

Georgia producer casts a crop of concrete corn

Dublin, Ohio, was once a small village on the eastern edge of the Ohio prairie. Before the town's existence, the prairie stretched to the Rocky Mountains, supporting tall grasses, black oaks, and diverse flora and fauna that beckoned early settlers. The native prairie gave way to farms of corn and soybeans. Just southeast, was the city of Columbus which developed rapidly over the years. Dublin soon was considered prime property and became the site for the exclusive community of Muirfield, a neighborhood that surrounds the championship golf course designed by native son Jack Nicklaus. Dublin's growth skyrocketed.

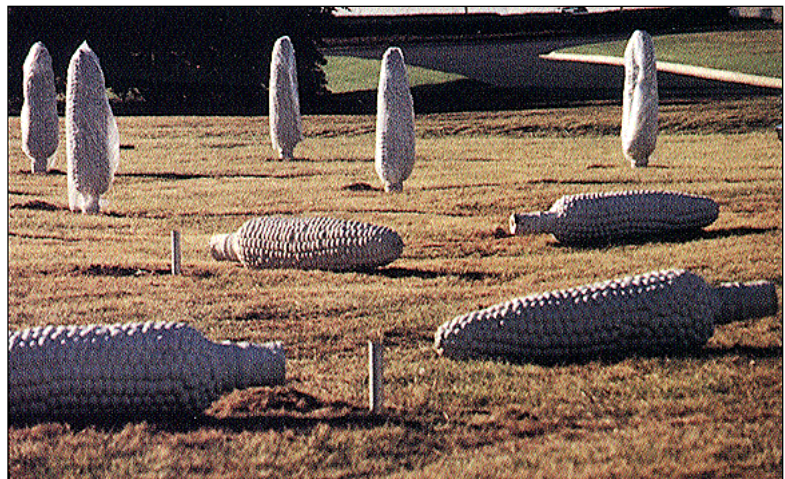
Outer belts displaced corn belts. Farms were plowed under. From their fields rose office buildings, homes, schools, hotels, and shopping malls. Blessed with the vision to set off large parcels for parks and green space, Dublin's reputation grew as a vital community in the area surrounding Columbus.

Most recently, from the creative mind of Malcom Cochran, professor of sculpture at Ohio State University, came the idea to build giant monoliths of concrete corn, 109 of them. Their presence would remind those working in the offices of Dublin of the tranquility of the corn fields that existed there just a few decades ago.

Financed by travelers required to pay a bed tax to sleep in the motels of Dublin, \$70,000 was allocated for the project that came in within budget thanks to some generous costing by precasters, Cook and Ingle Co. Inc. of Dalton, Ga. The company man-

ufactures concrete pipe, septic tanks, man-holes, utility vaults, and architectural pre-cast. This is the second concrete sculpture the company has produced for Cochran. George Spence, president of Cook and Ingle, fashioned a master mold that contained liners bearing a reverse of the corn kernels. Carefully casted, cured, loaded, and secured, they made the long trip north by truck. There they were gently placed onto stainless steel support pipes, cast into concrete, then detailed by the artist and his staff. Soon to be bordered by a glen of osage orange trees, Dublin's field of corn is an Easter Island-like tribute to the past—when man farmed a prairie that is now the city of Dublin, Ohio. ❖

By John D. Cowan



Each ear of corn was placed on a stainless-steel pipe embedded in concrete. The ears in the background are still clad in the plastic wrap used to protect them during shipping.