Friday Club

In January 1899 there was a prize fight in Jefferson. The Friday Club disapproved and deciding that it was ‘a menace to the good name of our city, corrupting to the morals of the youth, brutalizing to all beholding it and an outrage to society’ they sent a petition to the city council requesting that prize fights be prohibited in the city of Jefferson. As far as anyone knows, there has never been another prize fight in Jefferson.”

The next city improvement move was to purchase four trash cans, one for each corner of the square. They also hired boys to pick up the trash and rubbish that had annoyed the ladies wearing their long skirts. Few people seemed to realize the purpose of the trash cans and finally, one by one they disappeared.

They proudly went to war against hitching posts around the square. The businessmen lined up in opposition to that one and were joined by the farmers. In rather undignified terms they expressed the idea that the ladies had overstepped their bounds. Friday Club lost the first battle but they won the war for two years later the hitching posts disappeared from the square.

The Friday Club presented to the city a three-tiered water fountain. The city did not really want it nor did the County Board of Supervisors citing issues such as who would pay for the water. Capt. Head donated $150 to the club with the condition that the fountain would not be placed on the courtyard but rather on the south side of the square in front of his hotel. The businessmen on the other three sides of the square were outraged and tempers ran high. Friday Club returned the $150 to Capt. Head. They decided to store the fountain in a local barn until determining what to do with it. After the library was constructed, they decided to give the fountain to the library trustees to place on the grounds of the library. The trustees accepted. It was placed on the south side of the building and east of the front walk.

“At first the water fell gracefully from tier to tier and when the evening sun shone on it there would be a rainbow of color.” Then the water ran less and less frequently. One spring the upper spout was missing, then the upper basin. Flowers were planted in the lower basin and the pool. Finally the lower basin and the base were donated to a war-time scrap metal drive and the six-sided pool became an ordinary flower bed. When the east walk was put, in even the flower bed disappeared.

The Friday Club Fountain flower bed is “buried in a grave unknown and unmarked.”