



100
YEARS

JOURNAL

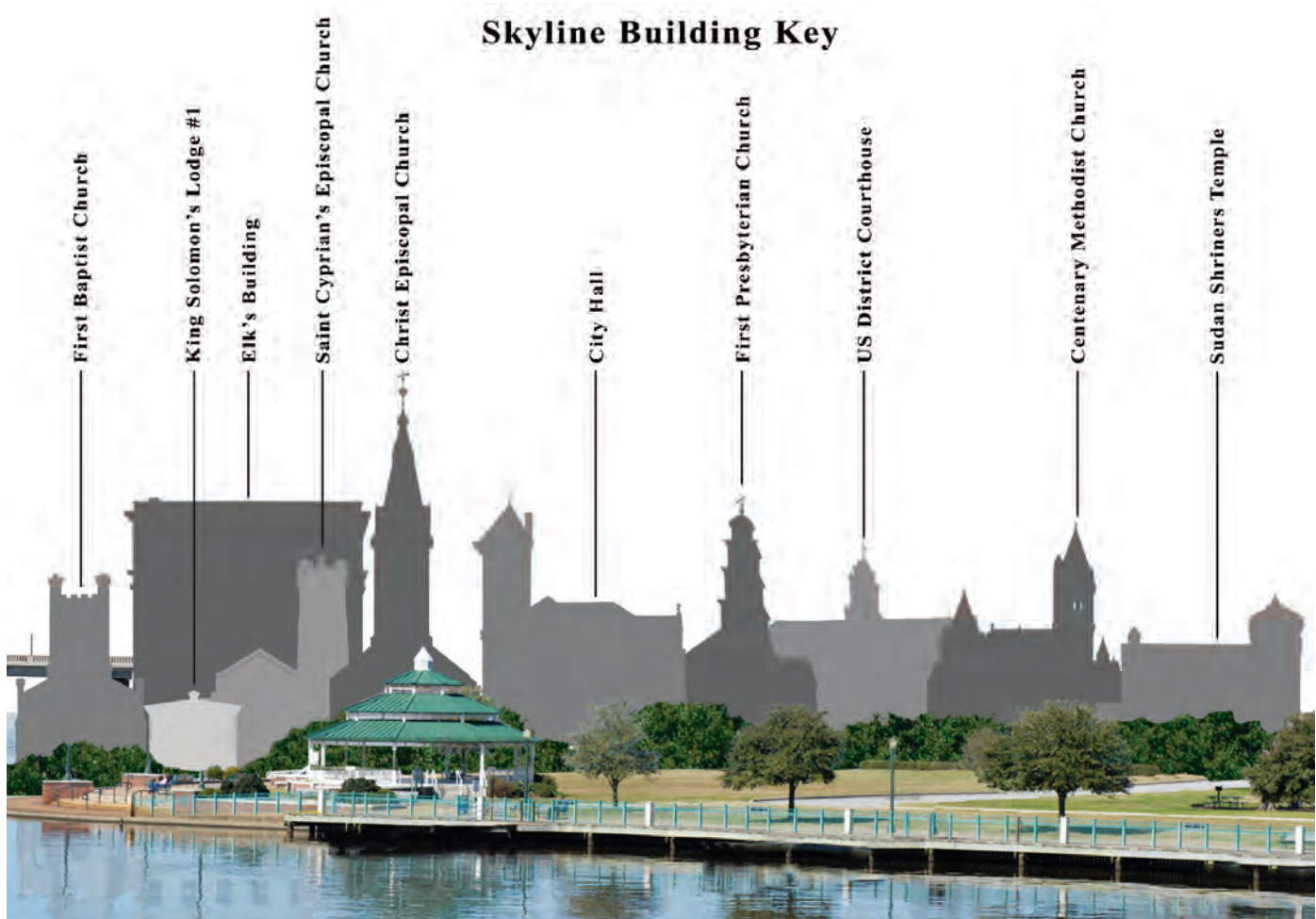
100th Anniversary Edition
Vol. XXX, No. 1
2023



Cover Illustrations

Front Cover: A stylized view of the New Bern skyline by John Klecker, showing many of the important buildings downtown. See the identification key below.

Back Cover: Aerial views of the city and its bridges from drone photography courtesy of Ben Lindemann Photography.



JOURNAL OF THE NEW BERN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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The *Journal of the New Bern Historical Society* is a publication of the New Bern Historical Society Foundation, Inc., a nonprofit organization whose mission is to celebrate and promote New Bern and its heritage through events and education.

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Attmore-Oliver House, Home of the **new bern historical society**

We bring history to life!

ABOUT THE NEW BERN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The New Bern Historical Society has been celebrating New Bern's rich heritage through events and education since 1923 when Minnette Chapman Duffy, Judge Romulus A. Nunn, and other interested New Bernians founded the Society "to preserve for future generations the wealth of historical material found in New Bern." The vision of these New Bernians continues today and is reflected in an active calendar of educational events/programs and social gatherings. The Society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, member-supported organization. Our membership has grown to over 1300 with hundreds of volunteers contributing to our projects, programs and events each year. Membership support and tax-deductible donations go toward educational events and programs and stewardship of important historic properties such as:

- Historic Attmore-Oliver House – home to our administrative offices and exhibits
- New Bern Civil War Battlefield Park activities and tours
- Lunch & Learn lectures
- Dr. Richard K. Lore Annual Lecture
- Annual Ghostwalk 3-Day Event
- Heritage Homes Tour
- Journal of the New Bern Historical Society
- Quarterly New Bern Historical Society Newsletter
- New Bern Historical Society Website and Facebook page
- New Bern History Quest
- Monthly articles in *New Bern Magazine*
- Marks and Taylor Scholarships
- More than 6000 accessioned historical photos, artifacts and furnishings

We ask you to share our mission with family and friends and encourage them to become active members promoting New Bern and celebrating its rich heritage.

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OBSERVATIONS FROM THE CROW'S NEST

Jay DeLoach

One year after the devastating fire of 1922, concerned citizens realized that an organization dedicated to preserving New Bern's rich history and sharing that heritage was needed. Hence, the New Bern Historical Society was formed. As a first step toward this goal, early members were tasked with collecting and reporting facts about New Bern's beginning from pre-colonial days forward. The amassing of documents, photos and recollections, became the foundation of the historical collection in the Kellenberger Room of today's Craven-Pamlico Regional Library. The Society has grown significantly in membership and, most notably, made memorable contributions to New Bern and Craven County.

In addition to collecting information, both written and oral, the Society acquired several historic properties including the Attmore-Oliver House, currently Society headquarters, and land associated with the Battle of New Bern (1862). Sharing stories about the early years as a colonial and state capital to more recent events is facilitated by a variety of programs such as: Ghostwalk, Lunch & Learn, Heritage Homes Tour and Battlefield Adventure Day.

Strong leadership from presidents and executive directors helped manage bumps in membership as the entire nation weathered economic depression and international wars. One such leader was dynamic, historically-minded Gertrude Carraway. She was the driving force behind the plan to rebuild Tryon Palace thus bringing state and national attention to New Bern and more members. Renewed attention to the Civil War Battle of 1862 and the opening of the Battlefield Park; the Society's participation in the 300th anniversary of New Bern's founding; and national articles about New Bern's quality of life attracted new visitors and residents. All contributing, along with the Society's rich blend of historical programs, to the continued success of the Historical Society as its membership (see Membership graph on the next page) now trends to 1370 members. A true testament to the leadership, hard work, and dedication of the Society's Board of Directors, the staff, and our volunteers in executing the Society's mission set forth 100 years ago!



To capture the Society's 100 years, we start with the cover of our 100th Anniversary commemorative edition. The front cover is a composite skyline of New Bern created by our graphics designer John Klecker. He blended a representative cross-section of historic buildings of New Bern to create this fascinating skyline along the Neuse River. The back cover depicts the picturesque bridges that span both the Neuse and Trent Rivers. The breathtaking view of these beautiful bridges attracted many new arrivals and retirees to the area, my wife and I included, who have blended seamlessly with the deep-rooted New Bernians to form a wonderful tapestry of history, art, and culture.

Historical Society Membership



Article highlights

Susan Cook's "Readers Digest" version of the 40-page article written by late Society Historian Richard K. Lore summarizes the first 75 years of the New Bern Historical Society. Lore's detailed account can be found in its entirety in the 1998 Journal where it walks the reader through the first meeting of the Founders in 1923 and marches through time with exacting descriptions of events and personalities. To complement Susan's synopsis is a pictorial display of the homes of the Founders of the Society. This effort is brought to us by the creative work and joint effort of our curator Jim Hodges and our graphic designer John Klecker.

Historian Claudia Houston poured through stacks of meeting minutes and newsletters to capture the plethora of programs and activities created by the Society in the last 25 years. Her hours of hard work captured a wonderful historical record of the multitude of interesting programs, past and present, that the Society has offered our community. Here you will also find the themes for the annual Ghostwalk events since 1998 and the list of Richard Lore Lecture topics.

Curator Jim Hodges and graphic designer John Klecker teamed up again to bring us a portrait of each of the Society

Presidents since 1923. John used the Adobe Photoshop's artificial intelligence function to recreate and enhance poor quality images of two past presidents. Which ones?

A prominent offshoot of the New Bern Historical Society is the New Bern Preservation Foundation. Board member Bernard George and past Foundation President E. Newsom Williams joined forces to highlight the successful efforts of the Preservation Foundation to save more than sixty structures from neglect and demolition since the Foundation inception in 1972. The Foundation's mission to help preserve the historical legacy of New Bern's homes and buildings has been a contributing factor to New Bern's image of historic significance.

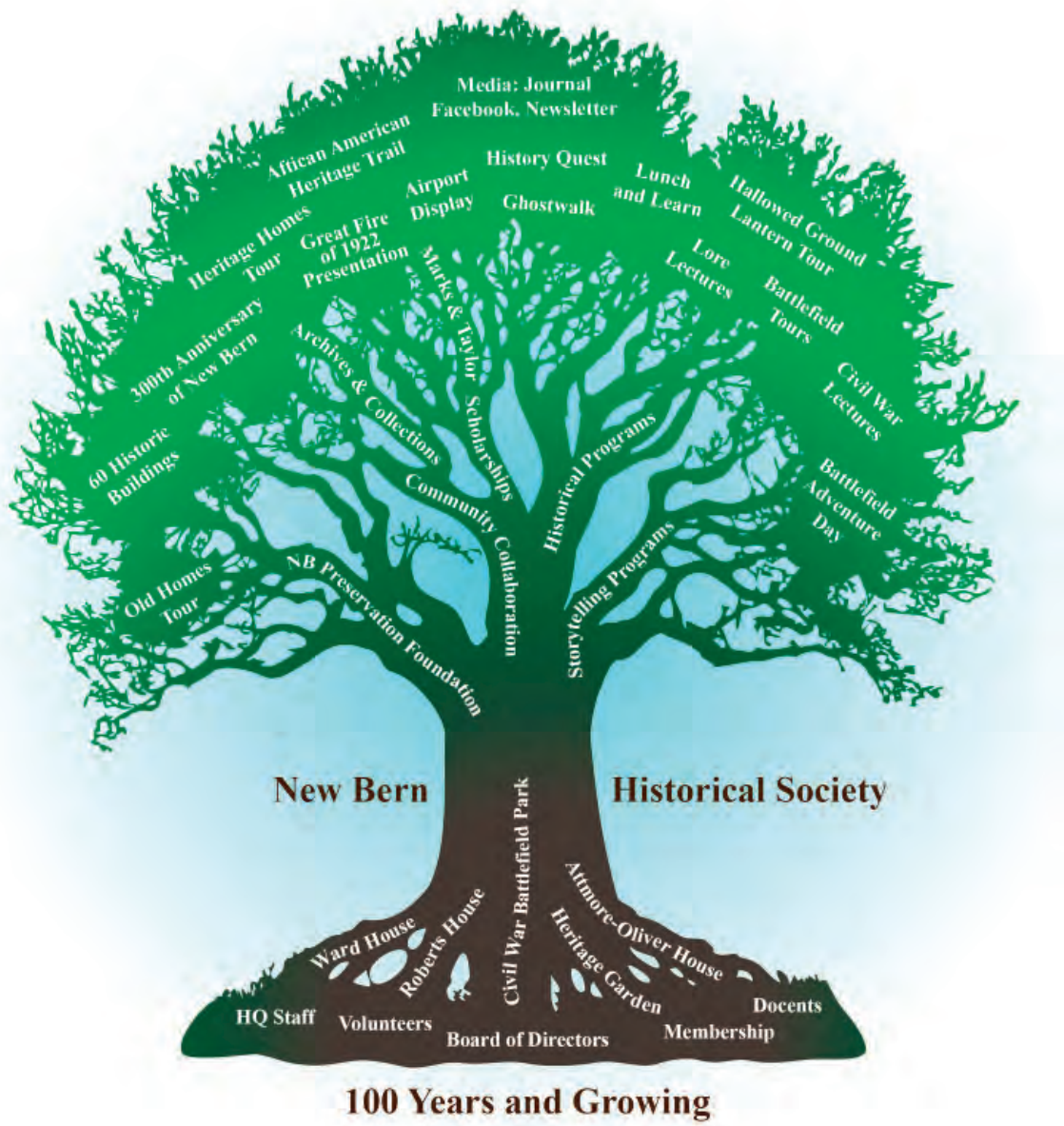
Located five miles outside the city at the entrance to the Taberna residential area, the New Bern Battlefield Park is a reality today due to the New Bern Historical Society's dedication and tireless preservation work. Civil War aficionado Steve Shaffer details the Society's efforts to acquire and preserve an overgrown, long forgotten 24-acre site where a fierce 1862 Civil War battle was fought. Today the Park is part of the Civil War Trails site where several thousand students, tourists, Civil War scholars and local residents visit annually.

The capstone of the Historical Society’s extended gift to the community is a 100th Anniversary exhibit at the North Carolina History Center entitled, “Through the Looking Glass, A Journey with the Storytellers.” Executive Director Mickey Miller describes the blood, sweat, and tears of a dedicated group of volunteers who conceived, designed, and storyboarded the exhibit that debuted in the Duffy Gallery on April 22, 2023. It featured a walking tour through a series of creative historical images and artifacts of New Bern’s history and the Society’s contributions in telling its history. The exhibit was free to the public and remained open until January 2024. This last article is a crucial record of this fascinating ‘time capsule’ presentation of the Society.

This special 100th Anniversary commemorative edition is not your traditional Journal with individual stories of New Bern’s past. Instead, it is a historical record of the New Bern Historical Society’s contributions of a century of service to preserve New Bern’s history and its efforts to tell the memorable stories of the remarkable people and events

that have shaped this community and contributed to our state and nation. Like the mighty oak tree depicted below, it will be a lasting reminder of our wonderful Society and its contributions. As we continue our mission to “celebrate and promote New Bern and its heritage through events and education,” what other treasures of our past will be discovered in the next 100 years?

Lastly, I would like to commend the entire Journal staff for their long hours researching meeting minutes, newsletters, Journals, and newspapers; conducting interviews; and then organizing this wealth of information before writing, rewriting, and editing this historical collection for the 100th Anniversary edition. A special shoutout to our technical editor Margo Fesperman who kept us all honest dotting our i’s and crossing our t’s as well as keeping us straight on an accurate chronology of events. Thank you for the sacrifice of your precious time in pulling this keepsake record together.



100 Years and Growing

Susan McEnally Cook

The Beginnings

1923! New Bern was booming. The city had sixty-two manufacturing companies. The county had a brick road system, and the decade of the automobile was upon us. Women had gained the right to vote. The country had won the “war to end all wars.” Clubs and betterment societies for men and women were flourishing. The growth of two successful suburbs, Riverside and Ghent, continued to expand the city limits.

For a group of downtown citizens, the time seemed right to look back on New Bern’s past and ensure that the proud history of their growing town was not lost. On April 19, 1923, a modest notice appeared in the Personals section of the afternoon Sun Journal:

*Historic Society
Persons interested in the organization of a
Historical Society in New Bern are asked to be
present at a meeting to be held at the home of
Mrs. Richard Duffy, on Johnson Street, tonight
at 8:30 O’Clock.*

The minutes from this inaugural meeting revealed that “nineteen persons met at the home of Mrs. Richard N. Duffy (Minette Chapman Duffy)” ... for the purpose of organizing a local branch of the State Historical Society for “the preservation of the wealth of historical material to be found in New Bern for future generations.” Twenty citizens who could not be present that night also asked to be enrolled. Mr. Romulus Nunn, a local lawyer and judge, was elected as the Society’s first president.

Early Meetings

The young society met frequently, most often in the homes of members. Meetings sometimes involved presentations by an academic historian, a local historian, or a visit by a state employee active in archival work or historic preservation. Most often, however, the local members prepared papers for presentation with a focus almost exclusively on the colonial period. Informal question and answer sessions followed, and the evenings always concluded with the serving of “light refreshments.”

Historical Markers

From the beginning the Society’s efforts focused on much more than just the exchange of information among mem-

bers. The Society also wanted to promote awareness of local history so both New Bernians and visitors would come to appreciate the past. One approach was through the use of historical markers celebrating notable buildings and events. By the summer of 1927, the Society had paid for the design, construction, and erection of a number of these markers around town. This New Bern program provided the impetus for the current state constructed historical markers that we now see on just about every corner of town and across the state

Preserving History

As the Society began to compile information, items were made in triplicate: one for the Society, one for the State office in Raleigh, and one for the local library. During these early years society members also acquired and held for safe-keeping a large number of books and other written materials about New Bern history. Much of this material formed the nucleus of what is now the Craven-Pamlico Regional Library’s Kellenberger Room Collection.

Celebrations

True to the observation, “Give New Bernians a reason to celebrate and we’ll do it in style,” the Society soon organized a “Historical Jubilee.” This 1927 event was also one of the Society’s first fundraisers. Held in the Elks Building, historical skits and displays made the event a resounding success, realizing a “substantial sum” for the treasury.



Governor and Mrs. O. Max Gardner at lunch during the June 1929 celebration

The Society continued to grow and prosper. In 1929, under the leadership of President Minnette Chapman Duffy, it sponsored a second remarkably successful historic celebration and pageant. Key features were a large parade with floats representing the area's history and numerous storefront displays. Thousands were expected to attend, and nearly 10,000 did, including Governor O. Max Gardner along with other notables. "It was a glorious occasion indeed." Mrs. Kate B. Reynolds of Winston-Salem underwrote the celebration expenses, advancing \$5000 with the provision that any funds remaining be returned to her. After the event, \$3500 was sent back to Mrs. Reynolds, who returned the check for the restoration of Tryon Palace. This was the first cash donation in that important effort – a significant turning point in New Bern history. By 1941, the money had grown to over \$5000 and it was then given over to the Tryon Palace Commission.

One Sad Thing

A notable failure occurred in New Bern during this period, and the Society must shoulder some of the blame. In 1926, as the new residential area of DeGraffenreid Park was being developed, a problem was encountered. The remains of Fort Totten were part of the developers' property. Fort Totten was probably the largest federal fort built in North Carolina during the Civil War. Mounting twenty-six large-caliber cannons, it was the keystone fort in the multitude of federal fortifications surrounding New Bern. The developers offered to donate the fort to any historical association that would maintain the structure. In November 1926, the Society formed a committee to examine this opportunity; and in July 1927, the Society decided to take no action. Subsequently the huge earthen fortification was removed, and a children's playground and ballfield were erected on the spot.

Why did the Society allow the fort to be destroyed? First it was unattractive. Nothing remained other than ramparts. Moreover, in the 1920s little attention was being paid to the Civil War. Interest in the Civil War in the area revived sharply only in the 1960s. Also, the fledgling Historical Society had a strong colonial orientation, and most of their activities centered on earlier times. Finally, given limited resources, many members must have felt that they could not undertake the huge responsibility of restoring and maintaining the fort.

Economic Depression and World War: Time of Trial

Three months after the elegant 1929 celebration, the world was plunged into economic depression. New Bern's economy was no exception, and no formal meetings were conducted until the 1940s. A reorganization meeting took place on December 1, 1941. Not good timing; six days later the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor and thus the United States entered World War II. Given the huge increase in military activity in this region coupled with the demand for locally produced agricultural and industrial products, local resources were strained to the limit. After two meetings in

early 1942, the Society remained inactive until 1952.

Resurrection with a vengeance: the Go-go Fifties Rebirth

By the fall of 1953 Dwight D. Eisenhower was president, the Korean War was resolved, and times were good. Locally the future construction of Tryon Palace was assured. Most everyone was excited about the prospect that this could turn New Bern into a significant historical center.

Society meetings resumed in 1952 when John R. Taylor called together about fifty of the former members. Mr. H.B. Smith agreed to serve as president for one year, and the following year Mr. Taylor became society president and served for eleven years. His vigorous and inspired leadership produced an unprecedented period of growth and activity for the Society.

One major step was the purchase and restoration of the Attmore-Oliver House to serve as a house museum and society headquarters. Mr. Taylor was instrumental in acquiring the property and worked tirelessly to raise funds for the project. He created a seven-member finance committee and an additional group called "solicitors" who raised the total in the society's treasury from \$89.63 in June 1953 to \$15,000 in only seven months. Many businesses continued to be generous with donations and supplies. Society members also held fundraising "silver teas" on Sunday afternoons. The silver part came from the contributions of silver coins. Through these big and little efforts, within ten years the Society succeeded in raising slightly more than \$65,000 that was required for the purchase, extensive renovation, and furnishings of the house. This building has served the organization well and is one of the showplaces of downtown



The Attmore-Oliver House prior to purchase by the Society

Photograph Circa 1951

The Sixties and Seventies: Growth and Expansion Property Expansion

Acquisition of the Attmore-Oliver House included only the property on Broad Street. Access to the limited parking

in the rear was through a narrow Broad Street driveway that was difficult to navigate. That situation, coupled with the lack of parking spaces on Broad Street, discouraged tourists and even townspeople from visiting the house. The purchase of the Roberts House fronting on Pollock Street remedied this situation as it provided a driveway into the interior parking area.

Next, the Manly Ward House was gifted to the society by Mrs. Leah Ward. In 1980, this house was moved from Change Street to its present location in the interior of the grounds. At one time, the Roberts House and later, the Manly Ward House were used as society offices. Both have since been business rentals, providing income useful for maintenance of all the buildings and grounds.

Also in 1980, the brick structure called the Haslen Dependency (now the home of the New Bern Preservation Foundation) was relocated to the interior southwest corner of the original lot. The careful rebuilding of this structure, assumed to be the oldest brick structure surviving in the county, took several years. It was most likely the detached kitchen for the Haslen Mansion which stood on the northwest corner of Pollock and East Front Streets.

The Scholarship Legacy of Miss Harriet Marks

The educational mission of the Society took an unexpected turn in 1968. An endowment of \$68,000 in securities was

entrusted to the society by Miss Harriet Marks upon her death. Miss Marks was a New Bern native and the daughter of a noted New Bern merchant. She stipulated in her will that the interest derived from this fund be used to provide college scholarships for graduates of New Bern High School. Students in the class of 1971 were the first recipients. The scholarship is renewable for three years. As of 1998, the Marks endowment had supported more than 30 students.

Urban Renewal and the Formation of the Preservation Commission

In the late 1960s, a bitter controversy occurred surrounding the major urban renewal project on New Bern's waterfront. This controversy led to the appointment of a society committee to examine historic preservation in more detail. This committee was called the revolving fund committee because the stated purpose of the group was (1) to secure funds to buy endangered properties, and (2) to sell the property to a buyer willing to restore the building. The process was then to be repeated with other endangered structures. Soon the revolving fund committee decided that the preservation mission was important enough to justify a separate organization to rescue old New Bern homes and buildings that were threatened with destruction. Out of this committee came the what is now known as the Historic Preservation Foundation Inc. chartered in 1972. The Society should take

Scholarship Winners

Marks Scholarship	1981	Cynthia Hoke	2002	Nikki Heath	
1970	Alan Gene Carroway	1982	Martha Louise White	2003	Maggie Womack
1971	Tyrone Stiles	1983	Shari Lynn Arthur	2004	Danielle Ashley Turner
1971	Richard Bishop	1984	Matthew Smith	2005	Eric Scott Golike
1972	Nancy Avent	1985	Susan Hazel Scott	2006	Lauren Piner
1972	Dorothy Hughes	1986	John Charles Castro	2007	Goran Vukicevic
1973	Robert M. Whitehurst	1987	Sandra Elaine Tant	2008	Jordan Best
1973	Jane Ellen Powers	1988	Jody C. Span	2009	Thomas Bodo
1973	Ricky Lane Canady	1989	Lisa Faye Daughy	2010	Holly Lafond
1974	Celia Lynn Cannon	1989	Pamela Ann Mullenex	2011	Katherine Barlow
1974	Jean Hughes	1990	Jenny Mullenex	2012	Caitlyn Bodo
1974	Brenda Jean Morgan	1991	No new scholarship awarded	2013	Kayla Toler
1974	Marina Carol Harris	1992	Joseph W. Witherspoon	2014	Amber Herman
1974	Barbara Ann Boyd	1993	Jennifer W. Smith	2015	Stacy Partin
1975	No scholarship awarded	1994	Carrie M. Bowden	2016	Caroline Vieregge
1976	No scholarship awarded	1994	Sinoda D. Brown	2017	Gretchen Deters
1977	Carolyn Sampson	1995	Antoine Hall	2018	Kayla Grace RuthAnne Hardee
1978	David R. Daly	1996	No scholarship awarded	2019	Kimberly Tran
1978	Diane Lupton	1997	C. J. Sarento	2020	Kimberly Cusack
1979	Judie Brenner (withdrew)	1998	Amanda M. Rose	2021	Sarahann Bu
1979	Jill Williams	1999	Joshua L. Brekenfeld	Taylor and Marks Scholarship	
1980	Shelia Hooper	2000	Michele L. Newland-Hageman	2022	Lauren Heath
1980	Anette M. Morrow	2001	Niya T. Fonville	2023	Kadiatou Diawara

great pride in its far-sighted efforts to preserve the beauty and character of our city. A detailed account of the Historic Preservation Foundation can be found in this Journal issue written by Bernard George and Newsom Williams.

A Strong and Flourishing Historical Society Through the Eighties and Nineties

The Attmore-Oliver House certainly continued to require a vast amount of money and time to improve and maintain it. At one time or another virtually every system and component needed repair or replacement. Rental income helped provide the necessary funds. As for maintenance, recognition should be given to Mr. Harry Goodman, the outstanding volunteer who, beginning in 1985, worked almost full time for about twenty years to meet the challenges of the building and grounds. Much of the time he did the work himself. At other times he recruited friends to help or convinced local tradesmen to do the work for a discounted fee.

Programs

Ghostwalk, a new and successful tradition, began in 1986. This annual event has a different theme each year and is one of the major fundraisers. The planning begins at least six months prior to the event. A large committee is assembled, and planning sessions begin with the selection of a theme and numerous committee assignments. Once a theme has been selected, the job of writing scripts and a search for appropriate sites begins. The event is essentially an outdoor pageant with a new historical theme every year. It takes the hard work and cooperation of more than one hundred volunteer writers, actors, homeowners, and house monitors to produce each Ghostwalk.

Other events sponsored by the Society require comparable planning and work. The Spring Homes Tour, an event jointly

sponsored by the Society and the Historic Preservation Foundation, requires the cooperation of homeowners willing to allow battalions of visitors into their homes as well as the work of volunteers willing to interpret and explain the houses and furnishings.

Best Durn Cooks in New Bern

One of the most pleasant ways to gain insight into the Society's past is to attend any of the traditional events still offered by the Society. A good example is the Fall Lawn party. On a (hopefully) glorious fall day more than 30 feet of food are laid out on tables under the old pecan trees in the backyard of the Attmore-Oliver House. After intense examination by a guest at one such event, he was heard to declare, "Oh boy! I do believe they have even outdone last year's spread. The best durn cooks in New Bern."

Bake sales, or "bakes" as they were called are a long tradition and continue as part of the modern Ghostwalk and Spring Homes Tour celebrations. We should also honor the women and perhaps some men who held these bakes every Saturday on the sidewalk in front of the J.C. Penny Store (then on Middle Street) during the early 1950s in the struggle to acquire the Attmore-Oliver House.

Founding a Journal

A newsletter that included upcoming events and updates on needs and accomplishments had always been published. The Newsletter offered a forum for members to publish short articles on local history. As the articles grew in length this format was becoming unwieldy. Accordingly, in 1988 the Journal of the New Bern Historical Society was established. The founding editor of the Journal, Vance Harper Jones, had already been involved in editing the Newsletter for several years. His editorial skills and his



Ghost of Lady in Red haunts the cemetery.



"Best durn cooks in New Bern" served a Christmas feast at the Blades house.

intimate knowledge of local history provided an ideal combination for his work as first editor.

Kellenberger Historical Foundation Support

Throughout the years, the Society has been the beneficiary of numerous grants from the Kellenberger Foundation. Mrs. John A. Kellenberger of Greensboro was the only daughter of Mrs. James Edwin Latham, a New Bern native who established the Maude Latham Trust Fund for the purpose of restoring Tryon Palace. The sole mission of the Kellenberger Foundation is the promotion and preservation of history in New Bern and Craven County. Grants from this foundation were used to help the Society move and renovate the Ward House and to restore All Saints Chapel when it was owned by the Historical Society.

Transitions

Under the leadership of Dr. Newsom Williams, President of the Society from 1983-1988, the Society made the transition into the organization it is today with a full-time office staff. Mrs. Kathy Beckwith was employed as the first executive director in May 1985 and served through December 1990. Miss Joanne Gwaltney (later known as Joanne G. Ashton) became the full-time executive director in 1991 and served in this capacity through December 2004. Mrs. Jean Buck was employed as the first full time administrative assistant in 1990.

Still, as in the beginning, it is the work of our membership and their willingness to devote their time and talents to the yeoman work of the Society that are the critical ingredients in the success of the Society over the first 75 years. One can only hope that this spirit will continue for many more generations.

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About the Author: Susan McEnally Cook is a proud graduate of New Bern High School and attended the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill with a Ph.D. in Library and Information Science. She returned to live in New Bern after a career in teaching and public librarianship. An active Historical Society member and volunteer, she served on the board of directors for 13 years.



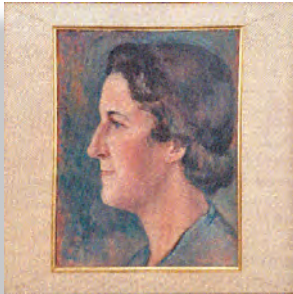


New Bern Historical Society Founders Homes Tour



The purpose of this publication is to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the New Bern Historical Society and to recognize the individuals who were present and participated in the inaugural meeting on April 19, 1923. The information provided is to show in downtown New Bern the houses or locations where these charter members had lived at some point in their lives. Please be advised that these locations are private residences and are not accessible to the public.

THE NEW BERN HISTORICAL SOCIETY WILL BE CELEBRATING ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY IN 2023.



Mrs. R. N. Duffy

The minutes from the inaugural meeting indicate that “nineteen persons met at the home of Mrs. Richard N. Duffy (Minnette Chapman Duffy) on Thursday evening, April 19, 1923 for the purpose of organizing a local branch of the State Historical Society. Mrs. Duffy who was largely responsible for starting the movement toward organization, acted as temporary chairman, and the following officers were elected:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| President: Mr. R. A. Nunn | Rec. Secretary, Miss Mary Ward |
| 1st Vice President, Mrs. R. N. Duffy | Cor. Sec., Mrs. K. E. Spencer |
| 2nd Vice President, Mrs. John Dunn | Treasurer: Mrs. Francis S. Duffy” |



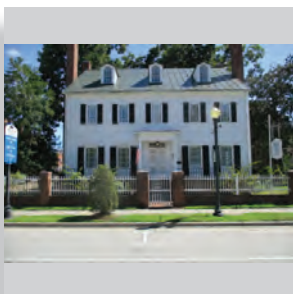
Jerkins - Duffy House

Although nineteen persons had met for the initial meeting of the New Bern Historical Society, there were an additional twenty individuals who could not be present but had asked to be enrolled.



Judge R. A. Nunn

After an enthusiastic beginning, the Society went inactive during the stock market crash of 1929 and the ensuing depression years, as well as during the World War II era. Renewed interest in New Bern’s history persevered and the Society was reactivated in the early 1950s. In 1954, the Society acquired the historic Attmore-Oliver House that remains to this day the anchor for our downtown campus and presence. The acquisition and development of the New Bern Battlefield Park enhanced public awareness and nurtured support for the New Bern Historical Society. Today, the 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization enjoys a membership of over a thousand strong and aggressively pursues, with dedicated leadership and hundreds of volunteers, fulfillment of the mission to “celebrate and promote New Bern and its heritage through events and education”.



Attmore - Oliver House



(1) **Minnette Chapman Duffy / Mrs. R. N. Duffy** / (1882-1951) / 301 Johnson Street
 A Tennessee transplant, Minnette Young Chapman married Dr. Richard N. Duffy in 1907 and resided in the Jerkins-Duffy House located at 301 Johnson Street for many years until her death in 1951. A primary force behind the organization of the New Bern Historical Society, Mrs. Duffy chaired the Historic Pageant of 1929 event that generated momentum for the eventual restoration of Tryon Palace in the 1950s. Her home was the site for the New Bern Historical Society's inaugural meeting on April 19, 1923.



(2) **Charles Slover Hollister, Sr.** (1860-1938) / **Mary Cecilia Bryan Hollister** (1868-1959) 614 Craven Street
 This marriage represented a union of two very prominent New Bern families that dominated local trade and commerce during the nineteenth century. Their home was located on Graves Street that today is 614 Craven Street. The house was extensively remodeled by local architect Herbert Woodley Simpson in 1912 producing a dramatic Colonial Revival design.



(3) **Rosamond Jordan Hancock Meadows** (1870-1961) / 620 Craven Street
 Rosamond Jordan Hancock was the daughter of William Gray Jordan and Matilda Selby Hancock Jordan. Her circa 1890 marriage to Seymour Whiting Hancock, Sr. resulted in the births of five children of which three survived to adulthood. After his death in 1909, Mrs. Hancock purchased in 1913 the Robert Hancock House located at 620 Craven Street. During this time she married New Bern native Edward Hughes Meadows and after his death in 1921, she sold the 620 Craven Street property. Her legacy survives today in that many of her descendants continue to reside in New Bern.



(4) **Lalyce Duffy Buford** (1881-1955) / 620 East Front Street
 An Onslow County native, Mrs. Charles Buford spent part of her adult life in Greensboro and Winston-Salem. After arriving in New Bern, she made her home with the James Vernon Blades family until later moving to 620 East Front Street. Both 620 and 622 East Front Street structures were constructed by the Blades Lumber Company circa 1900 to provide rental housing for its workers during that time.



(5) **Emma Mitchell Stevenson Dunn** (1881-1959) / 507 East Front Street
 A native and lifelong New Bern resident, she was the daughter of Mark deWolf Stevenson and Harriet King Slover Stevenson. Mrs. Dunn was married to John Guion Dunn and resided at 507 East Front Street for many years. The house was built circa 1903 for Mr. Dunn who was proprietor of a dry goods and clothing store and later became involved in banking.



(6) **Anna Slover Stevenson Bishop** (1876-1948) / 501 East Front Street
 Older sister to Emma Mitchell Stevenson Dunn, 'Annie' Slover Stevenson was married to Edward K. Bishop, a successful commission merchant and wholesale lumber and grocer dealer. Their home, the Coor-Bishop House, was built circa 1770-1778 and was completely remodeled in 1904 in the Colonial Revival style. At the time of the remodeling that was overseen by local architect Herbert Woodley Simpson, the house's orientation was changed to face the Neuse River rather than New Street.





(7) Romulus Armistead Nunn (1876-1966) / 210 New Street

A Jones County native, R. A. Nunn was a highly respected lawyer who served as New Bern's city attorney during the early twentieth century and later served as judge of the Craven County Superior Court. Judge Nunn was passionate about local history and was elected as the first president of the New Bern Historical Society in 1923. The Judge and his wife, affectionately called "Miss Pink," and their two daughters resided at 210 New Street. The house constructed in 1903 is in the conservative Colonial Revival architectural style.



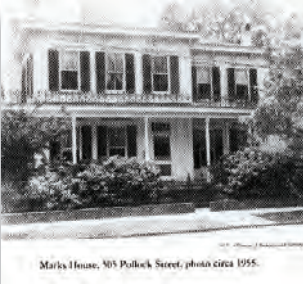
(8) Kathleen C. Bryan Duffy (1874-1945) / Southwest corner of Broad and East Front Streets

Enjoying impressive ancestry, Kathleen C. Bryan was the daughter of Judge Henry Ravenscroft Bryan and Mary Biddle Norcott Bryan. In 1899, she married Francis Stringer Duffy who was a prominent local druggist and medicine manufacturer. Their home, located on the southwest corner of Broad and East Front Streets, was constructed circa 1904 but demolished in 1957 to accommodate a service station. Today, four high-end condominiums have been constructed on the site.



(9) Miss Anna Pearce Hanff (1882-1950) / 211 Pollock Street

Anna Pearce Hanff was maternally connected to the Pearce family who lived in the 1840s era house located on the south side of the 200 block of Pollock Street. During the Civil War, the house served as quarters for Company D of the Forty-fourth Massachusetts Regiment. The house was demolished circa 1960.



(10) Harriet Laura Lane Hyman (1872-1935) / 505 Pollock Street

Member of a prominent Craven County family, Mrs. Hyman was very active in civic affairs and the First Presbyterian Church. Her husband, Thomas Gardner Hyman, was proprietor of Hyman Supply Company with operations in New Bern and Wilmington. She resided at 505 Pollock Street that traditionally is referred to as the Oscar Marks House. However, the house was demolished in the 1960s and replaced with an asphalt parking lot to accommodate a medical building next door.



(11) Alfred D. Ward, Sr. (1859-1940), Miss Mary Pickett Ward (1891-1975) / 509 Pollock Street

Mr. A. D. Ward, Sr. was a Duplin County native and a longtime resident of New Bern where he was a recognized attorney who chaired the Craven County Bar for twenty-five years. In 1890, he married Virginia Farrior, also from Duplin County. Their daughter, Mary Pickett Ward, was the recording secretary for the Historical Society for many years and resided at the family home at 509 Pollock Street for the duration of her life. Today, the Street-Ward House is repurposed as the Aerie Bed & Breakfast.



(12) Kate Eula Rhem Spencer (1859-1943) / 701 Broad Street

The daughter of the pioneer truck farmer and turpentine distiller Joseph Lane Rhem and widow of Jones M. Spencer, Mrs. Spencer resided in her later years at the Rhem Family House at 701 Broad Street. The extensive Ghent neighborhood was at one time the Rhem farm, hence the names Spencer and Rhem Avenues.





(13) Sarah Slover Hollister (1865-1924) / 613 Broad Street

Sarah, affectionately called Sadie, was the daughter of William Hollister and Sarah King Slover Hollister and represented a merger of two of New Bern's distinguished families. The family resided in the Hollister House built by her grandfather William Hollister, a very successful maritime merchant who owned fourteen ships during the first half of the nineteenth century. The Federal and Greek Revival styled house has been meticulously restored during the last few years.



(14) Emma Katherine Jones Knowles Firstbrook (1874-1962) / 407 New Street
Mrs. Firstbrook was a native New Bernian and the daughter of James W. and Elizabeth Ellis Jones. She was predeceased by two husbands and eventually lived in an apartment in the John Wright Stanley House at 407 New Street. This was the second location of the Stanley House that served as the New Bern Public Library having been moved from its original Middle Street location in 1932. The Stanley House was subsequently acquired by the Tryon Palace Commission and relocated to its current site on George Street in 1966.



(15) Agnes Gates Foy Pollock (1878-1966) / 509 Middle Street

The daughter of Claudius E. Foy, visible figure in New Bern's financial and political circles, and her namesake mother Agnes Foy. She married Dr. Raymond Pollock and lived in a large house at 509 Middle Street. The raised brick basement was constructed to accommodate Dr. Pollock's medical office. Mrs. Pollock was reared nearby in the Foy-Munger House on the southeast corner of Middle and Johnson Streets.



(16) Mary L. Allen Potter (1866-1951) / 405 Johnson Street

A New Bern native, Mrs. Potter was the daughter of George Allen, a prominent merchant and manufacturer, and Leah Jones Allen. She was married to Dr. William H. Potter of Boston, Massachusetts where she resided until her death in 1951 and is buried in Boston. The Stanly-Allen House located at 405 Johnson Street was previously owned and probably built by John Caruthers Stanly, a prominent "free person of color in New Bern". George Allen purchased the house in 1866 and resided there with his family until 1899.



These two ladies were present for the inaugural meeting, but available information for them is limited.

- **Hassie Eleanor "Lena" Glenn Pratt** (1892-1971) / Born and buried in Rockingham County, North Carolina / Married to Robert Clyde Pratt / New Bern residence unknown / By 1930, she resided in Winston-Salem, NC / No Pratt or Glenn in Cedar Grove Cemetery.
- **Minnie Lee Hart Williams** (1892-1981) / Born and buried in Richmond City, Virginia / Married to Robert Blaney Williams / Possibly resided at 43 East Front Street in 1920s, not confirmed / Hart plot in Cedar Grove Cemetery, relations unconfirmed.

The following individuals were unable to attend the first meeting of the New Bern Historical Society but requested to be enrolled and qualify as charter members:

Mrs. Charles Ives
Mrs. Royal Turner
Mrs. J. P. C. Davis
Mr. D. S. Jones
Mrs. T. J. Roberts
Mrs. J. T. Hollister
Mrs. R. B. Nixon

Mrs. R. E. Whitehurst
Mrs. T. Z. Uzzell
Mrs. Sam Dill
Mrs. H. B. Wadsworth
Mrs. George Moulton
Mr. Ernest M. Green
Mr. and Mrs. H. B. Smith

Mrs. M. M. Millett
Mr. & Mrs. Henry Whitehurst
Mrs. Beeview Harrell
Mrs. Ruth Harrell Schroder

Compiled by volunteers Jim Hodges and John Klecker of The New Bern Historical Society

Claudia Houston

The millennium was looming on the calendar and the Society's 100th anniversary was in the near future. The groundwork of the past seventy-five years included: a substantial membership; energetic volunteers; events that became traditions; and high-profile participation in the civic/historical community of New Bern. The Society would continue to protect, record, and share local history against a backdrop of hurricanes, a nation at war after 9/11, and an international pandemic labeled COVID-19.

Welcome to the 21st century...

Sharing History

The New Bern Historical Society brings local history to life with a variety of interesting educational programs. Whether you're a newcomer or a New Bern native, there's so much to learn about our fascinating local heritage! Our special programs are shared in numerous ways and feature guest speakers, historical book signings, commemorative events, and more.

Lunch and Learn

Over the years, lectures have been offered at a variety of venues. However, in 2006 one of our newer members suggested that we try having a speaker present a topic at a restaurant while attendees eat lunch. Lunch and Learn was born! Two programs were scheduled for the spring, at the Chelsea restaurant. The first was scheduled for May 4, and

Dick Lore, Historian, spoke to an audience of thirty. He had to cancel his next lecture, but Nelson McDaniel ably stepped in for him on June 15. His talk was equally well attended by members as well as members of the public, or, as we are fond of saying, future members.

Lunch and Learn programs have continued since that time. Increased membership and publicity have resulted in sold out programs with one hundred twenty-five people per event. Not to be deterred by the pandemic, several of our popular presenters agreed to record their programs at a local TV studio and the videos were posted on the Society's Facebook page for viewing by perhaps a wider audience.

Post pandemic, a decision was made to move to a larger venue, the Pavilion at Carolina Colours. Lunch and Learns are scheduled as topics and speakers can be coordinated, but they remain as popular as ever. The calendar has been never long without a Lunch and Learn announcement.

An remarkable example of topic and unusual format in March 2018 was dedicated to Women's History Month. Five famous women from New Bern were chosen and highlighted in a presentation entitled "Ordinary Women, Extraordinary Deeds." Scripts were written, a director and actresses from our ranks were recruited, and costumes obtained. They portrayed characters who left an extraordinary legacy in New Bern; Kady Brownell, Civil War soldier, Sarah Dudley Pettey, activist, Charlotte Rhone, nurse and entrepreneur, Lula Disosway, physician and Bayard Wootten, photographer. Each woman told her own story and then introduced the next. These performances were so powerful, they received a standing ovation. This performance was repeated two weeks later at the New Bern-Craven County Public Library to a sold-out audience resulting in another standing ovation. These outstanding performances were recorded during the pandemic for preservation.

Lore Lecture

When Dr. Richard "Dick" K. Lore retired to New Bern in 1992, he quickly joined the New Bern Historical Society and served as the Society's Historian for many years. He was deeply interested in local history and was a humorous storyteller. He had been involved in every aspect of education for the Society. He gave lectures, trained docents, prepared educational material for school age children, wrote many Ghostwalk scripts and numerous Journal articles, and was an educator at the Battlefield. When he passed away on May 18, 2007, the Society honored him by establishing an annual lecture in his name.

The first Lore Lecture speaker was Dr. David Cecelski who appeared in front of two hundred and seventy people at the Masonic Theater to speak about the book he was writing, "Fire of Freedom" about a young man named Abraham Galloway. The Lore Lecture has since been held yearly,



Ordinary Women, Extraordinary Deeds
(l.) Teisha Glover as Sarah Dudley Pettey, (r.) Carol Becton as Charlotte Rhone

Richard K. Lore Lecture Series

2007	The Fires of Freedom: Abraham Galloway's Civil War	Dr. David Cecelski
2008	How the Historic Interaction between African Americans and Europeans Shaped the Evolution of Popular American Music	Billy Stevens
2009	How Shipwrecks Shaped the Destiny of the Outer Banks	Kevin Duffus
2010	The Last Days of Blackbeard the Pirate	Kevin Duffus
2011	War Zone - WWII off the Outer Banks	Kevin Duffus
2012	The Lost Light	Kevin Duffus
2013	The Meanings and Representations of Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation	Dr. Reginald Hildebrand
2014	From a Fire on the Beach to a Diamond in the Sky	Kevin Duffus
2015	Nazi POWs in the Tar Heel State, 1942-1946	Dr. Robert Billinger Jr.
2016	What Happened to the Lost Colony?	David La Vere
2017	Recovering the Enigma Machine	Jim Bunch
2018	Tarheel Traveler Comes to New Bern	Scott Mason
2019	A Delicious Country, Rediscovering the Carolinas	Scott Huler
2020	Postponed due to COVID-19 Epidemic	
2021	Gentle On My Mind	Rodney Kemp
2022	Carpetbaggers, Scalawags and Spies: Clandestine Affairs at New Bern 1861-1865	Edward Barnes Ellis Jr.
2023	The Other Coup D'Etat: Remembering New Bern, NC in 1898	Dr. David Cecelski

usually on a Sunday afternoon in the fall and followed by a reception. Due to scheduling conflicts, our 2022 Lore Lecture was held in January 2023 at the Orringer Auditorium at Craven Community College. Our speaker was Edward Barnes Ellis Jr., historian and author. His presentation was entitled "Carpetbaggers, Scalawags and Spies: Clandestine Affairs at New Bern, 1861-1865" and this event was sold out and well received.

Symposia

In March 2012 we presented a Sesquicentennial Symposium and Commemoration in partnership with Tryon Palace to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Battle of New Bern. "Thunder in the East, The Civil War in Eastern North Carolina" featured an array of scholars speaking about the Civil War and its aftermath in Eastern Carolina. Ed Bearss, noted Civil War historian and author, was the keynote speaker and other featured lecturers included Richard Sauers, Mark Bradley, Hari Jones, Josh Howard, and Chris Fonvielle. A reception was held on Friday night, the conference took place on Saturday and a commemoration at New Bern Battlefield Park was scheduled on Sunday.

Civil War Lectures

A Civil War lecture is given every year, usually in January. These lectures began with Ed Bearss, nationally renowned Civil War historian, author, and Chief Historian Emeritus of the National Park Service. He was a great proponent for the recognition and preservation of New Bern Battlefield Park. Mr. Bearss gave a yearly Civil War lecture in New Bern

for thirteen years resulting in over \$10,000 being donated towards the Battlefield preservation. Mr. Bearss gave his last lecture "Raising the Cairo" on January 13, 2019. His



Edwin C. Bearss

Champion of History

lectures were sponsored by the New Bern Historical Society and the New Bern Civil War Roundtable in partnership with Tryon Palace. The New Bern Historical Society established a special award in his honor, named the “Edwin C. Bearss Champion of History Award” and Mr. Bearss was the first recipient of it. It was presented to him at this last lecture. Ed Bearss passed away on September 15, 2020, at the age of ninety-seven. We, and the rest of the Civil War community, lost a good friend.

These popular Civil War lectures have continued. Hampton Newsome, author, presented “The Old North State” in 2020 and Wade Sokolosky, author, and expert on the Civil War in eastern Carolina presented “Preparing for Sherman’s Coming” in 2022. Edward Barnes Ellis Jr. presented a combined Civil War/ Lore Lecture in January 2023.

300th Anniversary of Founding of New Bern 1710-2010

Nelson McDaniel, then president, was selected to be the chairperson of the celebration committee and was honored for his leadership. There were a myriad of events including a parade and a reenactment of a landmark legal case, Bayard vs. Singleton. We created a float and marched in the parade, but also directed and helped with a giant reenactment of the Battle of New Bern entitled “Remembering the Civil War.” This was a huge event that took place at Union Point Park. Hundreds of reenactors and volunteers were involved with this event.

Publications, Print and Digital

Journal

The New Bern Historical Society Journal was first published in May 1988. The idea was to provide a forum for in-depth and researched articles about important people, places, organizations and events in New Bern and Craven County. Vance Harper Jones was editor from 1998-2008, but unfortunately the Journal ceased publication due to financial constraints.

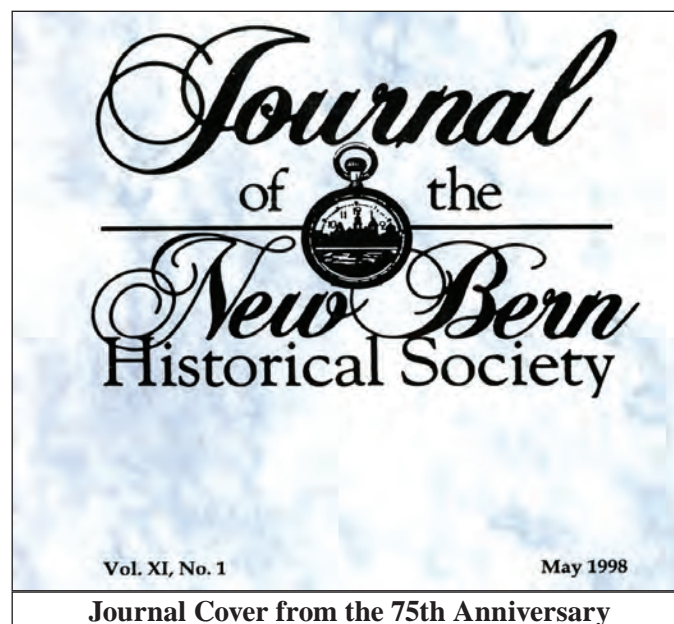
The Journal was revived in 2015 when Society member Richard “Woolie” McEnally approached the Board to relaunch the Journal and, after much discussion, obtained the Board’s approval with Woolie as the editor. He invested time, talent, and financial resources to publish the Journal. The Journal is printed yearly and mailed free to Society members as well as being sent to libraries and organizations. It is also available for purchase and continues to contain articles relevant to New Bern and Craven County. Woolie retired as editor in 2020 and was recognized by the Board for his leadership. He also provided a substantial donation to help fund future Journals. On September 12, 2021, just as the 2021 Journal was published, Richard McEnally unexpectedly passed away. In 2020, Jay DeLoach became the Editor in Chief of the Journal and has spearheaded the efforts to produce this special Centennial Commemoration of the New Bern Historical Society.

Newsletter Historical Happenings

In the past, the Society had a newsletter committee who wrote the newsletter providing members with timely information about events as well as other valuable information. The newsletter was reorganized in 1988 and was then published monthly by the executive director. Our current newsletter, “Historical Happenings” is published quarterly and contains information about upcoming programs, photographs of past events and special columns from the president and director as well as the curator, battlefield adjutant, and historian. The newsletter is usually six to eight pages and is mailed to members but is also found online on our webpage.

This Month in New Bern History

In 2015, New Bern Magazine, a local magazine popular with tourists and residents, requested that the Society submit a short article each month about something that happened in New Bern history. It was agreed that this could be an effective way to reach an increased audience. From February 1, 2015, through December 2016, the stories were shared from the “This Day in North Carolina” blog from the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources. We realized there were many more stories and voices we wanted to share, and in January 2017 we began to tell stories that we researched and wrote ourselves. The magazine had new owners who encouraged this and over the years this has become a popular feature and we have reached a broader audience while writing about diverse history.



Social Media

The publicity committee discussed in 2007 ways to share information with a larger public. One of our frustrations was that we had many albums of photos and memorabilia, but no one had an opportunity to see them. Because Facebook allowed the sharing of photos and information, we decided to try it. We learned quickly that people loved photos and postcards and we shared many of them. In the beginning,

information was posted, one time per week. Information about events as well as other lectures, symposiums in the community were posted also. We soon increased the number of posts each week.

Society curator, James Hodges Jr. continually showed us some of the things that had been donated to the Society over the years, and we found a way to introduce them to a larger community. "What's in the Attic with Jim?" was born which is a weekly feature on Wednesday where we post on Facebook an old photo from a collection and talk about its history. These posts usually generate conversations and sharing. We posted a photo of an old billiard ball from the 18th century, and more than 20,000 people viewed that post.

Currently over 8,000 individuals follow our Facebook page and while a number of viewers live locally, many live in other states and even other countries. It has been a powerful way to connect former residents with their hometown, and to excite new residents about the history here. Some of our posts have had anywhere from 20,000 people to view them up to over 35,000. We post several times per week and share upcoming events, photos from past events and important news. It has been an effective form of communication. Instagram is another form of social media that highlights photographs that are shared with other Instagram users. Although we began using Instagram in 2017, it was only sporadically with the help of a volunteer. We began posting regularly in March 2022 when our program director, Marissa Moore, arrived, and followers quickly jumped to more than 2000 followers in just over a year.

Airport Display

On Friday, November 5, 1999, official dedication ceremonies were held for New Bern's new airport terminal. Prior to the airport's opening, Regional Airport Director John Price generously donated a large glass display case for the Historical Society's use in the lobby of the new terminal. In the fall of 2015, our curator spoke with then Airport Director for Coastal Carolina Regional Airport, Tom Braaten, about updating the display case that the airport had generously allowed the Society to use free of charge for the past ten plus years.

The curatorial team decided to present a few unique artifacts that had relevance to the Battle of New Bern. The Battlefield Park History Walk Celebration was scheduled for early October 2015, so we wanted the initial phase of the exhibit to focus on the Park. Of prime focus was a surfboat design that was used by the Burnside Expedition during the events preceding the Battle of New Bern in March 1862. A member crafted a scale model of the surfboat, complete with oars that he generously loaned to the Historical Society for display at the airport. Other artifacts included a shrapnel shell, detailed map from 1862 of the Battle of New Bern and a large chip from a tree with an embedded bullet from the battle. These items were installed on July 28, 2015.

A second installation took place on September 1, 2015, and its purpose was to recognize and highlight local organiza-

tions that provided public museums and/or tours by including relevant visuals and contact information. New Bern Historical Society's Attmore-Oliver House and Museum, Tryon Palace and the North Carolina History Center, New Bern Firemen's Museum, and the Charlotte Rhone Cultural Center were included.



Freedom Bearer Bear

On December 16, 2010, the Society was the recipient of Freedom Bearer-a hand painted Bear depicting a resolute Revolutionary War officer. Linda Lore both sponsored and painted Freedom Bearer that she donated to the New Bern Historical Society in honor of her late husband, past historian, Richard K. Lore. Freedom Bearer was placed near the campus entrance from Pollock Street. Linda and Richard Lore were huge supporters of the Battlefield and the New Bern Historical Society and have left a long-lasting legacy.

Partnerships

Great Fire Commemoration

The Society has sponsored many special historical events. 2022 was the 100th Anniversary of the Great Fire, the largest fire in North Carolina history. On the morning of December 1, 1922, the fire started at the Rowland Lumber Company on the banks of the Neuse River. A second fire broke out on Kilmarnock Street a short while later. By the end of the day, over 3,000 people were displaced, most in the African American community.

Many current residents of our city had no idea of the details of this event, and it was an opportunity to share this history as well as the ramifications of decisions made during that



day and after the fire. It was also a way to commemorate those who struggled and those who helped. A four-day event included: a vigil, tour of the Firemen’s Museum, photographic presentations, and lectures and prayer services. These community partners worked together to commemorate this significant event: African American Heritage and Culture Center, City of New Bern, Craven County Tourism Development Authority, Earl of Craven Questers, New Bern Fireman’s Museum, New Bern Historical Society, St. Cyprian’s Episcopal Church, St. Peter’s AME Zion Church, Swiss Bear, Inc., A.M.E.Z. New Bern District, North Carolina Conference Eastern NC Episcopal District, and Tryon Palace.

African American Heritage Trail

The Historical Society participated in a multiyear project to develop the African American Heritage Trail. The goal was to share important local African American History with the public. The trail is a collection of points of interest located within the greater Craven Terrace/Dryborough neighborhoods of New Bern. Sixteen panels and ten sites explain and interpret significant historic events, people and places pertaining to African American heritage. A self-guided tour allows visitors to explore each panel that features historical information, photographs, and graphics. These signs as well as a map were added to the Historical Society website. The dedication of this trail took place on June 19, 2021, as part of the Juneteenth celebration. The development of these signs was guided by a committee chaired by local historian Bernard George with representatives from the Historic Dryborough Neighborhood Association, the New Bern Historical Society, the City of New Bern, the Housing Authority, and the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office.

African American Heritage and Culture Center

In February 2020, Leesa Jones, Director and Co-Founder of the Washington Underground Railroad Museum in Washington, NC presented a Lunch and Learn program

regarding the Underground Railroad in North Carolina. It sold out quickly and many more people wished to see it. The African American Heritage and Culture Center (AAHCC) offered to sponsor an encore performance in the community which took place at St. Peter’s AME Zion Church, Queen Street, on March 14, 2020. The Society is committed to sharing African American stories and many of our written articles have been shared on the website of the AAHCC.

Luke Martin Day

On September 18, 2014, ninety-seven-year-old Luke Martin Jr. was honored at a presentation co-sponsored by the Society and the Tryon Palace African American Lecture Series. The event was held at the North Carolina History Center and the program was entitled, “Epic Memories of an American Family: the Luke Martin Story.” Luke Martin Jr. was the son of a formerly enslaved man who was one of the first to enlist in the 1st North Carolina Colored Infantry in New Bern, which eventually became the 35th United States Colored Troops. He had escaped from his enslaver in Plymouth, North Carolina and braved swamps and rivers to escape to New Bern. After joining the Union Army, he was wounded at the Battle of Olustee in Florida. After the war, Luke Martin Sr. returned to New Bern and helped to establish the St. John Missionary Baptist Church becoming its Pastor. He married twice and had seven children, the youngest being Luke Martin Jr. His father, Luke Sr., died when Luke Jr. was three years old.

Luke Jr. was a remarkable contributor to the community, serving many causes, including St. John Missionary Baptist Church. He became a master mason and worked on the restored Tryon Palace in the 1950’s. He taught vocational classes in Pamlico County for twenty years. He was a recipient of the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, a prestigious award “for persons who have made significant contributions to the state and their communities through their exemplary service and exceptional accomplishments.” September 18, 2014, was named “Luke Martin Day” by the Craven County Commissioners. Mr. Martin died four months later

on January 25, 2015.

CCC Lifetime Learning Program

A partnership with the Craven Community College Lifetime Learning Project and Tryon Palace evolved in 2023 into a series of free lectures at the North Carolina History Center regarding several periods of New Bern History. These lectures were popular and well attended, and, in fact, every seat in Cullman Hall was filled for the initial program. The series will continue.

Events-Gone but Not Forgotten

To fulfill the mission of the organization and to pay salaries and building costs, it is essential, as a non-profit, to fundraise. There have been many inventive fundraisers over the years, but the Society has been wise enough to respond to changing conditions.

Pak-A-Sak

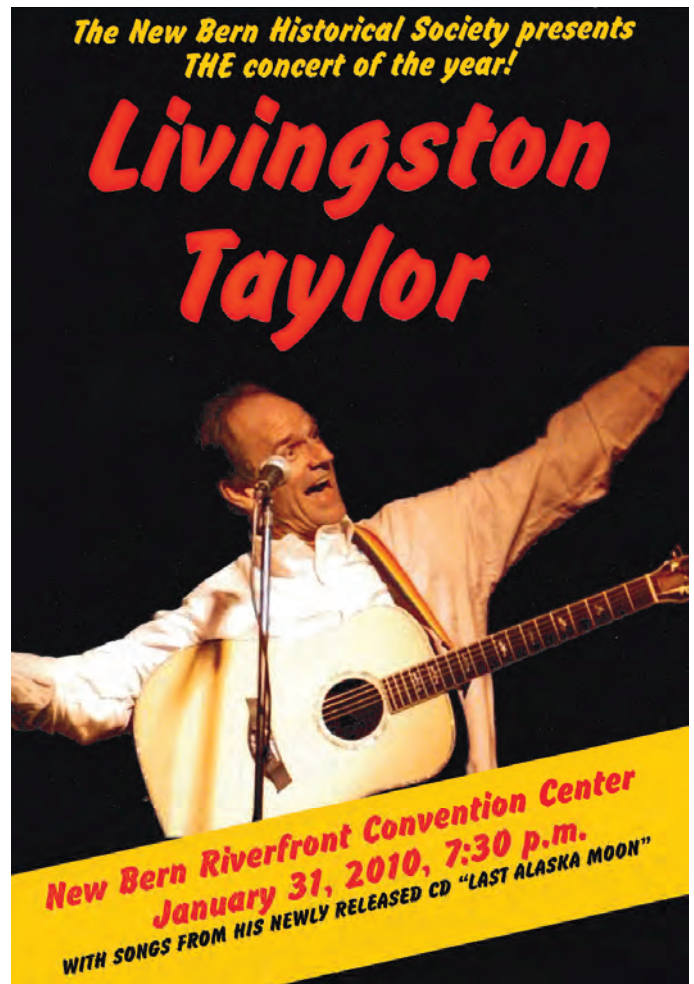
The Pak-A-Sak, a grocery store in several locations in New Bern, had a program to assist non-profits. Any organization that submitted \$106,000 in receipts would receive a check for \$1,500. Every Society newsletter included the number of receipts we had collected so far, and it became exciting to follow along to see if they would hit their goal. In May/June of 2000 the goal of \$106,000 receipts was reached. The \$1,500 winnings funded new computer software and a color printer. Unfortunately, Pak-A-Sak closed at the end of 2003 and ended their program.

Attic, Basement, and Closet (ABC) Sale

The popular Attic, Basement and Closet (ABC) sale began in 1987 and continued until 2022, serving as a major fundraiser for the Society. Donations of furniture, collectibles, antiques, art, and housewares were solicited, picked up, and stored for a big one-day sale at the Knights of Columbus hall. Under a series of strong volunteer leaders, the ABC Sale team employed over a hundred volunteers a year for pick-ups, sorting, and selling. In 2018, net income reached a peak of over \$12,000 before declining in subsequent years. Challenges arose with the disposition of unsold donations and physical risk to aging volunteers. from moving heavy furniture items. In January 2023 a report was made to the board that after a thorough analysis of the costs and benefits of the ABC sale it was decided that due to the physical risk to the staff and volunteers, competition from other non-profit organizations, increasing expenses, lower revenue returns and the lack of nexus to our historical mission, we would no longer operate the ABC Sale. It was the end of an era.

Legends in Concert

As we needed a large infusion of cash to keep our organization going in 2008-09, the Historical Society was focused on renovation of the Attmore-Oliver House and campus. To raise additional revenue, Executive Director Lynne Harakal recommended that the Society sponsor a concert. There are lots of risks inherent in this type of venture and one that



could result in a monetary loss rather than a gain. However, the board agreed to take a gamble and in 2010 sponsored our first concert. Legends In Concert was born. Our first performer was Livingston Taylor, who was a wonderful choice. Livingston had a strong connection to New Bern, as his great, great, great grandfather was Isaac Taylor who owned the house at 228 Craven Street which still stands. Over the years we sponsored Kathy Mattea, Orleans, the Vienna Boys Choir, Under the Streetlamp (twice), the Texas Tenors, and once again, in our last concert in 2018, Livingston Taylor. All the concerts were held at the New Bern Convention Center except for Orleans, who played at the Grover Field Middle School Auditorium. All the concerts were good and beneficial to the Society. The most memorable was the Vienna Boys Choir. Most audience members knew that they would never have the opportunity to see them again and they also thought this group tied in, with their original inception back in the Middle Ages, the Vienna Boys Choir was truly a success. While these concerts sold out and we were able to garner much needed funds, these concerts required a lot of time and organization. They placed a large burden on volunteers and due to that and increased performance fees it was no longer feasible to have them. Thus, 2018 was the end of another successful fundraising effort.

Fundraiser

In 2008 when Lynne Harakal was the Director of the New

Bern Historical Society, she generously opened her home, the beautiful Blades House for a Christmas holiday fundraiser, that was quickly dubbed a “Friendraiser.” The cost was ten dollars to attend and if you brought a guest with you who joined you would be allowed to attend for free. For the first Friendraiser, one hundred eighty-two people attended, and forty-three guests became members. The Friendraisers continued during the holiday time until 2016. In 2016 and 2017 this event was held in February with a Mardi Gras theme. In 2019, the Board discussed the benefits and cost of this annual event, and decided ten years was enough and it was time to find another means to attract new membership.

Gingerbread Contest

Sponsorship of a gingerbread house competition at Christmastime began in 2017. The contest was not a fundraiser but rather a fun event to encourage and inspire creativity, celebrate the holiday season, and increase community involvement. A partnership with local potters and ceramists provided unique prizes and we worked with the New Bern “Beary Merry Christmas” committee and the downtown merchants. Additionally, we collaborated with Craven Community College to develop a one-hour class titled, “How to Build a Gingerbread House.” A group of judges was chosen to pick the winning houses. Overall, there were twenty-one entries at twelve downtown merchant locations. The gingerbread houses remained in store windows for an extended period and were enjoyed by many.

In 2018, the contest and class continued on the heels of Hurricane Florence in September. This contest was especially important to many of the downtown merchants who had been closed post hurricane and worked extremely hard to be able to open by the holiday season. The contest really helped to raise spirits. Two years later the challenge was COVID-19 pandemic socialization restrictions. The contest became an online event with voting and gingerbread houses entered from bakers nationwide. However, due to the lack of tie-in to our mission, the difficulty to obtain volunteers during the holiday season and Society time constraints due to other events, the board’s consensus was to discontinue this event in 2021.

Haunted Evening/Candlelight Tours

This event began in 2006 when characters in costume appeared outside near an open fire at an event at the Attmore-Oliver House. An idea was born, and a trial Haunted Evening was planned for Friday evenings from September 8-October 6, 2006, at a cost of \$10 per person. The Haunted Evening in New Bern was advertised as a 45-minute tour of the Attmore-Oliver house by candlelight. Actors in costumes led visitors through the Attmore-Oliver House telling stories of previous residents, and the meaning of some of the objects in the house. People loved it and it became a great fundraiser for a time. The program was usually scheduled for evenings on specific weekends. At some point in January of 2007, it was announced that Haunted Evening would do weekly Saturday performances. By July of 2007, three full sets of cast members were needed for

the expanded schedule. This program was also financially beneficial, but it became increasingly difficult for volunteer actors to be continuously available on weekends and through the summer months. The actors and program are fondly remembered but with a finite number of volunteers, it could not be sustained. Production ceased in 2008.

Honour, The Musical

Local historian and writer, Bill Hand, approached the Historical Society in 2019 about partnering with him to produce a play entitled “Honour, The Musical.” It was an original musical with scripts and lyrics written by Hand, with the music composed by local musician and performer Simon Spaulding. It told the true story of the Stanly-Spaight duel in 1802 through the lens of Richard Dobbs Spaight, signer of the Constitution as well as governor and congressman. After his political defeat and defamation by young rival John Stanly, their war of words resulted in a duel on a field of honor. Two other tales woven into the play were that of Stanly’s half-brother, “Barber Jack”, a former slave who became the largest slave owner in Craven County, and of Sarah Rice, who had a child by John Stanly.

The play ran from January 23-February 2, 2020, at Orringer Auditorium on the Craven Community College campus. The executive producer was the Historical Society in collaboration with CarolinaEast Health System, the New Bern Sun Journal, and Craven Community College. This community-based production engaged the talents of many local actors and singers. Sold out audiences declared it a hit and it was both financially beneficial for the Society and the first step in the formation of Hand’s nonprofit North Carolina History Theater, launched in 2021.

The Spring Historic Home and Garden Tour

Initially known as the Old Homes and Garden Tour, this popular event was started by the Historical Society in 1967 as a biennial event. In 1980, the Preservation Foundation partnered with the Society on the event. Over the years the tour was enhanced with new additions such as a bake sale or offering boxed lunches for sale. This fundraiser was a major endeavor for both organizations and took countless hours and volunteers to put together. The Homes Tour attracted people from a large geographic area and was extremely popular. Most of the houses were in the downtown historic district and guests were delighted to see the inside of these homes that they could only see from afar.

Docents stationed outside each home informed guests about the history of the house as they waited to enter. Inside visitors learned about historic architecture in the home, special objects, and any stories relevant to the home. Garden clubs and local florists provided floral arrangements specifically designed for each home. A ticket was good for two days and ticket holders could view the homes in any order they wished.

In 2017, the Spring Historic Home & Gardens Tour celebrated its 50th Anniversary. Homes from the Ghent,



Riverside, Dryborough and DeGraffenreid neighborhoods were added to those of the downtown historic district, and Tryon Palace opened their gardens for free. After the 50th anniversary tour, the decision was made for the Historical Society to take over operation of the tour, changing the name to the Heritage Homes Tour. The 2023 tour coincided with the 100th Anniversary celebration. The self-guided tour featured homes in Riverside and the Downtown Historic District, two homes under construction/renovation were included. The anniversary homes tour included musicians, Plein Air painters, and free food at a 1920's inspired garden party at the Attmore-Oliver House. The weather was perfect, and we had record attendance on both days.

Social Events

Most organizations have social events, and the Historical Society is no exception. These parties that honored volunteers, connected members and involved member families have helped solidify the foundation of the organization and contribute to the awareness of history. A yearly volunteer social thank you has been held on the back porch of the Attmore-Oliver House with drinks and food being supplied and served by staff and Board members. Our 100th Anniversary party took place there as well, which was a fun event with the oldest and youngest member cutting the cake together.

Pandemic Inspired, Thinking Outside the Box

Unbelievably, several innovative programs were created to adapt to public health restrictions and protocols for COVID-19, and have continued after restrictions were lifted.

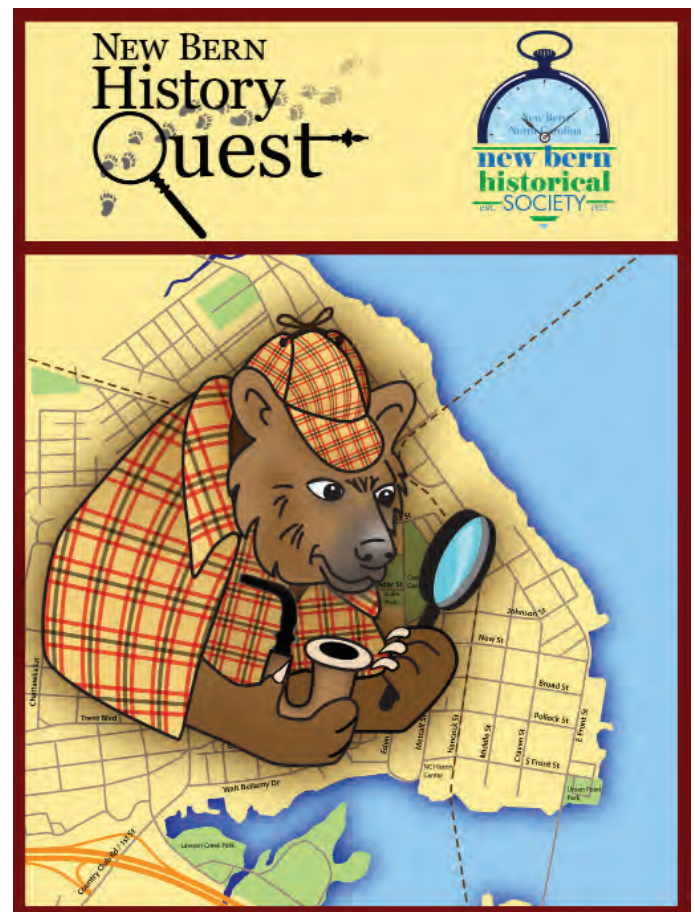
The first “Tee It Up FORE History” golf tournament was the perfect match for social distancing guidelines. Adapting to the guidelines required that the event be rescheduled from an earlier date of May 9, 2020 to October 3, 2020 at the Taberna Country Club. Sponsors provided many lovely gifts that were wrapped in beautiful baskets that each contained

a bottle of wine donated by Board members. Twenty teams registered, the maximum that could play, and the weather was great. The event was well attended, organized, and significantly profitable for a first-time event. The golf tournament has since become a popular program, moving from Taberna to Carolina Colours in 2022. The Fourth Annual Tee It Up FORE History tournament was held on June 11, 2023. Registered teams increased to 24, with increased corporate and individual sponsorships. Both as a “FUNraiser” and a fundraiser, the tournament is destined to remain an annual event.

The History Quest

The History Quest was specifically started due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The goal was to develop a program where families could do something together outside that would be educational and fun. A committee studied tours and scavenger hunts from all over the country and then decided which features would fit New Bern best. The outcome was a family-oriented event that was not a competition for awards.

We decided to offer hints and puzzles to direct teams to a destination. There was a story at the destination which required an answer. Our unofficial motto for the Quest was “hiding in plain sight” as many of the clue destinations were places that people walked or drove by all the time but they had no idea of the historical significance of the site. We kept the cost to a minimum and hoped we would get a lot of teams as we had no school events to compete





Kady Brownell

Hallowed Ground Lantern Tour

Another outdoor program created during the pandemic was the Hallowed Ground Lantern Tour. This lantern-lit guided tour at Battlefield Park was not a Battlefield tour nor about the battle itself, but rather a portrayal of poignant stories about those who were affected by events during the Civil War in and around New Bern. The moving stories of courage and conviction were told by costumed volunteer actors, and were based on letters, diaries and contemporaneous accounts and emphasized the courage and conviction of those portrayed.

The first Lantern Tour was held in April 2021, with characters arrayed along the battlefield paths, followed by a powerful vignette and music by escaped slaves in a tent on the parade ground. The reaction to the first lantern tour was overwhelmingly positive, with guests commenting about how powerful and thought-provoking the tales were. The characters featured at Lantern Tour have included a devoted wife who followed her husband to the fight disguised as a man; a skilled nurse who was also a plucky Confederate spy; friends who found themselves on opposing sides of the war; and an influential Freedwoman who changed the course of the war; a brave immigrant who won the Medal of Honor; and daring tales from the Underground Railroad. Community partners including reenactors from the 5th and 7th NC Regiments and the 35th US Colored Troops, and musicians from the Craven Community College Gospel Choir have enhanced the program. The Lantern Tour was held a second time in March 2023. It has proved to be both a wonderful educational program and a modest Society fundraiser, and is now planned to be an annual event.

Ghostwalk

If you ask anyone in New Bern what the New Bern Historical Society does, they inevitably say the Ghostwalk. Deliberately spelled and trademarked in this fashion, Ghostwalk debuted in 1990 and takes place annually on the Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings a week before Halloween. It is part pageant, part play, part historical and part hysterical. There is usually a theme, and scripts are written for characters of a historic nature that fit the theme. This event attracts 3-4,000 people annually. Not only is it our most popular event, but it is also our biggest fundraiser. It also requires an enormous amount of time to plan and enlist the help of hundreds of volunteers.

The 2000 New Bern at Night Ghostwalk celebrated ten years of Ghostwalk and the theme, aptly, was the "Very Best of Ghostwalk." There was something else special that year. New Bern Postmaster Dale Hocker arranged for the Ghostwalk to have a special postmark commemorating the 10th Anniversary of this popular event. The U.S. Post Office grants special event postmarks to local groups all over the country and has their own graphic artist who normally designs the mark. However, this 2000 postmark was designed by Doug Williams of Dr. Bill's photo clinics. He also designed the cover for the Ghostwalk brochure that year. The limited-edition postmark was available for three

with. The Quest was held on June 5, 2021, and we had fifty teams participate with more than two hundred people. Our Board members were very generous in helping to sponsor this event. We were not trying to make this a fundraiser, but neither did we want to lose money because COVID-19 had affected our budget due to event cancellations. We needed start up income for advertising. One of our committee members designed a Bear who we dubbed Sherlock T. Bear, and he became the mascot and symbol in all our advertising.

The Quest started at the Battlefield. Each team entered the competition with a chosen team name and had their photo taken at the start. They were given a packet with lots of information and a list of clues. We had separate clues for a family or adult team. A family could attempt both sets of clues if they wished, but the adult team had to complete the adult questions. The Quest hours were 10 am – 4 pm, and they could search for the clues in any order they wished. When they returned to the Battlefield with their answer sheets, they were reviewed and if all their answers were correct, they received a ticket to put in a box. At the end of the day, five lucky names were drawn, and each family won a basket filled with all kinds of lovely prizes from local businesses. Teams were awarded extra tickets for taking "selfies" at designated spots as well as for extra credit questions. Signs with our mascot bear were created and placed near destinations. Teams were allowed to use social media and computers to solve the clues as we wanted them to get the right answer. The first History Quest was so well received that it was held again in 2022 and 2023 and is now considered an annual event.

New Bern at Night and Ghostwalk

Themes of Past Ghostwalk Events (note, the event now known as Ghostwalk was previously a generic Ghost Walk)

1990	<i>New Bern at Night Ghost Walk</i> (no particular theme) November 10
1991	<i>New Bern at Night Ghost Walk: A Chillingly Elegant Evening</i> November 2
1992	<i>New Bern at Night Ghost Walk: An Evening of Haunted Happenings</i> in 5 historical homes and a moon light walk through Cedar Grove Cemetery October 24
1993	<i>New Bern at Night Ghost Walk: Ghostly Presences from the Sea</i> with connections to the sea will enliven a tour through 7 historic homes and a moonlit walk through Cedar Grove Cemetery October 22-23
1994	<i>Phantoms of the Civil War</i> within historic houses, gardens and during a moon lit stroll through Cedar Grove Cemetery October 28-29
1995	<i>Phantoms of the 1922 Great Fire in New Bern</i> October 27-28
1996	<i>A Stroll Through New Bern's Haunted Past</i> October 25-26
1997	<i>New Bern at Night Ghost Walk</i> (no particular theme) - October 24-25
1998	<i>The Roaring 20's, The Decadent Decade</i> October 23-24
1999	<i>Remembering the 1940's War Years</i> October 22-23
2000	<i>The Best of Ghostwalk</i> October 27-28
2001	<i>Turning of the 20th Century 1900-1910</i> October 25-27
2002	<i>The Civil War Years</i> October 24-26
2003	<i>Saints & Sinners</i> October 23-25
2004	<i>The Revolutionary War 1776</i> October 21-23
2005	<i>The Fabulous Fifties (1950's)</i> October 20-22
2006	<i>The Gilded Age</i> October 26-28
2007	<i>The Civil War Years</i> October 25-27
2008	<i>Spirits of the Neuse</i> October 23-25
2009	<i>Roaring & Sizzling 20's</i> October 22-24
2010	<i>Best of 300 Years</i> October 28-30
2011	<i>The Good, Bad, and Ugly</i> October 27-29
2012	<i>Spirited Through Time</i> October 25-27
2013	<i>Haunted Housewives of New Bern</i> October 24-26
2014	<i>Hauntings with Attitude</i> October 23-25
2015	<i>Un-Modern Family</i> October 22-24
2016	<i>Ghost Whispers from the Past</i> October 27-29
2017	<i>Heroes & Hooligans</i> October 26-28
2018	<i>Graves' Anatomy: Medicine, Mystery & Mayhem</i> October 26-27
2019	<i>Spirited Skirts & the Shadows They Cast</i> October 24-26
2020	<i>Tales From the Underground</i> October 22-24 (all at Cedar Grove Cemetery in three loops due to COVID-19)
2021	<i>Skeletons in Our Closets</i> October 28-30 (two loops Cedar Grove, remaining on porches)
2022	<i>Fabulous Firsts</i> October 20-22
2023	<i>Tales from the Twenties: A Decadent Decade</i> Oct 19-21



in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic and rules were changing every day. How do you plan for a major fundraising event when you do not know whether an event with any size gathering may be held? The challenge was to be creative. By May, numerous membership and educational events had to be canceled or postponed but we were still planning that Ghostwalk would happen. There were restrictions that changed frequently as to how many people could attend an event if they had to wear a mask and whether they had to be socially distant. It was decided to stage the entire Ghostwalk outside at Cedar Grove Cemetery. All ticket sales were online, and everyone had to sign up for an advanced appointment arrival time. Mask protocols and social distancing were all detailed when tickets were purchased, and these safety protocols were acknowledged. There were three groups to be escorted throughout the cemetery. We could only sell a maximum of 1,000 tickets with these rules in place, but we sold that number. As an additional source of revenue and so others did not miss out completely if they were unable to come in person, “Ghostwalk, the Movie” was produced and an electronic release made on Thursday, October 22. Once again, the Society’s ability to dynamically pivot saved us from a large financial hit and proved to be super popular with visitors.

The Harriett Marks Scholarship and Taylor Scholarship

The Harriett Marks Scholarship was established in a trust for the estate of Miss Harriett Marks in 1968 as a memorial to the O. Marks family. The Taylor Scholarship was created in 2015 by James Hodges Jr. to honor the memory of his grandparents John R. Taylor and Alice Land Taylor. This scholarship is administered by the North Carolina Community Foundation. While the Taylor scholarship is a separate entity, it is designed to complement and supplement the Marks Scholarship.

days only. It was noted that by the year 2000 Ghostwalk had more than doubled in size and scope since its beginning.

In 2001, a “Ghostly Ball” was added and held at the Sudan Temple Ballroom. The Ghostwalk theme itself was “Turning the 20th Century, 1900-1919” but the theme of the Ball was “Titanic, Ships of Dreams.” The sponsor of this event was the Jewelry Company, and at this Masquerade Ball a .58 carat diamond courtesy of the sponsor and aptly named “Hearts on Fire”, was to be raffled off. Ghostwalk was extended to three days, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday which has continued to this day. It was all extraordinarily successful and over 4,000 tickets were sold.

In 2002, another Ghostly Ball was held at the Sudan Temple with a Civil War theme. The 2003 Ghostwalk, “Saints and Sinners” was indicated as the most successful and profitable up to that time. It was also the beginning of the title sponsorship of this event by Chesnutt, Clemmons, Thomas, and Peacock.

Hurricane Florence struck the city head-on in September 2018 and presented some significant issues as in September the city was struck head-on by Hurricane Florence. A major cleanup of the city was taking place, but we were able to have Ghostwalk with the theme of Graves’ Anatomy: Medicine, Mystery & Mayhem. So many people wanted to get out and see their neighbors and friends and support the Society as well as the city and we all made it through together.

A completely different challenge surfaced in 2020. We were



**Marks and Taylor Scholarships winner for 2023
Kadiatou Diawara**

Presented by Mary Parish

Both scholarships are awarded to a senior graduating from New Bern High School, and they contribute to the tuition, board or lodging at an accredited college, university, or

other institution of higher learning. They are renewable for three succeeding years if academic standards are maintained. These scholarships are awarded annually based on both scholarship and financial need.

Annual Meeting

Per the by-laws, the Society is required to have an annual membership meeting at which board officers are elected. For many years the annual meeting was styled as a banquet and held at the New Bern Country Club. Following the dinner and business meeting, the highlight of the evening was presenting volunteer awards and introducing the scholarship winner. More recently, locations and formats have varied to increase attendance. Traditionally, speakers were on the agenda and an auction concluded the event to help defray other costs. Eventually the format transitioned to a more casual atmosphere so members could socialize and dine together. In 2023, for the first time, the annual meeting was held outdoors at our own Battlefield Park.

Crisis Management

The years 2018-2021 were difficult years for many. Hurricane Florence directly hit the city of New Bern on September 14, 2018, causing millions of dollars in damage and much heartache for its citizens. Businesses were closed, homes destroyed, and families and organizations disrupted. Our main campus suffered some damage, but it was rectified with the help of volunteers and insurance. The Battlefield campus did not fare as well. The Visitor Center, and two sheds suffered major damage and there was debris everywhere. The Battlefield guides and other volunteers stepped up their efforts to clean the debris, but it took some time though they were there every day. Some of the work had to be done by contractors. Volunteers worked for months to clear out fallen trees, debris, etc.

Led by Executive Director Mickey Miller and President Joseph Hunt, along with a strong board, problems were creatively solved. An outgrowth of creative management was the adoption in June of 2022, an addition to the bylaws, Article XI Emergency Powers. Of great concern as well was we could expect little or no income for several months. Our primary fundraiser, Ghostwalk seemed in jeopardy of cancellation. However, Ghostwalk took place with highly creative planning and compliance with all laws. In lieu of live lunch programs or lectures, the Society produced a number of video programs, professionally filmed in studio, accompanied by slide shows. These programs were available through our website and remain there to be watched today. We certainly proved to be #NewBernStrong.

Strong leadership and management helped membership to continue to grow, and in January 2022, a proposal was made to create a new full-time staff position, Events & Program Manager. Though it was clear that additional salary costs coupled with the 100th Anniversary exhibit would affect the operating budget for two to three years, the board unanimously approved the motion to add this position. On March 15, 2022, our first full-time Programs Director, Marissa

Moore, was brought on board. This enabled the director to focus on the strategic needs of the Historical Society. In August 2022, following the retirement of the assistant to the director, a new Operations Manager, Anthony Giardino, joined the staff.

Collection Management

Preserving history includes more than information about and interpretation of historic events. Collections of artifacts, ephemera, and photographs are equally important. According to the Society's Curator Jim Hodges, the two most important collections of the past ten years had been recently donated. The William Hollister Collection comprises hundreds of original documents dating from the late 18th through the early 20th century that included hand-written ledgers regarding his maritime activities. William Hollister was a ship owner, banker, and merchant who had moved to New Bern from Connecticut in the late 1700s. He was also a founding member of New Bern Presbyterian Church (now First Presbyterian Church). The Benners/Kellum Photograph Collection contains 25,000 photos of life in New Bern during the past century. This collection is being cataloged and accessioned. As the first one hundred years close, all collections belonging to the Society total 7,285 catalogued items.



Jim Hodges manages the collection as curator of the Society

Campuses

We have two campuses where many events and social activities are held. The downtown campus consists of the Attmore-Oliver House, Roberts House and Ward House as well as the Haslen House and William Gaston Law Office. Integral to this campus is the beautiful historic garden that connects the area and is lovingly tended by volunteers. Our second campus is the site of the New Bern Battlefield Park off Route 70 near Taberna. It is maintained by numerous volunteers and is funded by grants and contributions from members.

Attmore-Oliver House

Although we own several old homes, this house is our

crown jewel. Historical Society President John R. Taylor negotiated the purchase of the house in 1954. Though there was not much money in the treasury and the Society had been dormant after the Great Depression and two World Wars, members were able to purchase, restore, and furnish this house and managed to burn the mortgage within ten years. The determination to buy and resurrect this house was only the beginning. The house has continued to play a key role in the mission of the New Bern Historical Society. The Attmore-Oliver house was first designed as a house museum, a popular trend. New Bern citizens had watched, and had participated in the fight to rebuild Tryon Palace, and this inspired them to find new ways to preserve other historical places and help make New Bern a historical destination.

The Attmore-Oliver House was open for limited periods of times and days during the week and was closed for several months during the winter while the house was refurbished or repaired. Initially, adult visitors paid to tour the house and students and children were allowed free entrance. Several years later, the admission fee was dropped. The house was available for rental as well. Yearly statistics were kept and reported in board meetings as to how many people had toured the house and what fees and rentals were collected. For example, in 1998 there were 4,252 visitors over a 158-day period and the society received \$141 in donations and \$3,000 in rental fees. Statistics for 1999 were very similar. Income from donations and fees was not enough to cover the repairs and expenses of the house.

Records from 1998 noted repairs to shutters and fencing totaled \$10,000 alone. Between 1999 and 2004, maintenance/repairs included: structural damage to the front columns as well as other worrisome unknown damage; repairs underneath the house were ongoing; porch drainage issues; as well as several porch columns and sills that needed to be replaced or reworked. The climax in 2004 was a large quote for roof repair. Harry Goodman, a volunteer maintenance director for more than twenty years collaborated with team members to monitor and complete repair work. While this saved the Society large sums of money over the years, many repairs required expert skills.

While the work on the outside of the house was an enormous drain of time and funds, the interpretation and management of the inside of the house was equally time-consuming and expensive. Curatorial staff was constantly searching for the right accessory or piece of furniture for the house-museum and donors to assist with the cost of these items. In 1998, the family of Minette Chapman Duffy, the founder of the Society, donated \$5,000 in honor of the 75th anniversary of the Society and additional funds were later contributed by another family member. They wanted a piece of furniture purchased for the Attmore-Oliver House, and an 1820 Mecklenburg County corner cupboard was located for \$7200. Luckily, the family agreed to pay the additional cost. However, a wish regarding donations for swags and jabots for the four front windows at a cost of \$875 each went unfulfilled for some time. At each board meeting, a summary of donations and a list of needs was provided in the hope that someone might contribute to the cost of pur-

chase and/or repair of an item. Rentals and tours were not providing much in the way of income and in 2001 Dick Lore suggested that to attract more visitors, the focus of the Attmore-Oliver House should be changed to that of a Civil War Museum. Changes in signage and docent presentations were made.

Manly-Ward House (Ward House)

Many members may not realize, but for a period, the board meetings and administrative functions of the Society were taking place in the Manly-Ward house that is on our downtown campus. This dependency was originally located on Change Street but was gifted to the Society by Leah Jones Ward. The expenses of moving the house, and providing extensive renovation and remodeling, added additional financial struggle to the Society during this period. For example, it was determined in June 2002 that the roof on the house needed significant repair, which was later completed in October at a cost of \$3800.

Laughinghouse House (Roberts House)

The Attmore-Oliver House was accessible from Broad Street but the Society office at the Ward House was not visible from Broad or Pollock Street and there was no access to the campus property from Pollock Street. In 2015 the Society learned that the Laughinghouse property might be for sale. That property, at 512 Pollock Street, was the home of the Lady Tryon Beauty Shop on the bottom floor and the Laughinghouse family on the top floor. A resolution to purchase this property was made and passed. The purchase price for the home was accepted, and the closing of the house took place on March 15, 2015. The house had been originally owned by the Roberts family in the 1800's. Captain William Willis Roberts brought the *Lycoris Radiata* or Spider Lily to New Bern and North America from Japan in 1858. The name was changed to the Roberts House.

President Ken McCotter made an announcement to all indicating "We have purchased the house and lot at 512 Pollock Street from Robert and Gladys Laughinghouse. We plan to move our office there, giving us much needed visibility on Pollock Street. Nelson McDaniel is leading a fundraising campaign to pay for the property and needed repairs." The rationale for purchasing and moving the office was said to be to improve visibility for tourists, and to have space for sale items and a display for upcoming events.

Jack Daft and Rebecca Lucas created a landscape plan for a garden that would integrate the Roberts House and Attmore-Oliver House. The plan was presented and approved by the board in March 2006. However, it significantly impacted the fundraising campaign. In November of 2006, Nelson McDaniel, chair of the Roberts House Committee, distributed a detailed proposal that the Roberts House and garden should be combined into one project. Despite the increase in the debt for the house and garden, by September of 2007, the Roberts House committee had raised more than half their goal.

In November 2007, Margaret Rawls Stancil, a longtime New Bern educator and benefactor, gifted the Society with

a generous cash contribution. The board gratefully accepted this gift and authorized a portion of it to be used in conjunction with a Bate Foundation grant towards the Roberts House and garden. The remaining sum was to be placed in a New Bern Historical Society Endowment with the North Carolina Community Foundation. Usage was restricted for the support, maintenance, repair, renovation or improvement of the Attmore-Oliver House and Campus. To honor Margaret Rawls Stancil and her generous gift, the Society voted to designate the Roberts House as the Rawls Stancil History Center. This endowment continues to be available to maintain the buildings and grounds.

In January/February 2008 the Society moved into the Roberts House at 512 Pollock Street. It became the site of board meetings; a resource library; as well as administrative offices. The Manly-Ward House was then leased to two tenants as office space, an arrangement which continues to this day.

During this time, the Attmore-Oliver House and grounds were still being utilized, though not to the extent desired. Efforts to promote the house as a wedding venue eventually proved to be futile because in 2007, a representative from the New Bern Convention Center & Visitor Bureau indicated that the lack of parking and toilet facilities precluded its use as a wedding facility. Concurrently, the Society was trying to obtain grants and cash for Battlefield Park. The continued need for cash took a toll on the budget.

Financial issues among other issues eventually forced a decision. It was announced that in August 2011 the Society would move their headquarters into the Attmore-Oliver House and rent the Roberts House to provide necessary income. There was much debate at the time, but the move has been a good one and has allowed the Society to remain financially stable. Nelson McDaniel wrote in the Fall 2013 Newsletter, "While our mission is education, it is accomplished through the help of two sites that we own and steward. The one site is the downtown campus between Broad and Pollock Streets that includes buildings and a beautiful garden. The other is the New Bern Battlefield Park, a thirty-one-acre site where the Battle of New Bern occurred on March 14, 1862.... We decided to make use of the signature Attmore-Oliver House as both a museum and offices for our operations. That decision allowed us to lease the Roberts House which faces Pollock Street, and, after renovations, the Aerie Bed and Breakfast took occupancy of that house with a long-term lease. The Aerie also participated in the cost of renovations."

This decision prompted other decisions as well, like examining our many extensive collections and deciding what things had no relationship to the house or New Bern history. Objects that did not meet the criteria were deaccessioned and proceeds from their sale were put into a special fund for conservation of the objects we kept. In addition to preserving the collections that have been so important to this city, all the necessary administrative functions are front and center in this house as well. Rental income from the Roberts

House and Ward house continue to allow us to make repairs on all the downtown campus buildings that we owned.

The house-museum trend began to fade nationally by 2015, and after moving into the Attmore-Oliver House in 2012, the Society stopped providing formal tours with docents, opting instead for a self-guided tour of several rooms in the house. The administrative staff has grown, necessitating that more space be allotted for offices. Fortunately, wonderful historic photos and portraits still adorn the walls, and many items are on display but only in a few rooms. The spirit of the Attmore-Oliver House remains. Numerous events are held on the campus including the Ghostwalk bake sale, volunteer socials and most recently the Historical Society's 100th birthday party. The garden is extremely popular during the Heritage Homes Tour. We think Miss Mary would be pleased with the care we give her home.

NBHS and Support of Preservation

Extended Downtown Campus

The Haslen House was purchased by Dr. Thomas Haslen circa 1771. Its brick structure predates 1761 making it one of the oldest structures in Craven County. It stood on the northwest corner of Pollock and East Front Streets. The Haslen house and property were sold through the years. The mansion was destroyed in the 1843 fire that burned the entire first block of Pollock Street. The dependency survived and was used as a dwelling for many years. In 1980, the brick dependency was dismantled and rebuilt, brick-by-brick, behind the Attmore-Oliver House by the New Bern Preservation Foundation. This property is owned by the Preservation Foundation and houses their headquarters.

Gaston Law Office

In 2016, the Judge William Gaston law office was moved to the Historical Society downtown campus. The New Bern Garden Club has owned the building since 1948. The building faced demolition or relocation and the New Bern Garden Club, with the assistance of the Garden Club of North Carolina, raised the necessary funds to have the building dismantled and moved to city property at 311 Craven Street. The City requested in 2016 that the building be moved again as they had another use for that property.

The Society was pleased to participate in saving this structure by offering a permanent location on our grounds. The New Bern Garden Club retains ownership of the building and paid all moving costs. The Garden Club pays a yearly lease of \$1, retains use of the building and pays all maintenance expenses. If the 90-year-old Garden Club should cease to exist, ownership of the property would revert to the New Bern Historical Society.

All Saints Chapel

This charming chapel building located on Pollock Street had been rented by the Society from the Archdiocese for a nominal fee. However, during February 1998 a conversation with the Bishop of the Diocese included the idea that the Society



The Gaston Law Office

would receive All Saints Chapel if it were donated. In April, the Vestry at Christ Episcopal Church passed a resolution supporting the conveyance of the Chapel to the Society and in January 1999 the deed was received. The plan was either to rent the chapel to a long-term tenant or utilize it for weddings. Either way, the Society anticipated profits for the budget. In April 2000, a long-term lease was signed with a local church. Unfortunately, the Chapel needed many costly repairs. By July 2002, the financial drain of the Chapel was discussed, and an ad hoc committee was formed to explore ideas. Although the Chapel was rented a few times during 2004-2005, the income was small and inconsistent. By March 2005, the renter of the Chapel vacated and owed rent and money for a wedding that had taken place there. An offer was made in 2005 by a private owner to purchase the chapel and the board agreed to sell it. It was used as a plant store for many years and has been sold several times since then to private owners who use it as their home.

Henderson-Dunn “Birdsong” House

In 2015, the Henderson-Dunn House at 622 New Street was donated to the Society by Robert and Shirley Birdsong. The board voted unanimously to accept this property that was an unencumbered and unrestricted gift of the house. The deed was transferred on December 15, 2015. The only caveat was that the Society had to retain the title of the house for three

years prior to selling it. This was the largest gift the Society has ever received from one donor. At the May 5, 2016, annual meeting of the Society, President Nelson McDaniel announced that the Parade Ground at the Battlefield would be named the Birdsong Parade Ground to honor this gift to the Society. The Parade Ground was dedicated as such on November 2, 2016, and appropriate signage erected. The Birdsong house was rented through January 2019 but after the tenants moved out the sale of the property was approved by the Society membership. The closing of this house took place on August 16, 2019, and the funds were invested in our endowment.

Lasting Contribution

With all of this said, what has been the lasting contribution of the New Bern Historical Society to New Bern and Craven County? That may be defined by questions we have been asked over the years, answers we researched and shared and who we connected with. It can be from an overheard conversation that led to a big discovery. It can be from photographs and postcards posted on social media that led to several presentations because everyone was so interested. We have been able to celebrate and promote New Bern and its heritage through special events and education. We have an active calendar of educational events, storytelling programs, speaker presentations, tours, and social gatherings. Our success can be measured by the growth of our membership to well over 1,300 members and the hundreds of volunteers contributing to our programs each year. We continue to attract new members and volunteers every day.

You can see that the New Bern Historical Society has not been idle for the past twenty-five years. We have become adept at managing adversity and adapting to better serve the community. We are committed to uncovering those hidden gems of New Bern’s past and telling the unusual and unique stories that have not been told. We are continuing to partner with community members as we are only stronger when we do so. Our board and staff are dedicated and enterprising and we are focused on preserving New Bern’s history. What will the New Bern Historical Society do in the next one hundred years? It is exciting to think about. We believe that we have given New Bern and its people a sense of place, pride, and purpose. We hope you will continue the journey with us.

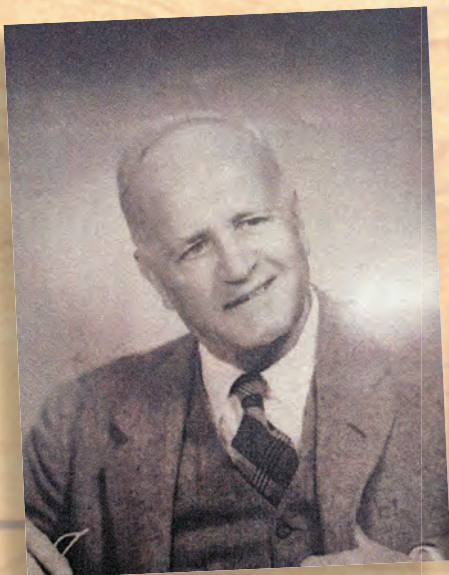
References:

- New Bern Historical Society Board Meetings from January 20, 1998 until April, 2023.
- New Bern Historical Society Newsletters from Jan/Feb 2000 to March 2023.
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- Quote by Ken McCotter, March/April 2005 New Bern Historical Society Newsletter, pg. 13.
- Quote by Nelson McDaniel, Fall 2013 New Bern Historical Society Newsletter, pg. 14.

About the Author: Claudia Houston loves history, genealogy, writing and research. She utilizes all those skills as a Board Member and Historian for the New Bern Historical Society, writing monthly stories for the New Bern Magazine, articles for the NBHS Journal and co-managing the NBHS Facebook Page. She holds a degree in History from the State University College of New Paltz, NY and a Master of Public Administration degree from PACE University.



New Bern Historical Society Presidents



Hon. Romulus Armistead Nunn, JD
1923-1924



Mrs. Emma Mitchell Stevenson Dunn
1925



Mrs. Minnette Chapman Duffy
1926-1927, 1941



Junius Weeks Davis, MD
1966-1972



Charles Thomas Barker, DDS
1973-1975



Joseph M. Fremon, Jr.
1976



Hon. Joshua W. Willey, Jr., JD
1988-1992



Simeon Adams, MD
1992



Jim Russell Sugg, Sr., JD
1993-1999



Rep. Charles Laban Abernathy, JD
1929



Prof. Henry Brower Smith, Supt. NB
City Schools 1952



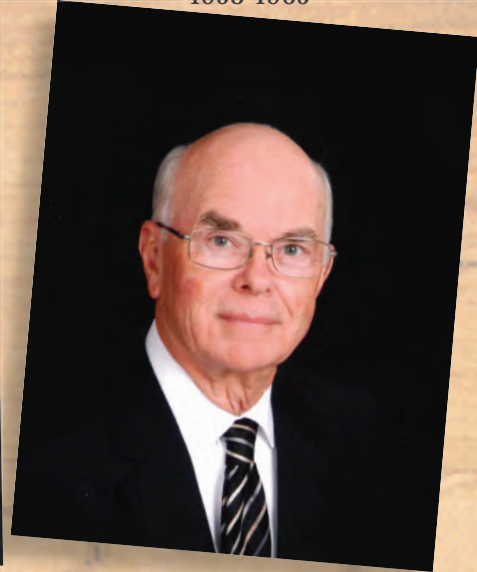
John R. Taylor, Sr.
1953-1965



Robert Lee Stallings, Jr.
1977-1981



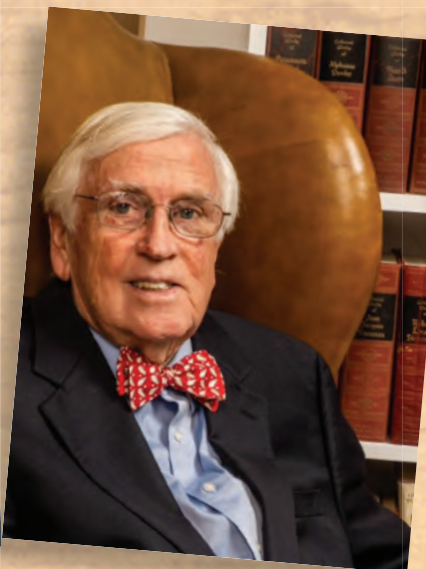
Raymond C. Houghton, MD
1982



E. Newsom Williams, PhD
1983-1987



Hon. Charles K. McCotter, Jr., JD
2000-2007



Nelson Bell McDaniel
2008-2016



Joseph M. Hunt, III, PhD
2017- Present

HISTORICAL SOCIETY PROMOTES THE NEW BERN PRESERVATION FOUNDATION

Bernard George and E. Newsom Williams

Introduction

According to Susan Moffat-Thomas, retired Executive Director of Swiss Bear Downtown Development Corporation, a late 1960s survey of New Bern's residential structures by the North Carolina Division of Archives and History identified large number of endangered historical structures being lost to decay and demolition. Initial steps to establish a foundation dedicated to preservation and slowing the loss of historic architecture began with the New Bern Historical Society. A revolving fund committee was established which laid the groundwork for the creation of a separate organization with its own charter and bylaws – the Historic New Bern Foundation, later renamed the New Bern Preservation Foundation, Inc.

Since its inception in 1972, the New Bern Preservation Foundation has been living its mission to preserve and protect the architectural heritage of the city. Approximately fifty historic properties have been acquired and sold for rehabilitation, each with covenants to protect them in perpetuity. Significant steps, such as relocation, were necessary to save sixteen of the structures destined for demolition.

A Strong Beginning

Wasting no time, under the leadership of Dr. Francis King, an organizational structure was established for the Foundation and two houses were acquired. The eighteenth-century Elijah Clark house was purchased for \$4500. The larger nineteenth-century Fraizer-Mayhew house was donated, with the caveat that it be moved from its original location on Middle Street. After much preparation and planning the three-story house was successfully relocated to Change Street. Both houses were sold by the end of 1974 and rehabilitation began immediately.

The Foundation's early successes, along with a growing interest in protecting historic houses, attracted the attention of the New Bern-Craven County Bicentennial Committee. The Foundation agreed to develop a comprehensive *Old Homes Tour* as part of the 1976 celebration year. Concurrently, the Historical Society organized an antiques show at the Sudan Temple. The homes tour, held in May, was declared a great success, with 1,319 tickets sold and a net profit of approximately \$7500.

Throughout this period, directors made numerous contacts with elected officials and city boards to encourage the development of a comprehensive plan for the downtown historic district. While there was pushback from some individuals, support was increasing for the proposed historic district and preventing the demolition of houses. One particularly successful effort was made in response to Craven County's plans to demolish a house located at 310 New Street to provide a parking lot for the adjacent courthouse building. A letter writing campaign to county commissioners and other

officials began, urging that an alternative site be found for parking and that the New Street house be sold for private use. With additional support for the concept from the state's historic preservation staff, the county eventually sold the house at public auction for an adaptive reuse.

Neighborhood Preservation

In the fall of 1976, the Foundation's board of directors took a bold move in the direction of neighborhood preservation. Having learned of the availability of six contiguous houses in the 800 block of Pollock St. known as the Odum property, they voted to purchase the entire parcel for \$60,000. Two of the structures in the complex were dated from the 19th-century. A \$40,000 loan was secured from a local bank and foundation funds were used for the additional \$20,000. Following the closing in December, the newly formed restoration committee cleaned up the complex and collected rent from occupied apartments. Protective covenants were developed for the two oldest houses and a basic sales plan was created. It took less than a year to sell the small Statham Cottage (circa 1800 – 1810) to a gentleman from Indiana. The larger Bryan Jones House (circa 1830 – 1840) was purchased by a New Bern couple shortly thereafter. During the next two years, as these historic properties were being rehabilitated by their new owners, four additional 18th and 19th-century houses located on the same block of Pollock Street were purchased by preservation minded New Bernians and rehabilitated. The ripple effect created by the initial investment in this long-neglected neighborhood was rapid and dramatic.

In 1979, another ambitious project began with the purchase of two decommissioned school buildings on Hancock and Johnson Streets, referred to collectively as the Academy Square property. The smaller of the two, the Bell building was constructed in 1884 and remained in constant use as classrooms for nearly 90 years. However, maintenance had been inadequate and the building's roof was in very poor condition. The larger Moses Griffin building had served as a high school and was in fair condition. After months of discussion, the Foundation's board of directors decided to replace the deteriorated metal roof and roof trusses on the Bell building, with an estimated cost of \$78,000. When this work was completed, both the Bell and Moses Griffin buildings were prepared for sale. For the first time, the marketplace of Preservation NC and the National Trust was used to advertise the sale. However, the demand for old school buildings in the early 1980s was limited and buyer response to ads was tepid. Fortunately, in the spring of 1981, a local preservation minded couple stepped forward and made an offer to purchase the Bell building. Their plan was to adaptively convert the eight large classrooms into four upscale apartments. The offer was accepted and the sale completed in June. In the meantime, there had been little buyer inter-



Bell Building (New Bern Graded School), 517 Hancock Street, built in 1884.



Coor-Cook House, ca. 1790, enlarged 1850. Office building ca. 1822. Both buildings moved to 521 Hancock Street in 1981.

est in the larger school building. The decision was made to demolish the Moses Griffith building and prepare the land for the future site of two endangered houses.

Relocation as a Means to Save Buildings

During the late 1970s, Craven County government was dealing with growth issues, including the need to expand its jail complex. Serious thought had been given to building a new jail on the empty urban renewal property near the current site of the Craven County Convention Center. In 1980 the county reversed directions and decided to build a new jail complex on property owned by the county on Craven Street behind the courthouse building. However, there was a problem. An important federal period building, the Coor-Cook house (built 1790) and its dependency were located on this land. Yielding to persuasion from the Foundation and the growing public support for historic preservation, the county decided in 1981 to sell the two buildings at public auction, with the stipulation that both be moved with haste. At the ensuing auction, the Foundation was high bidder for both the house and the dependency, paying \$500 apiece. Collins House Moving was contracted to relocate the buildings to the former site of the Moses Griffin school building on Hancock Street.

How to Move a House

Moving an historic house can be complicated but interesting; the Coor-Cook move was both. To roll the 2 ½ story L-shaped house from its original lot and down a narrow street, the decision was made to cut the house into two parts. Using chain saws, a vertical cut was made to separate the larger, oldest portion of the house from its 1850 L-section. The two sections were then placed on steel beams with attached wheels, and a tow truck pulled the assembly several blocks to its new location. When on site, a subcommittee of the board met with the tow truck driver to provide instructions for final placement of both buildings on the lot.

Another interesting project undertaken during this time was an emergency salvage of the oldest brick building in the

city. The Haslen Dependency (circa 1760-1770) located at the corner of Pollock and East Front streets, had been slated for demolition in late 1980. With only four brick outer walls of the building remaining, and only weeks to act, the board struggled to decide if this historic property could be saved. With the support and consent of the New Bern Historical Society, the outer walls of the Haslen building were moved to a site behind the Society's Attmore-Oliver house. A legal agreement provided the Foundation with a long-term lease at the new location. Funds were then raised and during the next five years the building was reconstructed. When completed, the Haslen Dependency became the office of the Historic New Bern Foundation and has served in this capacity for nearly 40 years.

Another Descendant of New Bern Historical Society

As previously noted, during the late 1970s Foundation board members contacted elected officials, business leaders, and others frequently to emphasize the need for an ordinance and mechanisms that would prevent the loss of historic properties in the city. Over time, preservation concepts were gradually being accepted, and by 1980, the growing



Haslen Dependency, ca. 1760-1770, 513 Broad Street, located behind the Attmore-Oliver House. Moved to this site and reconstructed 1980-1986.

revitalization within the downtown area convinced the New Bern Board of Aldermen that the city needed to participate. Early that year, April 22, 1980, the aldermen approved the formation of the New Bern Historic Preservation Commission, aka HPC. By January 1981, the New Bern Downtown Historic District was established by a city ordinance. During the following year, the newly appointed commission developed guidelines; inventoried all properties in the downtown district; prepared a format to conduct public meetings; and became fully operational. With a functioning historic preservation commission, a mechanism to halt inappropriate alterations and demolitions of historic buildings for up to 180 days was in place. That key provision allows time for important preservation solutions to be found.

Partnerships for Success

The *Spring Historic Homes Tour* continued to be a primary fundraiser for the organization and was initially scheduled every other year. In 1980 the Foundation joined with the Historical Society to co-sponsor the tour, with proceeds split evenly between the organizations. Opting for a large event, the 1982 tour included 24 historic homes, two 19th century school buildings, St. John's Masonic Lodge, Tryon Palace Gardens, and eight historic churches. This tour was well publicized and generated record attendance.

Moving forward with a recently revised name, New Bern Preservation Foundation, a full-time director was employed. The Foundation was now in a position to handle additional historic properties. In the spring 1983 newsletter, the "For Sale" inventory appeared as follows:

- Kafer Houses: 514 Metcalf Street – \$18,000
 - 516 Metcalf Street – \$22,000
 - 518 Metcalf Street – \$20,000
 - 520 Metcalf Street – \$20,000
- Simpson-Duffy House: 219 Pollock St. \$60,000
- Games House: 512 Johnson St. \$28,500
- Marshall-Lane House: 516 Johnson St. \$57,000.

The latter three houses, Simpson-Duffy, Games, and Marshall-Lane, sold in 1983. Not so, however, with the four Kafer Houses which were purchased as a package. They were put in temporary suspension as the Foundation worked through subdivision issues with the city. After a few months, the newsletter reported that the city's public works department gave the final nod for the Kafer houses to be sold individually. An offer to purchase one of these, 514 Metcalf Street, followed within weeks.

In order to invest more time in the expanding list of historic properties for sale, the executive director recruited members to assist with various office functions. A regular newsletter was published. The office was open 5 days weekly, with volunteers providing support when the director needed to show a property to a prospective buyer or to attend meet-

ings. Educational programs and workshops were offered, some primarily for members and others co-sponsored with local organizations or with the North Carolina Division of Archives and History.

In 1984, the Historical Society provided space in the Attmore-Oliver House for the Foundation office and new director, Susan Moffat-Thomas. The new director's agenda included the marketing of five houses owned by the Foundation and increasing member and volunteer participation in the organizational activities. To inform members about new and continuing activities, a more comprehensive newsletter was published monthly, complete with preservation news from the local and state level. One interesting article in the February 1984 newsletter reported that at that time, more than 20 historic structures had been revolved by the Foundation, with a rehabilitated value of \$2.7 million.

A building, referred to as the Reading Room for the First Church of Christ, Scientist, was considered a significant acquisition during 1984. Located at 408 Middle Street, the purchase agreement specified that the building had to be moved, as the church had other plans for the lot. With interesting Greek Revival and Victorian architectural features, and original stenciling on ceilings of primary rooms, this two-story house (circa 1850) was relocated to a vacant lot owned by the Foundation at 517 Johnson Street. The house was oriented with its 5-bay front facing the street and, after foundation work was completed, was offered for sale as a single-family residence for \$66,000.

As part of National Preservation Week 1984, a regional workshop entitled *Reviving Your Historic Neighborhood* was cosponsored by the Foundation and the Historic Preservation Foundation of North Carolina. Representatives from ten preservation groups in eastern North Carolina made presentations on rehabilitation and adaptive reuse projects in their respective communities. The Bank of the Arts and the former Federal Alley Tavern (now Morgan's), two of New Bern's repurposed historic buildings, served as meeting sites for this well attended workshop. The Foundation continued to promote Preservation Week, held annually in May, by sponsoring special events, activities, and tours of historic homes. For example, in 1985 the organization joined with Swiss Bear Downtown Development Corporation and the Chamber of Commerce to hold several events including tours of four historic houses in various stages of rehabilitation, two new bed and breakfast inns, and the Firemen's Museum. All activities and events were designed to educate and promote public awareness of historic preservation and its economic impact on the city.

Two historic houses located adjacent to Tabernacle Baptist Church on Broad Street were threatened with demolition as part of the church's building expansion in October 1984. Discussion with church leaders was initiated regarding preservation of a small house on Broad Street (circa 1885) and a larger property, the Hardy Whitford House (circa 1895) located at 413 Metcalf Street. With guidance from the Historic District Commission, a plan was developed to save

both houses. The Foundation would acquire a vacant lot on New Street and move the smaller Broad Street house to that site. The Hardy Whitford House would not be moved. Rather, the Foundation would purchase that house and subdivide the lot, with the back portion being transferred to the church for parking. In December 1984, the smaller house was moved to the vacant lot at 622 New Street. It was then stabilized, priced at \$22,000, and sold during the spring of 1985. The Whitfield House, which remained on its original site, was priced at \$34,500 and sold in 1985 also.

In early 1986, the Historical Society not only shared space with the Foundation, it shared leadership for six months. A single executive director worked half-time for each organization. When the Halsen building restoration was complete in late spring, it became the new permanent headquarters for the Foundation. Each organization then hired a full-time director. Barbara Howlett, new director of the Preservation Foundation, served in that capacity for the next 19 years.

Partnering with Kellenberger Historical Foundation

One of the challenges for historic preservation in New Bern during the 1980s involved several properties that had been converted into multiple apartments. While built for single family living, these historic houses had been seriously altered so that they contained 3, 4, 5, and in one case 7 living units. Further, these buildings had received insufficient upkeep and management by their respective landlords, and were viewed as blighted buildings, a detriment to their neighborhoods. For preservation to advance in the downtown historic district, an upgrade of these properties was needed. Seeking a workable solution, the Kellenberger Historical Foundation was approached to partner in the creation of a special revolving fund for the acquisition of problematic houses. After minor repairs and general clean-up, these houses would be sold with protective covenants, to be rehabilitated and occupied as single-family residences.

By May 1986, the Kellenberger Foundation had agreed to participate and to provide a no-interest loan of \$200,000 for the purpose of acquiring up to 12 "...undesirably used homes..." located in the Downtown Historic District. The working agreement further specified that the Preservation Foundation would handle the negotiation, purchase, repairs (if necessary), and marketing of the properties, with the goal of selling each for an amount equal to or greater than the purchase price. When the process was completed, the money borrowed from the Kellenberger Foundation would be repaid.

To begin this project, the acquisition and covenants committee negotiated the purchase of the David Congdon House at 706 Craven Street (circa 1908). Early in its history, the original nine-room house had been enlarged and converted into apartments. Some years later, the house served as a hospital and later was converted back into seven apartments with a total of twenty-seven rooms. Before putting the Congdon House on the market, the rear addition was removed, returning the building to its original nine-room design. Roof issues



David Congdon House, 706 Craven Street, built in 1908.

were addressed, along with damaged sills, rotten porches, and broken windows. The 200-foot-deep lot, extending from Craven Street to East Front Street, was divided in half to provide the Preservation Foundation with a vacant lot for the future placement of an endangered house. Priced at \$75,000, later reduced to \$59,000, the Congdon House took more than three years to sell, at a net loss. The next two houses purchased – 606 Hancock Street and 227 East Front Street – were smaller structures that sold within a year and the loans from the Kellenberger Foundation were repaid.

At the urging of New Bern's mayor, the Foundation's acquisition committee turned its attention to two late nineteenth-century houses on Bern Street. One house had been converted into three apartments, the other into five units. In the mayor's words, "...numerous problems have occurred at these houses, with repeated complaints by neighbors. The New Bern Police Department has been called many times to investigate fights, vulgar outbursts, violent behavior, attempted murder, and two fires... during the past two years." The owner of these properties, who had refused earlier offers to purchase, hinted that he might now be willing to sell. His price was steep – \$86,000 for the pair. The board decided in March 1987 to make another offer to purchase, but again, the owner refused to negotiate or sell. Thirteen more years elapsed before these two houses were acquired at a public foreclosure auction in October 2000. Remarkably, both houses sold to interested preservationists in less than three months.

The partnership with the Kellenberger Foundation was impressive in that it allowed the Preservation Foundation to deal with difficult properties much more efficiently than would have been possible with traditional marketplace funding. Three more examples of complicated properties handled during these years using loans provided by the Kellenberger Foundation included:

410 Johnson Street, the Gabriel Manigault Rains House (circa 1810). This property was donated for relocation due

to expansion of the then New Bern Craven County Public Library. The house was relocated to 605 E. Front Street, and required eighteen months to relocate, stabilize, and secure.

617 E. Front Street, the Abbott-Rowe House (circa 1885). When acquired, this property had been divided into five apartments. After extensive clean-up, the house was resold as a single-family residence. The sale produced a small profit; but there was no accounting for the many hours spent on this project by staff and volunteers.

606 Johnson Street, St. Cyprian's Rectory (circa 1890). To prevent demolition of this building, the rectory was accepted from the church. It was moved several blocks to the vacant lot at 707 East Front Street. The cost to move the building and place it on a new foundation was \$15,000.

In addition to dealing with historic properties, the Preservation Foundation was involved with several worthwhile activities and fundraisers in the late 1980s:

- Annual Historic Homes Tour
- River Homes Tour (held every other year)
- Antique Show and Sale
- Catered Meals in Historic Houses
- Special events for members (e.g., an annual dinner-dance)
- Assisting with the architectural surveys of Ghent, Riverside, and DeGraffenried neighborhoods
- Supporting the development of an Urban Design Plan for the City.

More innovative partnerships

Long Wharf Initiative

In 1992, an interesting project evolved that included the Preservation Foundation, Habitat for Humanity, and the City of New Bern's housing task force. At the city's encouraging, the Foundation agreed to undertake a rehabilitation in the Long Wharf neighborhood, located between Pollock Street and the Trent River west of the Downtown Historic District. It was believed that a successful preservation project there would help jump-start a much-needed revitalization.

A small twentieth-century house in the 1000 block of Church Street was to be purchased by the Foundation. Habitat would then rehabilitate the property based on covenants developed by the Foundation, find a family to purchase it, and hold the mortgage. Ultimately, the purchase price of the house would be repaid to the Preservation Foundation. Rehabilitation of this property was completed in late 1992, and after Habitat selected the new owners the house was dedicated in May 1993. Two additional historic houses in Long Wharf were rehabilitated using this partnership model – 1020 Church Street and 312 Jones Street. For its involvement in this creative project, the Foundation received the Stedman Award and a check for \$5,000 from Preservation North Carolina.

Reminded of its successful work on Pollock Street in the 1970s and the Academy Green in the 1980s, the Foundation began seeking preservation opportunities along Queen Street, the northern boundary of the Downtown Historic District. The first came in 1993 when the Salvation Army of New Bern donated a house at 812 N. Craven Street to provide more space for its off-street parking. The Foundation accepted the gift and moved the house to a vacant lot owned by the Foundation located nearby at 406 Queen Street.

Subsequently in the fall of 1993, three houses that had been on the Foundation's radar for years became available at a reasonable price: 533 Queen Street, 608 Metcalf Street, and 610 Metcalf Street. The three houses had been moved during the 1920s and crowded onto a single lot at the intersection of Queen and Middle Streets. Used as multi-family rentals, these properties had become the victims of landlord neglect and were in very poor condition. The residents in the immediate neighborhood were thrilled to learn these properties had been acquired by the Foundation. But in their deteriorated condition, it took nearly four years to find buyers. In 1997, two local preservationists purchased all three houses and began the rehabilitation process in earnest.

NCDOT

During the late 1990s, the Preservation Foundation was invited to participate with the North Carolina Department of Transportation on a project to protect a section of Old Brick Road and the circa 1909 concrete bridge across the Caswell Branch in Craven County. Referred to as the Caswell Branch and Old Brick Road Project, the plan was to rehabilitate the road and bridge and adapt them for modern vehicular traffic. When finished they would become a model for preserving the historic appearance of other brick roads. The restoration, which took more than seven years to complete, was coordinated by the Preservation Foundation; funds were provided by the NC Department of Transportation Enhancement Program.

Kellenberger Historical Foundation Partnership Concludes

In 2001, the 15-year partnership between the New Bern Preservation Foundation and the Kellenberger Historical Foundation was concluded. All loans had been repaid and the line of credit was no longer required, because the Foundation had developed a revolving fund and established a modest line of credit with a local bank. Both organizations agreed the partnership had been very successful, primarily by allowing the Foundation to deal directly with complex properties, including the moving of seven historic homes to prevent their demolition.

Entering the Twenty-First Century

The Foundation's property acquisition initiative slowed considerably in the following years, but it did not stop. In 2001, the organization was offered the Hugh Lovick House (circa 1898), a one-story structure on Middle Street adjacent to Centenary United Methodist Church, with the requirement that the structure be moved. The Foundation accepted



Hugh Lovick House, built in 1898 at 410 Middle Street; relocated to 701 East Front Street in 2003. House had to be cut in half to move it down narrow streets.

the challenge to save the house and began the search for a vacant lot. The process was lengthy, but in late winter 2003 a suitable lot was purchased and the Lovick house was prepared for the move. Given the width of the structure, it had to be cut in half vertically to get it down a narrow street. The two sections were transported to 701 E. Front Street where they were reattached and placed on a new foundation. Several months later, the property was sold and the rehabilitation process had begun.

Four more years passed from 2003 before the Foundation undertook another house project. The focus was a distressed cottage the owner wanted to demolish. Located at 314 Avenue B in the Riverside Historic District, the Sadler House (circa 1925) was a one-story bungalow built as rental property, now in need of a complete rehabilitation. The Foundation purchased the house, cleaned it up, made repairs, and placed it on the market. It sold within a few months, but with a net loss of approximately \$3000 for the Foundation.

As with most organizations, leadership changes occur. In 2005 the personnel committee recommended the position of executive director be changed to that of office coordinator, with a reduction in work hours. A husband-and-wife team assumed the leadership role for several years. During their tenure the Foundation's newsletter took on a more professional look while providing current information about all aspects of the organization, and in conjunction with the membership committee, individual and business memberships increased to 330.

Outreach and Education

During the fall of 2007, the education committee learned of a project that sixth-grade students at Epiphany School of Global Studies wished to undertake – the rehabilitation of a small family cemetery located on Queen Street. Fordham Cemetery had deteriorated from neglect – brick walls were leaning or toppled, headstones had fallen, and weeds and vines nearly obscured the property. With an estimated cost of \$33,000 to reestablish the cemetery, the Foundation

agreed to assist the students by providing grant writers and soliciting donations from members and local businesses. Several grants were written and three were awarded. With individual contributions, favorable rates charged by contractors involved with the restoration, and much labor provided by the students, the project was completed in four years at half of the estimated cost. And the young students learned a great deal about hands-on preservation. A rededication of the Fordham Cemetery was organized by the Epiphany students in 2011.

Mamie Sadler Store

One of the more difficult challenges was the campaign to save the Mamie Sadler store located at 1118 North Carven Street. Built in 1917, it was a thriving retail grocery for more than four decades and an anchor for the Riverside historic district. Therefore, it was purchased in 2010 with the goal of resale in spite of the serious disrepair. Repairs included several safety concerns identified by the City's chief building inspector.

Interim repairs were made and the store was listed for \$47,000. As time passed, the asking price was reduced and by 2013 the price had been set at \$1.00. Following a flurry of interest, additional inspections confirmed the structure was more compromised than first thought and a complete rehabilitation would be considerably more costly than original estimates.

Nevertheless, the preservation spirit was not dampened and the Historic Riverside Neighborhood Association partnered with the Foundation for a fundraising campaign in 2014. Funds fell short of the need (\$90,000) and time was not on their side. The building continued to deteriorate and the chief building inspector activated the demolition order. Sadly, the store was demolished in 2016, one year shy of its centennial year.



**Union Station, 416 Queen Street,
built in 1910.**

More than Houses

Union Station Depot Rehabilitation

The largest project undertaken by the Preservation Foundation involved the rehabilitation of Union Station, located at 416 Queen Street. Built in 1910 to handle the growing passenger train and freight service into and through New Bern, this large two-story brick depot was a focal point in the city during the early twentieth century. New Bern continued to be a regional rail center until the 1950s, when passenger trains were discontinued. Union Station was then used as offices for the owner, North Carolina Railroad Company (NCR), and a lumber company. By 1987, the building sat empty. With limited maintenance, occasional vandalism, and serious roof issues, the next two decades put the building in a predictable “demolition by neglect” condition.

As early as 1989, the Foundation and others were exploring ways to preserve Union Station, but the situation was complex and discussions went nowhere year after year. In 2012 all involved parties – the City of New Bern, NCR, Norfolk-Southern Railroad (lessee of the train tracks), and the Foundation came together to find a solution for the derelict property. An agreement was reached whereby the city would lease the building from the NCR for a specified time and the Foundation would raise funds for the complete restoration of the 7,500 square foot depot, estimated at \$1.4 to \$2 million.

Two substantial grants were obtained by the Foundation for replacement of the depot’s entire roof system at a cost of approximately a half-million dollars. Other exterior elements – windows, doors, trim – were repaired when possible, replaced when necessary, and painted a rich green, the depot’s original color. Interior restoration began on the first floor of the building in 2018. Later additions (e.g. walls, ceilings) were removed and original doors, windows, and wainscoting were repaired or reconstructed. When that phase of restoration was completed in the fall of 2019, work



**King Solomon Lodge, 710 Howard Street, built in 1870,
moved to this site ca. 1920.**

was halted. At this point over \$700,000 has been raised and spent on the depot project and the building is stable; however, considerable work is needed to make it functional. The resumption of fundraising and restoration work remains on hold, awaiting a satisfactory lease agreement between the NCR and the city. A timeframe for the eventual use of this important structure remains uncertain.

King Solomon Lodge Rehabilitation Project

In May 2019, representatives of the Foundation met with the leadership of King Solomon Lodge Number One to discuss strategies for rehabilitation of the Lodge building. Constructed in 1870 and moved to its current location on Howard Street in 1920, King Solomon Lodge is the oldest African American Masonic lodge building in North Carolina. In continuous use for nearly 150 years, an interior fire in 2005 and insufficient funds to make necessary repairs and provide ongoing maintenance had placed the building in a dangerous “at risk” status. Early projections for funding exterior and interior rehabilitation exceeded \$500,000.

By mid-summer, the boards of both organizations agreed to take the challenge of a full rehabilitation by forming a working partnership. A joint project team was formed consisting of members of the Lodge and the Foundation, along with architects and grant writers. Since 2019, 21 grants plus individual and organizational donations have been awarded for this project, with a total approaching \$480,000. Rehabilitation work on the exterior has been completed; interior work is expected to be finished during 2024.

Saving the Tisdale House

Built circa 1905 on what was then farmland, over the years the Tisdale House became surrounded by commercial properties and was sited on the proposed location of a new city recreation center. The Foundation was contacted about moving and saving the house. Discussions between the city and the Foundation were ongoing for months. The Foundation board agreed to work with the city to find an individual who wanted the house and who had the means

to move it to a suitable lot. A notice was placed on the city’s website about the “free” Tisdale House, with additional expenses being the responsibility of the new owner – the actual moving cost, lot purchases, and legal fees.

Of the sixty plus applications received and reviewed by the Foundation (using selection criteria set by the city), only two individuals were judged to have the means of handling a complicated house move and by December 2022 only one applicant remained. The Tisdale house and vacant lot on Rhem St. were sold to the final applicant and the new owner successfully moved the house over a two-day period in May 2023. Although this project took over a year to orchestrate and required countless hours by the members of the acquisi-

tions and covenants committee, another historic house was saved.

The Mission Continues

Going forward the New Bern Preservation Foundation, a significant off-shoot of the New Bern Historical Society, will be looking for new strategies and neighborhoods in which to fulfill its mission. With progressive leadership, a renewed membership base, and increased community support, the organization could experience success for decades to come in helping to preserve the historical legacy of New Bern’s homes and buildings.

Presidents of The New Bern Preservation Foundation, Inc.

Dr. Francis King	1972-1975
C.B. Beasley	1976
Gerald Colvin	1977-1979
E. Newsom Williams	1980-1981
Mary Bullock	1982
Harold Talton	1983-1985
Robert Stallings	1986-1987
John Thomas	1988-1990
Dr. Francis King	1991-1992
Mary Bullock	1993-1995
Paul Stephens	1996-1998
William Faulkenberry	1999-2001
Paul Stephens	2002-2004
Buzz Mead	2005-2007
Dallas Blackiston	2008-2010
Joe Mansfield	2011-2014
Lynn Hand	2015
John Young	2016
Larry Rosenstrauch	2017-2018
Tim Thompson	2019-2021
Georgiana Bowman Bircher	2022
Richard Parsons	2023

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About the Author: Bernard George: Bernard George, a retired city planner and Eastern NC historian, earned a Political Science degree from North Carolina Central University. He is a native New Bernian and avid historian who traces his Craven County George-family roots back to the early-18th Century.

About the Author: Newsom Williams: Newsom Williams has been past president and chairman of several committees of the New Bern Preservation Foundation for nearly 50 years. Trained as a psychologist, he is also a hands-on preservationist. He has personally restored or rehabilitated 10 historic homes in New Bern and, with a business partner, they have rehabilitated another 12 properties in the downtown historic district. In 2019, Newsom was asked to chair a joint project team to plan, fundraise, and oversee the rehabilitation of New Bern's King Solomon Lodge #1, the oldest African American Masonic Lodge in North Carolina.



NEW BERN BATTLEFIELD PARK PRESERVE, HONOR AND EDUCATE

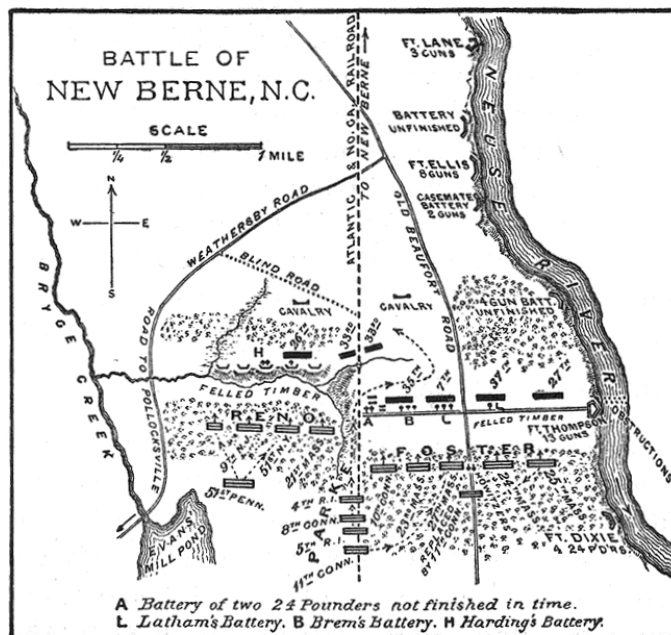
Steve Shaffer

Located five miles outside the city at the entrance to the Taberna residential area, the New Bern Battlefield Park is a reality due to the New Bern Historical Society's dedication and tireless preservation work. Prior to the Society's acquisition of the New Bern Battlefield tract, it was an overgrown, long forgotten 24-acre site where a fierce battle between Union and Confederate forces took place March 13-14, 1862. The battle ended in a major victory for the Union Army-Navy forces and determined New Bern's occupation by Union forces for the duration of the Civil War. This preservation restoration project by the Society is now a major attraction in Craven County and a catalyst for expanding Civil War tourism in Eastern North Carolina.

The history of colonial New Bern, the second oldest city in North Carolina settled in 1710, is better known than Civil War New Bern. This beautiful old town is strategically situated at the confluence of the Neuse and Trent rivers and astride the Atlantic & North Carolina Railroad (A&NCR). The A&NCR was operational in 1858 and ran from coastal Morehead City to a vital railway junction at Goldsboro. Thus, New Bern became a prime target for Union General Ambrose Burnside and his expeditionary forces. The topography of the battleground included undulating hillocks, craggy ravines and deep swamps; but over time would become derelict, wooded acreage and forgotten. Atop the hillocks were the remains of the thirteen redans (earthen V-shaped embankments) extending approximately one mile west of the railroad to Weathersby Road (modern Old Airport Road) that were of no use for businesses or homes. The entire western side of the A&NCR was neglected and would serve only as a wood lot and hog run... the entire area was protected for more than a century by natural growth, and lack of development for many decades. Eventually this area would be acquired and preserved as the New Bern Battlefield Park. For many years in the early 1900's, it was part of the so-called Monroe Howell Tract, a huge tract of land. Weyerhaeuser Real Estate Co. would develop the residential community of Taberna on the land in 1995. It would also be a vital player in the plans to restore the battle site.

In 1962, the Historical Society along with state, county, city, and regional historical commissions organized a Civil War Centennial celebration. This event spawned renewed interest in developing the various battle sites in the area. Richard Iobst, Staff Historian for the Confederate Centennial Commission, offered suggestions for the development of plans to: (1) educate visitors about New Bern's involvement in the Civil War, and (2) preserve the various fortifications extant in the immediate vicinity of the city.

However, the estimated costs of implementing the suggested preservation program arising from this effort far exceeded what could be accomplished realistically. Instead, several



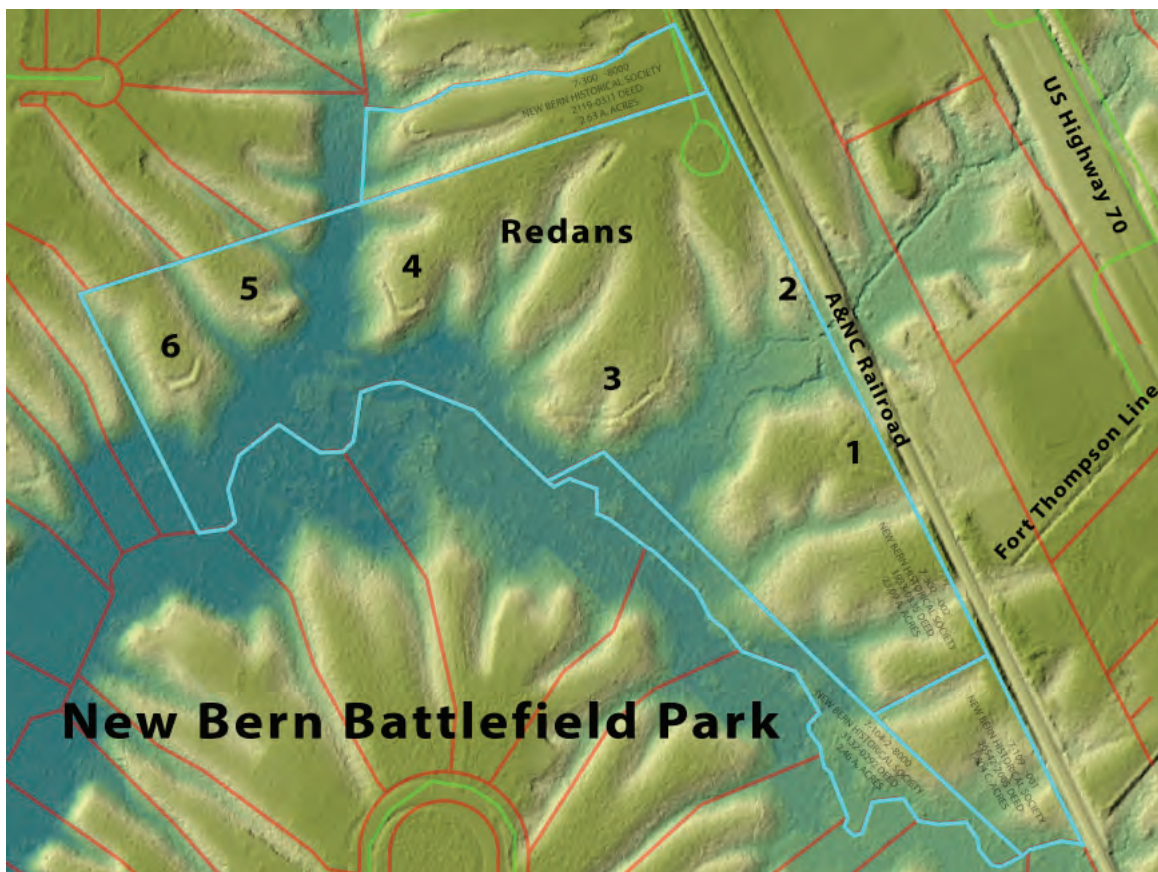
MAP OF THE BATTLE OF NEW BERNE, NORTH CAROLINA,
MARCH 14, 1862.

interpretive signs about stages of the battle were made of die-cast aluminum and installed: (1) in brick on East Front Street opposite the Shrine Temple, (2) on the Craven County Jaycees Fairground five miles south of New Bern near the Fort Thompson defensive line, and (3) on the edge of James City near the Trent River. However, none of the markers are in the original locations due to damage, relocation to storage or disappearance.

Twenty years later, in the early 1980's, the Society cooperated with New Bern city government officials and leaders in the community to reverse the economically impoverished downtown area and the largely abandoned waterfront extending along the shorelines of both the Neuse and the Trent rivers. As an important stakeholder in this effort, the New Bern Historical Society would be focused generally on the Civil War in the county and for the restoration of the battlefield site. Most of the original site of the battle extended from Fort Thompson anchoring the defensive line on the Neuse River and then extending westward some two miles to Brice's Creek. During the 118 years since the battle, many segments of the site had been developed and only small vestiges of rifle pits remained visible from the road.

Preservation Begins in Earnest

Yet in 1989, the Society formed what became known as the Battle of New Bern Park Committee. This was a collaborative effort led by: Jim Sugg, Historical Society; John Barden, Tryon Palace Commission; and Josh Willey, Chairman of the Battle of New Bern Preservation



Elevation Map of the Battlefield with Park Parcel Boundaries in Cyan

Overlay Provided by Robbin Becker, Craven County Mapper

Committee. Joe Mansfield, then vice president of the New Bern Preservation Foundation, Inc., became involved in that project in its infancy. Mr. Mansfield cited a letter from the Secretary of the North Carolina Historical Commission, dated November 20, 1990, in which the Commission had voted to award a Community Heritage Site Matching Grant of \$1620 to the New Bern Historical Society for further planning work for the Battle of New Bern Park.

It was not until 1992/1993 when conversations picked up among members of the Society’s board membership, Weyerhaeuser and area property owners pertaining to preserving the battle site, at least that portion where the battle was lost, approximately twenty-four acres. Weyerhaeuser was the majority holder of this part of the battlefield. In 1992, the Battle of New Bern was listed in a congressional Civil War Sites Advisory Commission survey (CWSAC) as a Priority IV Class B battlefield. The latter designation (Class B) is significant as it states that the battle had a direct, or decisive, influence on its campaign. The Priority IV, however, means that the battlefield is fragmented. Importantly, the vestiges of the battle have been lost to modern development, particularly on the northeast side of the railroad. Much of the original battle site is now gone on the east side of the railroad tracks and along the Neuse River. However, the thirteen sand and sod earthen redans remain after more than 160 years undisturbed by agriculture or developers and naturally protected by a tall mixed foliage forest and thick,

practically impassable undergrowth.

Paul Hawke, a historian for the U.S. National Park Service Regional headquarters in Atlanta, stated in 1992 that the New Bern battlefield had been selected as “... one of 385 Civil War battlefields the Park Service has surveyed during the past eighteen months under the Battlefield Protection Program, an effort by the U.S. Department of the Interior to inventory Civil War sites and determine which ones should be top-priority preservation projects.”

On December 3, 1992, reporter Martha Quillan with the *Raleigh News and Observer* published an article entitled “New Bern gives battle a new look – Where Blue and Gray mustered, group sees potential for tourism.” She articulated a vision for preservation of the battlefield saved from the intrusion and irreparable damage caused by the construction of modern communities and shopping centers with huge parking lots, the storms of Mother Nature, and relic hunters.

In September 1993, the future of the park brightened when several members, to include Jim Sugg and Susan Moffat-Thomas of the Society, seized the initiative and traveled to Wilmington to seek the attention of the National Board for the Preservation of Civil War Sites meeting there at the time. This group, while not on the meeting agenda to speak, did gain permission to present the Society’s plans for preserving the New Bern battlefield. Their detailed briefing was well received. Ed Bearss, a representative of the Civil War Sites

Advisory Commission, and James M. McPherson, a nationally renowned Civil War historian, were in attendance. After the meeting, they traveled to New Bern to visit the site themselves. Their visit gave them an enhanced appreciation for the potential this preserved ground held.

In 1996, archaeological evidence led the Weyerhaeuser Real Estate Company to deed the 24-acre tract to the Civil War Preservation Trust (renamed Civil War Trust in 2011). In 1997, development of a master plan by the Society was begun that formulated a phased approach to the construction of a park. This preliminary plan was necessary to ensure the eventual transfer of the property to the Historical Society.

Mark Mangum, local businessman and reenactor with the 26th North Carolina Infantry Regiment, became chairman of the Battle of New Bern Park Committee in the fall of 1997. Mangum identified the location of the tipping point of the battle where two Medals of Honor were won and where, a future North Carolina Governor, and commander of the famed 26th North Carolina Infantry Regiment served in the closing moments of the battle for New Bern. Around March 1998, Mangum ventured into the area with an old map of the battlefield. Stopping every 200 yards or so to struggle through the underbrush in search of any of the 13 redans, he eventually reached an obstructed view of what later would be called Redan #6. A later foray by Mangum resulted in the discovery of Redan #3. This redan measured some 85 yards in length, and was constructed atop a hillock overlooking Bullens Branch just prior to its conjoining with a swamp extending into it. This redan was notable as it was a major redoubt strongly defended by members of the 26th North Carolina Infantry Regiment.

Later in 1998, Magnum stated he organized a work day committee of some forty friends and associates from the Society to join him in exploring the New Bern battle site. There they worked at clearing the underbrush from Redan #3 and cut a trail to Taberna Way, the main ingress into the Taberna development.

Finally, in January 2000, the Civil War Trust deeded the former Weyerhaeuser 24-acre tract to the Society. Later in 2000, grants from the National Park Service's American Battlefield Protection Program and the Craven County Tourism and Development Authority provided funds to the Society for a survey of the 24-acre parcel. The results of this survey were subsequently submitted for official recognition to the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The goal of this effort was reached when the property of the New Bern battlefield was placed on the National Register of Historic Places on October 19, 2001.

New Bern aldermen in early 2002 approved the Society's application for transportation enhancement money from NCDOT to develop a Civil War park. Twenty percent of the total project cost must be matched by the New Bern Historical Society. The matching funds were made available to the New Bern Historical Society from a bank loan that was to be repaid over time through fundraising efforts.

In 2003, in order to retain fully the integrity of the core 24-acre of the battlefield, the Harold H. Bate Foundation of New Bern contributed funds to the Society for the purchase of the adjacent 2.63 acres from Weyerhaeuser. This additional acreage would provide vehicular access to the entire property. Later in November 2003, Mangum, then chairman of the Society's Battlefield Committee made a presentation at the annual meeting of the 26th North Carolina Reenactment Regiment in Salisbury, NC. His presentation was successful in achieving two important actions. Firstly, gaining public support and funds for the erection of a 11.5-ton block of pink Salisbury granite commemorating the 26th North Carolina Infantry Regiment at Redan #3. Secondly, to employ the landscape architectural design services of Kimley-Horn and Associates in Raleigh.

Coming on board then in 2004, Pat Hart, a landscape architect with Kimley-Horn and Associates and a Civil War enthusiast, developed an initial master plan for the New Bern Battlefield Park. This plan was completed and tentatively approved by the Society in March 2004. Research about the battle continued during the year and was completed later in August 2004. The completed and approved battlefield master plan now represented the vision of the Society, and would provide the necessary and historically accurate foundation for the actual creation of the New Bern Battlefield Park.

In February 2004, a group of more than thirty volunteers ... Armed with axes, chain saws, trimmers, and brush tools ... chopped and heaved to clear a 50-foot access easement adjoining 2.63 acres purchased to put a visitor center in front of the 22-acre battlefield. These volunteers also cleared brush to gain access to several redans.

The Civil War Preservation Trust recognized the historical value of the New Bern Battlefield, and named it to the Trust's list of the top ten most endangered battlefields in the United States. The battlefield was in turn featured on the cover of the Trust's national publication, *Guide to the Most Threatened Civil War sites in the United States*, February 2004.

The initial phase of the restoration and preservation of the Battlefield Park began in 2006 and included constructing an entrance road, building a visitor center, laying a public parking area, creating walking trails with signage throughout and bridges across swampy areas for access to redans. This restoration project at this point in time, including the value of the land, was estimated to be in excess of \$970,000. The Society received a second grant of \$25,000 from the Harold H. Bate Foundation for the battlefield. Other gifts were received in 2006 including a gift in cash and pledges amounting to \$10,400. By the year 2007, some trails had been roughed in, and progress was being made by a very loyal, hardworking volunteer group of Keepers of the Battlefield.

On March 14, 2007, more than 300 participants and guests attended a ceremony at the Park to commemorate the 145th anniversary of the battle and the dedication of the previously



Visitor Center at the New Bern Battlefield Park

funded 11.5-ton monument of polished Salisbury granite at Redan #3. The 26th North Carolina Regimental Brass Band opened the program with a spirited marching tune called a Quickstep. Speakers for the dedication included Colonel L.W. Smith, Jr.; Brigadier General J.H. Step, the founder of the 26th Reenactment Group; Mr. James Edwards, former NC State Senator; Mark Mangum, the Society's New Bern Battlefield Adjutant; Ken McCotter, Society President of the Board of Directors; and Alice Graham Underhill, NC State Representative. The 26th North Carolina Reenactors, together with Company D of the 1st North Carolina Artillery Company, fired period muskets and cannon.

A New Bern Sun Journal article announced the groundbreaking of the Visitor Center at the New Bern Battlefield Park on August 27, 2008. Nelson McDaniel, then the Society president, praised the early efforts of Mark Mangum, Richard Lore, and Harry Goodman; these people, he said, "...really had the vision.... This battlefield and woods were here for over a century and people paid no attention to it...." McDaniel closed his remarks saying that it was "... important to commemorate those who fought here, and to use the site as a place of historical education."

Concurrent with the visitor center groundbreaking, announcements of other projects included: the construction of a utility building at the battlefield to store and protect lawn care equipment donated by Linda Lore; two bridges spanning ravines had been completed, to include a large section of pathways; and the service project of a prospective Eagle Scout. A long-time resident, Joe Rose, donated shrapnel from a Federal cannon ball.

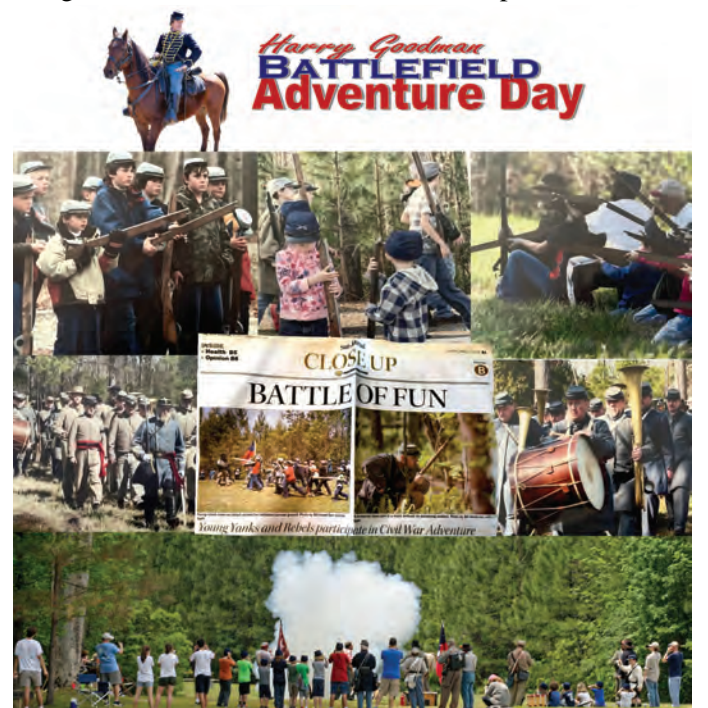
Advancing quickly, the Battlefield Visitor Center was dedicated by Ed Bearss, a nationally recognized Civil War historian, who cut the ribbon on Sunday, January 11, 2009. The proceedings were opened by a Color Guard of Confederate and Union reenactors. Remarks were made by Nelson

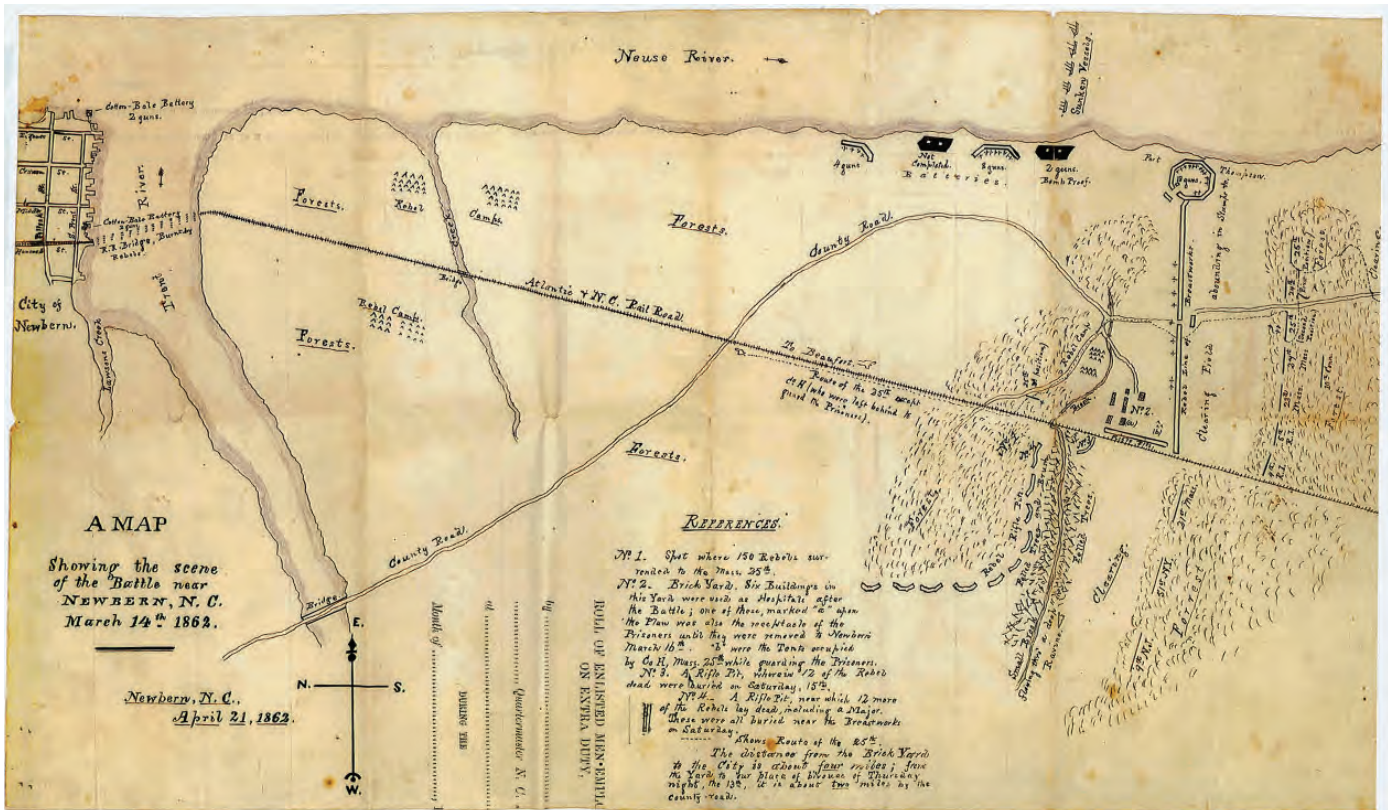
McDaniel, Mark Mangum, Pat Hart, and financial supporters: the Harold H. Bate Foundation, Craven County Tourism Development Authority, and the Golden LEAF Foundation.

Another initiative in August 2008 was a meeting of the Society's Executive Director Lynne Harakal, Horace Mewborn and Mike DuMont with principals of the North Carolina Cultural Resources Agency to establish inter-organizational communication, cooperation, and support of the Battlefield Park. There was a follow-up meeting on September 4, 2009, and a visit to the North Carolina Civil War Tourism Council on September 21, 2009.

In early March 2010, a phone call to the Society's curator, Nancy Richards, was received from Uxbridge, Massachusetts. The caller said he was a descendant of a young soldier stationed in New Bern with the 25th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment. That soldier, Private Henry Holbrook Legg, a clerk at his unit's regimental headquarters, had drawn a fine detailed map of the entire battleground in 1862. The map is now part of the display in the park Visitor Center and is included in information conveyed by park guides. As recorded in the fall 2010 newsletter, the Society received grants from the Harold H. Bate Foundation to provide funds for paving the Battlefield Park driveway and parking lot and from the Gold LEAF Foundation for the construction of the park entryway and bridges.

On March 27, 2010, the Society launched the first Civil War Adventure Day for our youth. This very popular annual event focused on children, ages 6 to 12, accompanied by their parents, for an encampment experience with the reenactors representing several North Carolina Regiments. All children received a kepi or cap, either a Confederate gray or a Union blue, and a wooden rifle made by Park volunteers. All participants received lessons in period military marching, commands, and formations as well as cooking, crafts and games. A mock battle was held on the parade area or at





Map of the Battle drawn by Private Henry Holbrook Legg

one of the redans.

Adventure Day, renamed the Harry Goodman Battlefield Adventure Day in 2016, is indicative of the Society's strong efforts to involve the area youth in the rich history of the area. Other examples include: the students from the Epiphany School of Global Studies, who toured the battlefield in connection with the school's Odyssey Days program; Guide Rolf Maris' demonstration of a period drum and its use by the unit commander to signal unit movements; assembly of several wooden picnic tables designed by Guide Pete Meyers; Eagle Scout service projects focused on the construction of foot bridges spanning shallow ravines and heavy timber to form steps leading to and from the bridge in hilly terrain; and local Girl Scouts earned merit badges related to period history.

The Society also has an outreach effort to our local servicemen and women. For example, groups of Marines from Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point are regularly present at the Battlefield Park to clear debris off the trails especially after a substantial storm. Their excavation of water drain channels along the Park's entry road successfully eliminated overflow of the roadway during and after heavy rains. While these young Marines working are helping to restore the park after a storm, they are also learning about local history.

The year 2012 brought the commemoration of the 150th anniversary of the Battle for New Bern. A sesquicentennial symposium sponsored by the Society and Tryon Palace was titled *Thunder in the East: The Civil War in Eastern North Carolina*. A memorial service for all who perished was held

at the battlefield the following day.

A non-firing replica of a Model 1841 6-pounder field cannon was donated by Linda Lore for prominent display at the Battlefield Park Visitor Center in memory of her husband Dr. Richard Lore. The Rotary Club of New Bern along with Linda Lore donated the three flag poles at the entrance to the park. A replica rifle pit at the west end of the field adjacent to the Visitor Center was built to serve as an instructional tool for reenactments. In 2014, the Visitor Center was rededicated and renamed the Richard K. and Linda C. Lore Visitor Center to honor these two marvelous benefactors whose generousities were so numerous over the years. On this occasion, Society President Nelson McDaniel announced that the 2013-2014 Investment in History campaign to raise funds and grant money exceeded the goal by approximately 20 percent — raising more than \$450,000.

Continuing work in the Battlefield Park led to several new projects. The Investment in History fundraising initiative was sufficient to fund the History Walk and the Gateway Plaza. The primary focus was on the design and construction of a History Walk in 2013. This narrated walk leads the visitor through the Park past the thirty-six interpretive panels that describe the actions and movements of the belligerents during the battle. The History Walk was completed in the fall of 2015. The Plaza, the starting point for both guided and unguided tours, leads the visitor from the parking lot at the Visitor Center to a unique 20-foot diameter ground map of the entire battle area that was constructed by a North Carolina firm, Classic Concrete Designs. A detailed trifold brochure setting forth the significant actions of the

belligerents throughout the battle, remains available and free.

The next major project was the construction of a bridge fully funded by the Golden LEAF Foundation. This bridge extends approximately 100 feet from a point where the Redan #4 ended, just above the swamp, to two hillocks where Redans #5 and #6 were found. Shorter walking bridges were constructed by Eagle Scouts to afford visitors the ability to gain greater access. Trader Construction owned by society board member, Carl Huddle, provided labor and materials to build the Park's longest bridge in 2019. This bridge provides a path to Redan #1 that previously had been inaccessible because of the swamp. Scouts and volunteers from Epiphany School cleared trails, constructed steps on hilly terrain, and planted shrubs.

Travelers at our regional airport are introduced to the Historical Society via a display of a collection of unique historical objects having relevance to the Battle for New Bern. One specific item in the display collection was a large model of a surf boat which was an exact replica of that vessel originally built to land Federal troops of the Burnside Expedition in North Carolina in 1862. This model was hand-crafted by John Klecker using an 1845 plane-view drawing of the boat.

In the fall of 2016, a parcel of land, commonly known as the Stevens property, was purchased by the Society. This acquisition completed an area in the Park on which the pivotal actions of the battle occurred on March 14, 1862. This piece of land overlooked the terminus of the Fort Thompson Line where the tide of battle finally turned. This property was acquired through the generosity of Linda Lore.

In 2018, Preservation North Carolina selected New Bern Battlefield Park to receive the Gertrude S. Carraway Award of Merit, recognizing the Historical Society's extraordinary leadership and commitment to historic preservation.

About the Author: Steve Shaffer retired as a Lt. Colonel (Foreign Area Officer, China) from the U.S. Air Force in 1981; the Defense Intelligence Agency, and then from the firm Booz, Allen, Hamilton. He holds a Bachelor of Arts from Franklin & Marshall College and Masters of Arts in Oriental Studies (China) from the University of Arizona. He is the author of the book, "The Order Book of Brigadier General Lawrence O'Bryan Branch, Confederate Army."

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Oral Histories, interviews conducted by Claudia Houston. "Sun Journal," newspaper, New Bern, NC.

"News & Observer," Raleigh, NC.

Map depicting four deeded parcels, New Bern Battlefield Park, Robin Becker, NC State Certified Property Mapper and Louis J. Valenti, GIS Manager, Craven County Mapping Office, New Bern, NC.

"2016 Civil War Trust Annual Awards," prepared for Civil War Trust by New Bern Historical Society, March 2016.

Damage caused by Hurricane Florence in the latter part of 2018 was extensive and expensive. More than thirty large trees were downed throughout the Park and prevented safe foot traffic. The Visitor Center suffered serious damage to the roof when a large tree fell across it. The largest and newest storage shed was also damaged as was the longest bridge. With the help of an untold number of volunteers and generous donations, all damage had been repaired by the close of 2019.

The 19th century meets the 21st century with the introduction in 2021 of the New Bern Battlefield Park audio tour app. This app, funded by Society member Jon Segal, is available to download on the visitor's smartphone from both the Apple and Google app stores. Katie Shorter wrote the scripts that are narrated by local thespians and descendants of veterans of this battle. The app provides a unique and engaging experience at each of the 36 interpretive panels and also includes battle maps and images. Additionally, a live map feature allows the visitor to locate panels from their current location in the park. The most recent acquisition, is a firing replica of 1841 six-pounder field howitzer purchased by an anonymous donor. When fired, its thunder and smoke truly brings history alive on this battlefield of the past.

Summary

During the past thirty-four years, the restoration and preservation of the battlefield site has been remarkable. Under the leadership of the New Bern Historical Society a neglected, overgrown swampy land of ravines unsuitable for development or agriculture has been transformed into the award-winning New Bern Battlefield Park. Today the Park is part of the Civil War Trails of battlefields. Several thousand students, tourists, Civil War scholars and local residents visit the Park annually. The Society is proud to maintain and manage this site which continues to preserve, honor, and educate.



ONE HUNDRED YEARS! HUNDREDS OF STORIES

Mickey Miller

But how to tell these stories? That was the daunting challenge we faced as we approached our 100th Anniversary. After much deliberation by creative minds, the inspired answer was to create a stunning exhibit free and easily accessible to the public and members! Titled *Through the Looking Glass: A Journey with the Storytellers*, it was displayed at the Duffy Gallery of the North Carolina History Center in cooperation with Tryon Palace. The exhibit was displayed April 23, 2023 – January 7, 2024. This extraordinary production was the New Bern Historical Society’s gift to the community. Planning began nearly two years prior to the unveiling.

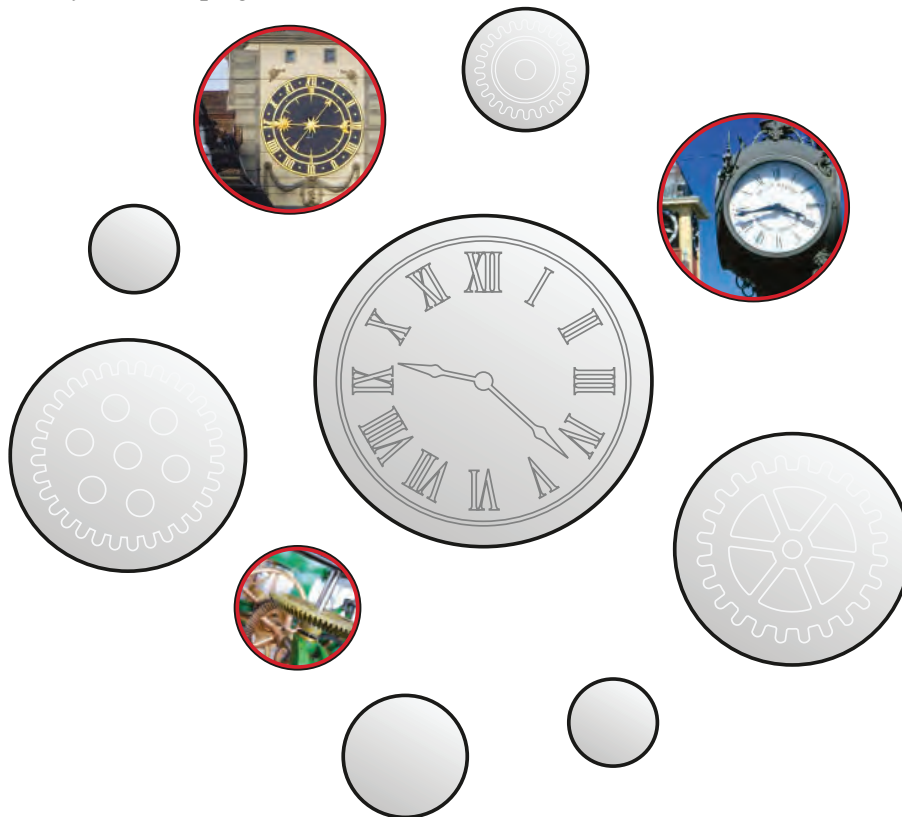
A monumental project requiring strong leadership, fundraising and time became a story in itself. Initial leadership began with a Centennial Committee co-chaired by First Vice President Kathy Morrison, and Curator Jim Hodges. They were joined by former Society presidents Ken McCotter and Nelson McDaniel, Historian Claudia Houston, and Executive Director Mickey Miller. Tryon Palace leadership graciously offered to provide the North Carolina History Center’s Duffy Gallery for the display.

A fundraising campaign titled “Investment in History-100” was launched in July 2022 with a goal of raising \$100,000 to cover anniversary expenses. The original planning committee was supplemented by Board President Joe Hunt, Treasurer Jim Morrison, and Lynne Harakal, former executive director of the Society. The campaign never made it

past the silent phase, with more than \$120,000 pledged in less than six months by a small group of donors. Historical Society board members alone contributed more than one-third of that total.

With leadership and funds in place, the Raleigh-area Design Dimension professional design firm team was hired, bringing an impressive vision and vitality to the mix. Guided by the mission statement “to recognize the past, celebrate the present, and inspire the future,” the exhibit featured the rich and diverse stories the Historical Society has preserved for the past hundred years. Of note were the contributions of local Black residents, both free and enslaved. Their stories, which are especially rich for having been mostly unshared or even suppressed, were woven through every chapter of New Bern’s history, and highlighted in the exhibit.

The challenge for Design Dimensions was to translate the stories into three dimensions and to create something dynamic, interactive, and unusual. The wall-to-wall explosion of color and movement more than succeeded. Cleverly based on the layout of a clock, the design paid homage to the Historical Society’s logo, the historic clocks found throughout downtown New Bern, and the famous clock tower in our mother city of Bern, Switzerland. The circular layout reminds us history and time are circuitous. Amplifying the clock and mirror motifs were the playful addition of gears and mirrored surfaces throughout the design.



Major sections of the display included:

- 100 Years of Leadership – tracing New Bern Historical Society’s founding and leadership
- Changing Times Around the Corner – highlighting our town in the mid-20th century
- Hallowed Ground – the pivotal 1862 Battle of New Bern and development of New Bern Battlefield Park
- Bringing History to Life – New Bern Historical Society key programs throughout the years
- Crossroads and Connections – the importance of rivers, railroads, and transportation routes to New Bern’s development
- Standouts! – highlighting the talents, skills, abilities, and gifts of New Bernians
- New Bern Then and Now – illustrating some major changes in our town’s landscape
- Kaleidoscope – telling the stories of some of New Bern’s colorful and outstanding personalities, from serious to fun-loving
- Bern Old & New – celebrating our town’s European roots, a source of pride and stability
- Courage, Strength, and Survival – through 300+ years of floods, fires, wars, and epidemics – We Are Survivors!

Special highlights included Gertrude Carraway’s “Famous Firsts,” a map wall on which was projected nine alternating maps of historic New Bern, and a variety of video programs on screen. Artifacts, some never before seen in public, were on display to illustrate the stories. Some of the more unusual items on display were a business ledger recording an eyewitness account of Spaight/Stanly duel; a baseball autographed by sluggers Babe Ruth and Joe DiMaggio on their hunting trips to New Bern; and exquisite silver pieces crafted by 18th century New Bern silversmiths.

The “ahh-inspiring” centerpiece of the exhibit was a remarkable ceiling-to-floor mobile entitled “Drop Me a Line.” Over twenty feet in diameter, it consisted of a grace-

ful spiral from which cascaded hundreds of enlarged vintage postcards depicting scenes across New Bern. Visitors delighted in walking through the structure, touching and spinning the postcards to view both the artwork on the front and the messages on the back.

As the Historical Society’s year-long celebration ends, we reflect on the past 100 years of service with a heart-felt sense of pride that we have accomplished the mission set forth by our founders. As we enter our second century, the men and women of the New Bern Historical Society are poised, ready, and confident to continue that mission to safeguard New Bern’s fascinating history and inspire our future generations with our stories of the past.

About the Author – Mickey Miller is a retired attorney and Army colonel who spent most of her service in the Army JAG Corps. Since arriving in New Bern in 2011, she has been the program manager for the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative revitalization program for New Bern’s greater Five Points community, active with the Breakfast Rotary Club and Master Gardener Volunteer Association, volunteered with the Historic Downtown Residents’ Association, and served as a commissioner on New Bern’s Historic Preservation Commission. Since 2016, she has devoted her time, talents, and leadership as the Executive Director of the New Bern Historical Society.



through the looking glass

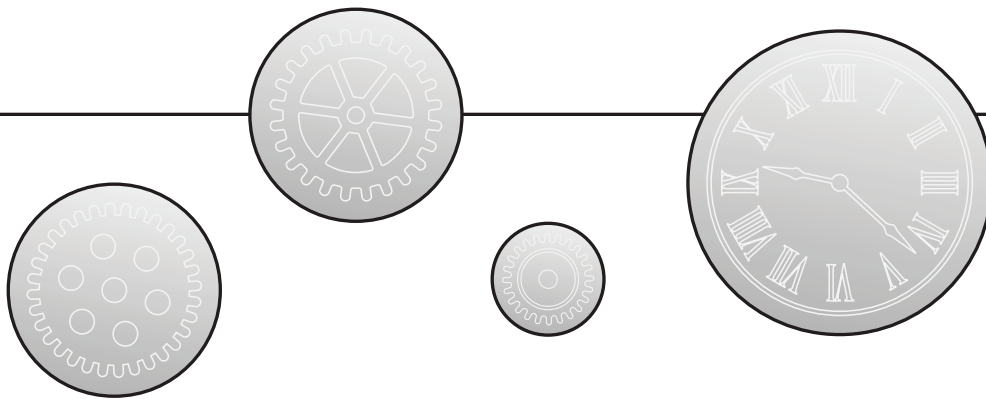
A JOURNEY WITH THE STORYTELLERS

100 YEARS
CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION



For 100 years the New Bern Historical Society has told the stories. New Bern, founded in 1710 by an expedition led by Christophe de Graffenried, took the name of its mother city in Switzerland, though its habitation by indigenous people and European settlers predates that founding. People of African ancestry became quite significant in number in the 18th and 19th centuries.

The stories we tell are rich and diverse. This exhibit celebrates some of those stories, as well as the fascinating people who have loved and told them. While this exhibit can bring only a few of them to life, it does take us through the looking glass into the minds and spirits of some of our most interesting storytellers.



100 years of leadership

NEW BERN HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESIDENTS

1. Hon. Romulus Armistead Nunn (1923-1924)
2. Mrs. John Guion Dunn (1925)
3. Mrs. Richard Nixon Duffy (1952)
4. Charles L. Abernathy (1952)
5. Prof. H.B. Smith (1952)
6. John R. Taylor (1953-1965)
7. Junius Davis, MD (1966-1972)
8. Charles T. Barker DDS (1973-1975)
9. Joe Freemon (1976)
10. Robert L. Stallings, Jr. (1977-1981)
11. Raymond Houghton, MD (1982)
12. Newsom Williams, PhD (1983-1987)
13. Hon. Josh Willey, MD (1988-1992)
14. Simeon Adams, MD (1992)
15. Jim Sugg, JD (1993-1999)
16. Hon. C.K. McCotter, Jr. (2000-2007)
17. Nelson McDaniel (2008-2016)
18. Joseph M. Hunt, III, PhD (2017- Present)

In 1910, New Bern celebrated its Bicentennial year. Here as well as across the nation there was considerable interest and pride as to who we were and where we came from. In 1923 a group of like-minded individuals came together to start the New Bern Historical Society and join the nationwide efforts to recall and preserve the past. This is the story of the guardians of our past.

World War I had ended, the Spanish Flu epidemic had passed, and the 1920's were booming...



Romulus Armistead Nunn (1876-1966)
Born in Jones County, Judge Nunn was a lawyer, judge, state legislator, and public official who resided in New Bern during the first half of the 20th century. He was the first president of the New Bern Historical Society and regarded as a dedicated and accomplished historian.

Minnette Chapman Duffy (1882-1951)
A Knoxville, Tennessee native, Minnette Chapman Duffy relocated to New Bern in 1907 when she married Dr. Richard Nixon Duffy. She was instrumental in organizing the New Bern Historical Society where the inaugural meeting was held at her Johnson Street home on April 19, 1923. Her passion for New Bern and its history is demonstrated with her involvement and leadership in the New Bern Historical Pageant of 1929 and the restoration efforts of Tryon Palace in the 1930s and 1940s.



changing times around the corner

Mid-Century brought many changes in New Bern. WWII was over, the soldiers came home to new jobs and homes, and businesses. People looked forward to better times, but for the Historical Society they still respected the past. The NBHS purchased the Attmore-Oliver house which became their headquarters and still is. There was great pride in paying/and then burning the mortgage.



Miss Mary Taylor Oliver (1859-1951)

Daughter of Hannah Taylor Attmore Oliver and William Hollister Oliver, Miss Mary, as she is affectionately referred to, never married and was the last of the Attmore-Oliver Family to reside in the 1834 Attmore-Oliver House that was built by Isaac Taylor for her grandparents, George Sitgreaves Attmore and Mary Taylor Attmore. Miss Mary was family proud and her presence is still felt in the house today.



Molly Heath was a beloved first grade teacher in the New Bern school system in the late 19th and early 20th century. She was a friend to Miss Mary Taylor Oliver and a long-term boarder at the Attmore-Oliver House. A devoted member of Christ Episcopal Church, a cedar tree, known as the Molly Heath Tree, was planted on the churchyard to honor her memory.

- 1941 Brought Cherry Point Marine Air Station to the area. Men formerly working in the lumber industry flocked to the base to work.
- Following the war, we were facing different times. Babies were indeed booming, new technologies like television and labor-saving kitchen devices were popular.
- The re-vitalized New Bern Historical Society became historic homeowners.



MEET THE storytellers



John Lawson was a British naturalist who explored in the early eighteenth century and wrote *A New Voyage to Carolina*. He built a cabin next to what is known today as Lawson's Creek. On a voyage to London, Lawson encouraged Swiss Baron DeGraffenreid to establish a colony at the confluence of the rivers here, then helped him to lead the first expedition. He was killed by the natives a year after New Bern's founding.



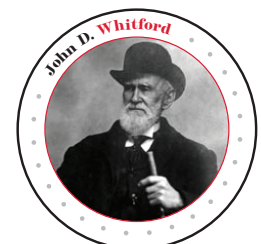
William Gaston was born in New Bern to a Scots Irish surgeon father and a mother who was English. His father was Protestant, but his mother was deeply Catholic and, after his patriot father was killed in the Revolution, Gaston's mother sent him to Catholic Schools in Philadelphia. He later became the first student at the new Jesuit school that became today's Georgetown University. After graduating from the College of New Jersey, today's Princeton, he returned to New Bern, read for the law. He later held a number of important State and Federal offices, despite the religious bar present in the first North Carolina constitution. Most notable, he was a justice of the Supreme Court of North Carolina. His extensive writings and influence across the state and the nation and his devotion to human rights have marked him as one of the most admired and influential individuals in the history of New Bern and North Carolina.



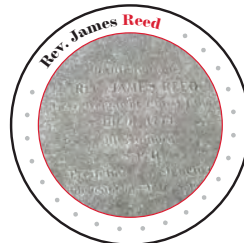
Baron Christophe De Graffenreid organized an expedition of Swiss and Palatines who settled here and founded New Bern in 1710. DeGraffenreid, a member of an important family from Worb and Bern, Switzerland, led the expedition but eventually returned to Switzerland. Both Swiss and American descendants, including collateral descendants, remain attached to the story of New Bern.



John Hawks was an English architect who drew the plans for the construction of Tryon Palace and for a number of other important 18th buildings across North Carolina. He permanently resided in New Bern and his descendants have been great contributors to the history of the town and state. Hawks, who had trained under English architect, Stiff Leadbeater and had a good collection of architectural books, brought a remarkable degree of sophistication to his work and influenced much of the construction here in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.



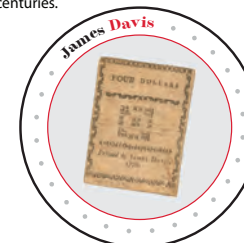
John D. Whitford became the mayor of New Bern at age 21 in 1846. He went on to become President of Atlantic and North Carolina Railroad. Whitford, also a storyteller, wrote a detailed history of New Bern in "The Home Story of a Walking Stick", written, as he said, in "real language". In it he notes the date of laying of the first brick at the Palace.



The Reverend James Reed was the first rector of Christ Church. While the church was established under the Diocese of London in 1715, Reed arrived in midcentury. Among his many noteworthy accomplishments was the establishment of the New Bern Academy. Prior to the American Revolution, many functions now delegated to the state were accomplished by the established church.



William Henry Singleton was born into slavery near New Bern. Historians put his date of birth at approximately 1843. At the age of 4 he was sold to a "slave farm" in Georgia. At the age of seven he ran away and made his way back to New Bern. Although his mother hid him for three years, he was eventually discovered and again enslaved. At age 26, Singleton was serving a Confederate officer. Following the Battle of New Bern on March 14, 1862, he escaped to New Bern where he aided in recruiting and forming the First U.S. Colored Troops, which later was redesignated as the 35th U.S. Colored Troops. Singleton saw action in South Carolina, Florida and Georgia. His book is one of the most compelling slave autobiographies available.



James Davis came to New Bern in 1749 to become the colony of North Carolina's first public printer, a position he held for over 30 years. Davis began North Carolina's first newspaper, *The North Carolina Gazette*. He also printed currency for the colonial government and many books, including the first nonlegal book in the province. Davis went on to hold several important public offices, including Craven County Sheriff, member of the North Carolina Assembly, justice of the peace. In 1755 Benjamin Franklin, the Postmaster-General for the American colonies, appointed Davis as the first postmaster of North Carolina at New Bern.



Stephen Miller, a 19th century New Bern Storyteller, wrote *Recollections of New Bern 50 Years Ago* in 1870. In it he details shops, businesses, theaters, and the daily life of early 19th century New Bern.

Tuscarora

The Tuscarora, native people who had a village at the site of today's New Bern, lived initially in peace with the Europeans. A year later, conflict began, and most of the defeated Tuscarora moved north to New York.



hallowed ground

THE BATTLE

The Battle of New Bern was fought on 13-14 March 1862, as part of the Burnside Expedition. The city of New Bern was an important strategic target as the railroad connecting the coast with the interior passed through here. Burnside's forces and accompanying gunboats were opposed by an undermanned and poorly trained Confederate force of NC soldiers and militia led by Brigadier General Lawrence Branch. The center of the defenders' line broke, forcing a general retreat of the Confederate force.

New Bern came under Federal control and remained so for the rest of the war. The three-year occupation protected many fine downtown buildings, which were used as garrisons, hospitals, and administrative offices, a number of which remain standing to this date.



Ambrose Burnside

Yes, of "sideburns" fame. In 1861-62, Union Brigadier General Burnside commanded the North Carolina Expeditionary Force. After a handy victory at Roanoke Island, Burnside led Union forces in the first Battle of New Bern in March 1862 which they won with relative ease, establishing a base of operations for the Union blockade of the Atlantic coast, and resulting in the occupation of New Bern for the duration of the war. New Bern was then NC's second largest city and an important strategic target due to its location vis-a-vis railroads and coastline.



General Laurence O'Bryan Branch

Branch was a railroad man and politician turned soldier when the south seceded. As a newly promoted brigadier general with almost no military experience, he led Confederate forces in the March 1862 Battle of New Bern. His 4000 inexperienced and ill-equipped Confederate troops faced 11,000 experienced Federal troops and 13 gunboats. After a short but heated battle, Branch's forces retreated.



hallowed ground

DEVELOPING THE PARK

Once one of the most endangered Civil War Battlefields in the country, the award-winning New Bern Battlefield Park is now a cornerstone of heritage tourism in Craven County and Eastern North Carolina.

The overgrown, long forgotten 24-acre tract of woods was a small portion of the site of the 1862 first Battle of New Bern, which resulted in New Bern's occupation by Union forces for the rest of the war. The original earthworks or fighting positions were in pristine condition within the heavily wooded tract owned by the Weyerhaeuser Company. In 1993, with the support of noted Civil War historian Ed Bearss, the Historical Society succeeded in having the site listed as one of the most endangered Civil War sites. Weyerhaeuser deeded the tract to the Civil War Trust which in turn deeded the tract to the New Bern Historical Society in 2000.



Linda and Dick Lore, longtime generous supporters for whom the Lore Pavilion is named. Dick was NBHS Historian for many years.



Harry Goodman, longtime NBHS board member, Goodman was passionate about the battlefield preservation effort and one of the early volunteers leading efforts on the ground. He was also key in contacting the congressional committee.



Mark Mangum appointed by NBHS in 1999 as Chairman of Battlefield Steering Committee; later became first Battlefield Adjutant on NBHS board of directors.



Susan Moffat-Thomas Executive Director of Swiss Bear Downtown Development Corp; along with Jim Sugg, she led a New Bern delegation to Wilmington in 1993 to plead their case for recognition before the US Congress' Civil War Sites Advisory Commission. Although not on the agenda, they managed to impress the committee with a detailed and well documented case for being included on the national list of endangered Civil War Sites.



Jim Sugg NBHS President, organized the Battle of New Bern Historical Park Committee in 1989 to examine different sites with a goal of preserving a portion of the site of the Battle of New Bern. The committee settled on the "Weyerhaeuser tract".



Ed Bearss is a nationally known Civil War historian and author, Bearss was on the Board of the Civil War Preservation Trust and Civil War Sites Advisory Commission in 1993. After hearing New Bern's case, he threw his influential support into New Bern's proposition to preserve the Weyerhaeuser tract.



Battlefield Guides scores of volunteers who, since the 1990s, have continued to develop and maintain Battlefield Park, from laying trails and making repairs to giving tailored guided tours to visitors.



NEW BERN FIRSTS

One of New Bern's greatest ambassadors was Miss Gertrude Sprague Carraway (1896-1993). A New Bern native, Miss Gertrude was an accomplished journalist, historian, & leader. Her vision & tenacity contributed to the restoration of Tryon Palace where she was the first executive director. With great pride & devotion to her hometown, Miss Gertrude assembled a list of New Bern's inaugural accomplishments that first appear in the Historic New Bern Guide Book in 1939.

We share a number of "Firsts" from Miss Gertrude's list. Watch for the "First" sign throughout the exhibit.

FIRST

Gertrude Carraway wasn't among those first 19 members of the New Bern Historical Society in 1922, but she was a very early member and a key in the connections between the Historical Society members and those who labored to restore Tryon Palace. She was the national president of the DAR and established Constitution Day nationwide.



Miss Gertrude Carraway and Lawrence Stith

First in America to celebrate George Washington's birthday, according to the NC Gazette 1796.

First macadamized road in the region.

First printing press in 1747, first pamphlet, first newspaper, and first non-legal book published in North Carolina by James Davis.

Oldest theatre in America still in regular operation here. St. John's Masonic Lodge and Theatre dates from 1801-1809.

Believed to be, according to Miss Gertrude, the only town to have a distinguished namesake. Settled and named by the Tuscarora Indians from here, giving the Indian name of their local village "Chattawka" to the now-famous Chautauqua, New York.

Oldest fire company in the State with the earliest charter still in existence. (This refers to the Atlantic Hook and Ladder company which was established in 1845. The Button Hook and Ladder company was established in 1865.

Only town in North Carolina with three railroads as well as water transportation. Verified by Historic New Bern Guide Book, 1947, page 7, paragraph 4.

First incorporated school in North Carolina and second private secondary school in English America to receive a charter. The New Bern Academy was originally created by a legislative act and built in 1764.

Oldest Presbyterian Church organization and building in its Presbytery. First Presbyterian was organized in 1817 and the church constructed 1819-1822.

Believed to be one of the first mutual fire insurance companies. New Bern Company Mutual Insurers established in 1794.

One of the oldest Episcopal Parishes in the South. Christ Episcopal Church founded in 1715 was gifted a silver communion service, bible, and prayer book by King George II of England in 1752.

One of the oldest gasoline buggy-automobiles was invented here by Gilbert Waters.

One of the first four post offices established in North Carolina. Four post offices began in the same year on July 26, 1775. They were New Bern, Bath, Edenton and Wilmington.

Original self-kicking machine built by Tom Haywood.

Oldest Catholic Parish in North Carolina. St. Paul Catholic Church on Middle Street in New Bern was established in 1841.

One of the oldest hotels in the South, the Gaston House Hotel was opened in the 1850s.

First town to get bequest and start free trade school for orphan girls. Moses Griffin Free School on George Street was started in the early 1840s.

Oldest Christian Science Church in East Carolina organized by Mary Hatch Harrison in 1904.

First in America to hold a provincial convention called and held in defiance of British orders at Tryon Palace, 25-27 August 1774

First modern naval minesweeper made in the State launched here in 1942 by Barbour Boat Works.

First permanent colonial capital of North Carolina and first State Capital of North Carolina.

First State officials inaugurated here in Tryon Palace, the first state capital building.



FIRST

drop me a line

Before the advent of modern-day telephone technology, visitors would oftentimes share their visit with family & friends by sending them a local postcard portraying local street scenes, historical landmarks, river views and a host of other sites of interest, although the professional sophistication of the scenes might vary. One scene the best, represented a postmarked souvenir from New Bern. The New Bern Historical Society is pleased to share an extensive postcard collection with the public.





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MEET THE GOVERNORS

Seven North Carolina Governors were connected to New Bern.

New Bernians are proud of their forebears, especially those who rise to the top to become leaders. They are pleased to embrace seven governors with ties to New Bern.



Richard Caswell

Richard Caswell, the 1st and 5th Governor of the State of NC from 1776-1780 and 1785-1787. He was born in Hertford County Maryland near Baltimore in 1729 and his family moved to New Bern in 1745.



Abner Nash

Abner Nash, the 2nd Governor of the State of NC from 1780-1781. He moved to New Bern in 1771 and married his second wife. They lived and he is buried at Pembroke, their plantation, located on the Trent River above New Bern. Nashville, Tennessee is named for his brother Francis Nash a Revolutionary War general.



Richard Dobbs Spaight

Richard Dobbs Spaight the first native born Governor, and the 8th Governor of the State of North Carolina from 1792-1795. He was a Founding Father, Politician, Planter and Signer of the Constitution. Born in New Bern, he was killed by John Wright Stanly Jr. in a duel.



Benjamin Williams

Benjamin Williams, a Revolutionary War patriot, was the 11th and the 14th Governor of North Carolina serving from 1799-1802 and from 1807-1808. He lived in Craven County for many years; however, he was elected governor in 1798 from Moore County. He fought at Guilford Courthouse. At the end of his 3rd term in office, he pardoned John Stanly for fatally shooting Richard Dobbs Spaight in the famous duel.



Richard Dobbs Spaight, Jr.

Richard Dobbs Spaight, Jr. was Governor of the State of North Carolina from 1835-36 and was the last Governor appointed by the General Assembly. He was born in New Bern.



John Willis Ellis

John Willis Ellis was elected Governor August 5, 1858. He married his 2nd wife, Mary McKinley Daves in New Bern August 11, 1858. He died in office in 1861.



Beverly Perdue

Beverly Perdue was the 73rd Governor of the State of North Carolina from 2009-2013. She was the first female governor of North Carolina. She represented the Eastern North Carolina Counties in the State House and Senate from 1987-2001. She was Lt. Governor from 2000-2008. She remains a resident of the New Bern area.

