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Remembering.....

By Ed McBride



Gaddy's Wild Goose Refuge

I was thinking about fall of the year, remembering the days when Gaddy's Wild Goose Refuge was an attraction for so many. During the weekdays many bus loads of school children would visit to watch the geese. At times there would be as many as perhaps 10,000 in the pond and the 'cotton patch' field around the pond.

Many people probably remember how it all began - hunting down on the river was not controlled by rules, regulations and laws then, so a hunter could shot, kill, trap or whatever, even using live decoys. Laws were later passed preventing that kind of hunting - no live decoys either. This was the era of time that the Gaddy's Refuge began.

The Refuge was a small, muddy pond that was dug out by hand (no bulldozers then) at the edge of the field. As some geese would fly over they could see and hear the 'grounded-crippled' ones in the pond. This attracted the flyovers. The Gaddys began to feed around the area - and and there was an occasional 'fishing trip' by Mrs. Pat Ross (Miss

Hazel's mother), who was in her 80's-90's. The fishing could not have been much - my brother and I 'dipped' most of them from a nearby branch, delivering same in a tin can to the pond.

The goose population at the pond grew tremendously. Articles were in The State magazine and other publications, and news media and others were telling about the thousands of Canadian Geese here in Anson County. Visitors from many states visited, sharing in the geese population. Of course Sunday afternoons, quite a few visited to 'watch the geese' and just 'visit.' That is how I got the above picture (plus hundreds more) of the 'little fellow' with the geese in the background. My son Tommy was about five years old then...

And, that makes me at least about thirty-nine, I think!!

Thank you so much! I began my 87th birthday celebration even before August 10th, and it has lasted all the week...and I am still receiving calls, cards, comments! Thanks and appreciation. Ed

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