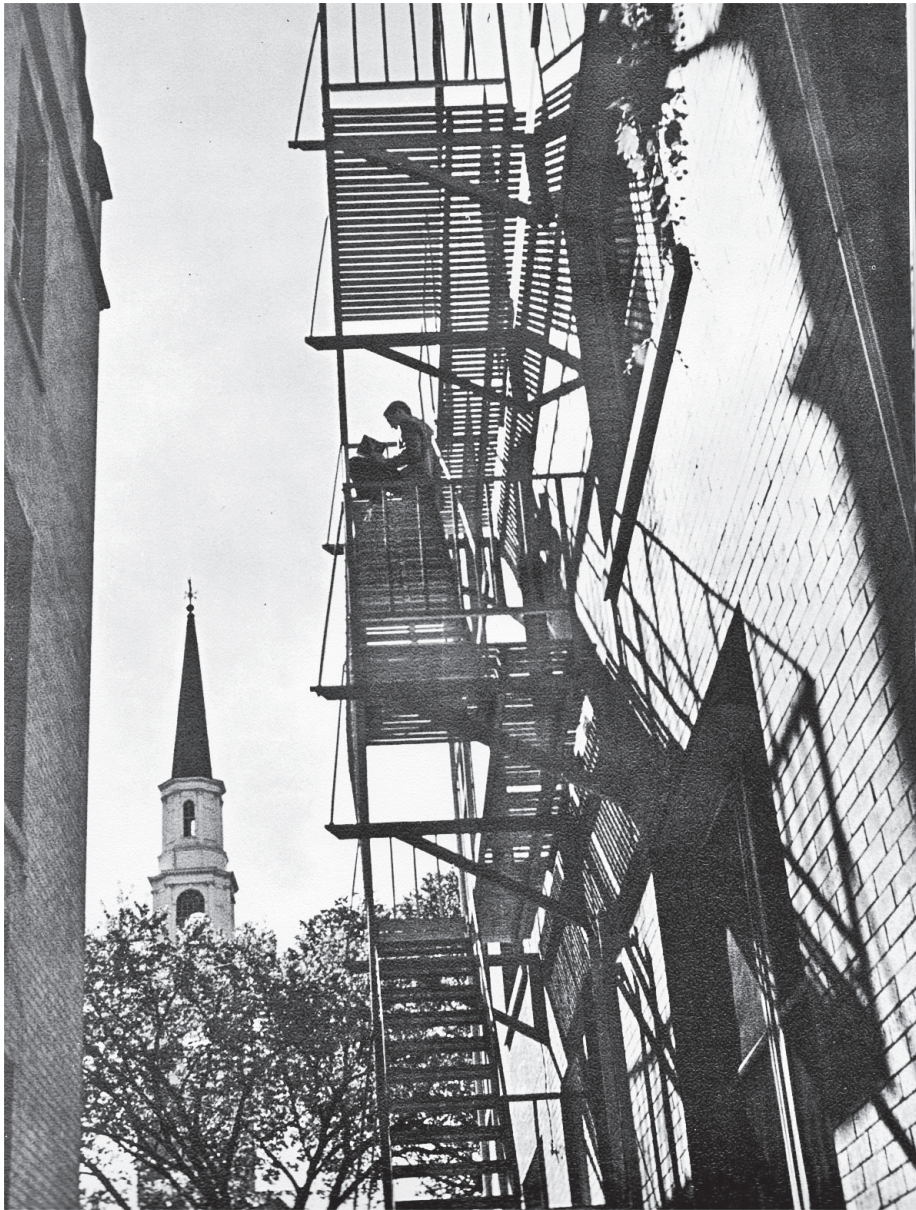
unappealing practice of clear-cutting.

Other forest history stories are found along the trail, which continues up and down through different forest types, including some variously managed pine plantations.

If you explore this trail soon, I'll wager you'll discover spots you'll want to revisit for wildflowers in the spring, like that north-facing beech slope.

Excellent maps for this and dozens of the other Duke Forest trails are available at Duke Garden's gift shop or on line at dukeforest.duke.edu.

Email Ken Moore at flora@carrborocitizen.com.



Battle-Vance-Pettigrew Dorms 1967

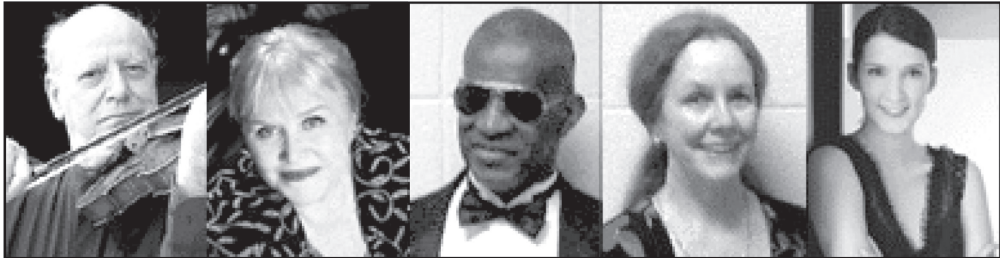
Surely, anyone who has been on the UNC campus recently surely has marveled at the giant expanse of protective plastic sheeting completely covering Battle-Vance-Pettigrew halls as workers renovate the roof and exterior of those administrative buildings. Looking at the spectacle makes me recall a "BVP" photo from another day, of a soon-to-be graduate Joe DePriest, class of '67, perched on the fire escape back in the day, when these were men's dorms. Joe would go on to serve in the Army as a reporter-photographer in Vietnam, 1968-69, returning to work at the *Charlotte Observer's* Gaston County bureau, where, the last I heard, my classmate is still holding forth as a much-beloved columnist.



A THOUSAND WORDS
BY JOCK LAUTERER

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