

Historically speaking



Quarterly Newsletter

july
august
september

Our Centennial Celebration continues...
Join us as we celebrate through 2023!
Congratulate our 2023 Volunteer Award Winners!

The strength of any non-profit comes from the time and commitment of its volunteers. This year we hosted our Annual Awards Dinner & Membership Meeting at Battlefield Park, where we honored your volunteer colleagues for their generous contributions. Kudos to these terrific folks — the heartbeat of our great Historical Society family!



Ambassadorship Award is awarded to **Joe Anderson** (left) for his impact across the community in preserving and promoting local history, both for the Society and Tryon Palace.

Battlefield Park Award is presented to **Scott Herman** (right) who, through his hard work and commitment, has quickly become an invaluable member of the volunteer Battlefield Guides.



Jon Miller (right) was presented the **Edwin C. Bearss Champion of History Award** for his decade+ of service to the Society. A board member since 2012, his leadership contributions to this organization -- particularly our own Battlefield Park -- are immeasurable.



Gerri Olvaney (left) receives this year's **Extended Service Award**. As a board member for the past nine years, Gerri has made huge contributions to nearly all Society activities, particularly in providing strong leadership of the ABC Sale for many years.



Education Award is proudly presented to **Wade Sokolosky** (above) for his contributions to the Society as an accomplished speaker, author, researcher, and tour guide.



Director's Award is given to **Cindy Teasdale** (above left), for her tireless efforts with Golf Tournament sponsorships, ABC Sale, Ghostwalk, and many other events. Cindy can do it all!

New volunteer **Lisa Setliff** (above right) received this year's **Newcomer's Award**. Lisa enthusiastically jumped into challenging roles on Homes Tour, History Quest, and Golf Tournament -- and is ready for more.

President's Award is presented to both **Kathy Morrison & Jim Hodges** (right) for their amazing leadership of the NBHS 100th Anniversary planning. Their masterful management of the fundraising campaign and exhibit planning ensured the centennial celebration leaves a lasting legacy.





Update from Mickey Miller, Executive Director

Oh, What a Night!

We're still aglow over the lovely awards dinner on Flag Day at Battlefield Park. What a great evening! Adorned with stars and stripes, the Park was standing tall. Guests were rocking their best red, white, and blue and we were blessed with a beautiful sunset as we finished the festive cake. One of the evening's highlights was recognizing the selfless volunteers who keep this great organization running (featured on page one). We were also delighted with the election of two strong new board members, **Gene Lock** and **Terri Hickman**. You'll hear more about Gene in the Battlefield Update. Terri has earned her chops first as an office volunteer and then taking on key responsibilities for Ghostwalk, Heritage Homes Tour, and Lantern Tour. Both Gene and Terri - as well as outgoing directors **Jon Miller** and **Gerri Olvaney** - exemplify the servant leadership model that has served the Historical Society so well over the years.



L to R: Holly and Brad Prafke, Gary Staley, Jon Miller, Marilyn Staley



Ghostwalk Auditions

Saturday, August 5 • 1 pm
Attmore-Oliver House

It's that time of year again! We are gearing up for another exciting fall full of spirits, creepers, and ghostly guides, oh my! If you are interested in participating in one of New Bern's premier events as a ghostly specter from the past, a guide, or a cemetery creeper, be sure to be at the Attmore-Oliver House at 511 Broad Street at 1 pm on Saturday, August 5 for Ghostwalk Auditions. First-come, first-served; no preparation needed.

SAVE THE DATE for Ghostwalk 2023!

October 19-20-21 from 6-9 pm



History Quest

Saturday, September 16 • 10 am
New Bern Battlefield Park



Put your Sherlock Holmes hat on and join this family friendly, outdoor scavenger hunt! Get your family, friends, or colleagues together to follow the clues to a series of quests. You'll discover historical places in and around New Bern that are hidden in plain sight. You might even learn a thing or two about this town that we live in! **Registration opens Aug 7** and watch our website (www.newbernhistorical.org) for more details.

2023 Events Calendar

Watch our website (www.NewBernHistorical.org) for further details on the upcoming 2023 programs!

Now through Jan 2024: NBHS 100th Anniversary Free Exhibit / *Through the Looking Glass: A Journey with the Storytellers* / Duffy Gallery, NC History Center

August 5, 2023: Ghostwalk Auditions 1pm - 4pm / New Bern Historical Society

September 2, 2023: Living History Day 8am - 4pm / New Bern Battlefield Park

September 16, 2023: History Quest 10am / begins & ends at New Bern Battlefield Park

September 20, 2023: Lunch & Learn 11:30am / Carolina Colours / *Colonial North Carolina* / presented by author Joe Mobley

October 8, 2023: Special Centennial Program featuring architectural historian Peter Sandbeck / details TBA

October 19-21, 2023: GHOSTWALK 2023! 6 - 9:30pm / Cedar Grove Cemetery & various downtown locations

November 12, 2023: Special Centennial Program featuring celebrated author David Cecelski / details TBA

Fall Date TBA: Fall Volunteer & New Member Social with a Chili Cookoff!



On a Lighter Note by Claudia Houston, NBHS Historian

I have been working on an article that will appear in the commemorative NBHS Journal celebrating our 100 years of history as an organization. Past Historian, Dr. Richard K. Lore wrote a Journal article celebrating our 75-year history in 1988 and I have been summarizing highlights of the last 25 years. I have discovered some interesting and downright funny tidbits of information which may not make it into the Journal, but I thought you would enjoy. These are all based on excerpts from board minutes or newsletters:

April 2000 - The Board agreed to present Ernest Richardson with a certificate of commendation for his restoration of the Blue Gable gas station at the corner of Pollock and Hancock.

August 2004 - We survived Hurricane Charley with much debris in the yard and damage to a pear tree and the fence.

March 2004 - the Battlefield was listed by the Congressional Civil War Sites Advisory Commission on the list of "Ten Most Endangered Battlefields."

December 2004 - Susan Dunn begins as an executive assistant on January 24, 2005. There were over 90 applications. (Note - Sue is still on staff today.)

June 2005 - An awards program was initiated in 1987 recognizing members for major volunteer work which benefits the organization. Of special note was the recent recognition of

Harry Goodman - the 5th award he has received in the last 19 years. It is a conservative estimate that Harry has given the Society over 10,000 voluntary hours.

March 2006 - A gift of historical New Bern photographs was donated to the Society by Albert D. Brooks in memory of his father, Albert D. Brooks, a New Bern photo collector and photographer. Mr. Brooks, Sr. was born in New Bern in 1909 and graduated from New Bern High School. A Mason and a Shriner, he passed away in 1975.

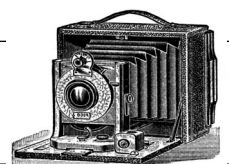
May 1, 2008 - James Hodges presented the New Bern Historical Society a May basket of 400 spider lilies. They were all planted in the new garden at the Roberts House.

2009 - The first Holiday Friendraiser was held at the beautiful Blades House. A great success - 180 people attended and 43 new members joined.

December 2010 - Linda Lore both sponsored and painted Freedom Bearer bear, which she donated to the New Bern Historical Society in honor of her late husband, Richard K. Lore. Freedom Bearer is a depiction of a Revolutionary War Officer and can be found at the end of the Historical Society driveway.

Fall 2011 - Hurricane Irene left debris on the Historical Society campus as it swept the east coast.

Thank you to our volunteer photographers! Photo credits: John Steady, Marissa Moore, Jon Miller, Melvin Kestner, Kelvin Kestner, and Anthony Giardino.



We had a fabulous spring - we couldn't have done it without YOU!

A Weekend of Beauty & Charm

Thanks to our marvelous Homes Tour committee, led by **Cathy O' Brien** and **Sharon Nelson**, this year's tour saw a record number of guests - with 50% more ticket sales than in previous years! Everything was wonderfully orchestrated by the team, from the beautiful floral arrangements and live music, to the carefully coordinated docents and relaxing garden party. And, of course, the stars of the show...the Historic Homes! The diverse display of charm was topped off by the New Bern superstar, the Blades House. Thank you to everyone who made this year's tour truly a feast for the senses!



Heritage Homes Tour Committee

Jeannie Garner - Flower Chair ♦ **Laurie Ingram & Terri Hickman** - Volunteer Co-Chairs
Gerri Olvaney & Cheryl Lawrence - Garden Party Co-Chairs
Joanne Friedman - Music Chair ♦ **Annette Hunt** - A-O House Garden Chair
Susan Broderick & Judi Lloyd - Garden Co-Chairs
Kathy Morrison - Publicity/Marketing Chair ♦ **Sue Wyatt** - "Church Lady"
Cheryl Jukich - Graphics ♦ **George Evans** - Logistics Chair

You Tee'd It Up Fore History



The New Bern Historical Society's **4th Annual Golf Tournament** was a tremendous success! Huge thanks to our amazing committee, generous sponsors, and dedicated volunteers. The **Carolina Colours** staff helped bring this event to a new level of professionalism (and fun!). Thank you to our membership for coming out to support as volunteers, sponsors, golfers, and raffle ticket buyers. Masterfully led by **Walt Teasdale**, the hard-working committee included **Cindy Teasdale, Gary & Marilyn Staley, Norman Black, Lisa Setliff, and Bob Dofner**. They brought in a record number of sponsors to make it our most profitable Golf Tournament yet.

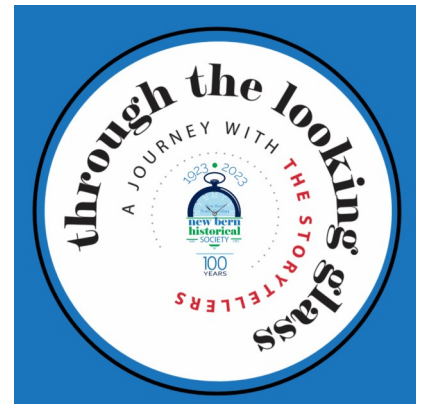
2023 Marks & Taylor Scholarships Winner



The New Bern Historical Society is pleased to announce the 2023 Marks & Taylor Scholarships have been awarded to Kadiatou Diawara. Kadiatou demonstrated academic excellence by her class standing and by taking honors, advanced placement, and college courses at New Bern High School. She will attend NC State University in Raleigh in the fall where she will pursue studies in Marketing. Kadiatou has been involved in many school and community activities such as Captain of the NBHS Varsity Track and Field, Vice President of Project Unify, Co-President of the Thurgood Marshall Club, member and President of the Junior Civitan, and member of the National Honor Society. Truly an accomplished young woman.



Mary Parrish, Scholarship Committee Member & Kadiatou Diawara



Meet the Storytellers

Have you visited the Historical Society's 100th Anniversary Exhibit yet? History will surround you in this colorful, interactive, full-360 multi-media display. Exhibit runs through January 8, 2024 at the Duffy Gallery, NC History Center. And it's free of charge!

What a year it's been!





Curator's Corner...by Jim Hodges

The Acorn Doesn't Fall Far from the Tree

I always seem to gain inspiration when walking through Cedar Grove Cemetery reflecting on the thousands of New Bernians interred there. This year is significant in that it marks the centennial anniversary of the New Bern Historical Society, and my attention is directed to its founding charter members and the fact that many of them lie in peaceful repose in Cedar Grove. There is an impressive granite obelisk that marks the grave of Minnette Chapman Duffy whose contributions to the Historical Society, New Bern, and North Carolina are uniquely meaningful and unparalleled.

The daughter of a prominent Tennessee family, Minnette Young Chapman (1882-1951) married Dr. Richard Nixon Duffy and relocated to New Bern in 1907. She immediately recognized the rich history of New Bern and became passionate about its history and the preservation of its historic buildings. With her initiation the inaugural meeting of the New Bern Historical Society took place at her Johnson Street home on April 19, 1923. Her boundless energy and motivation were further directed to the planning and implementation of the Historic Celebration & Pageant of 1929 whose success was enjoyed by thousands including dignitaries from near and far. Public awareness of New Bern's colonial and revolutionary history was greatly enhanced and ultimately resulted in the first restricted funding for the restoration of Tryon Palace by Mrs. Kate Reynolds of Winston-Salem. Mrs. Duffy is further credited for her efforts in saving and relocating the John Wright Stanly House in 1932 from its Middle Street location to New Street across from the First Presbyterian Church where it became the New Bern Public Library. Sadly, Mrs. Duffy died in 1951 and never witnessed the completion of



Tryon Palace that opened to the public in April 1959.

The marriage of Dr. Richard and Minnette Duffy produced five children who grew up in New Bern and carried with them, like their parents, the spirit and passion for New Bern as they pursued their dreams. One of the three daughters and namesake for her mother was Minnette Duffy Bickel (1921-2007) whose artistic talents were recognized at an early age. She honed her gift at several "fine arts" institutions and became a recognized portrait artist. In 1947, Minnette married William Croft Bickel who was a decorated WWII Marine fighter pilot and later a Gulf Oil Corporation executive. The Bickels moved several times until settling in Pittsburgh in 1976. Minnette Duffy Bickel instilled in her daughters Minnette and Susan the great sense of pride in their New Bern heritage and roots. With unwavering support from Minnette, Susan, and their mother, author David L. S. Brook after 18 years of research completed a book in 2015 entitled "Passion for the Palace" that documents the efforts of Minnette Chapman Duffy and colleagues to restore and reconstruct Tryon Palace.

Minnette Bickel Boesel and **Susan Bickel Scioli** continue to honor their Grandmother Duffy and their mother with their commitment to their Duffy heritage and their love for New Bern. In recognition of the Historical Society's Centennial Anniversary, the sisters in addition to donor participation gifted to the Society two beautiful portraits painted by their mother, Minnette Duffy Bickel. The portraits are proudly displayed in the Attmore-Oliver House and we sincerely appreciate their generosity and thoughtfulness. Like the women before them, they get things done.



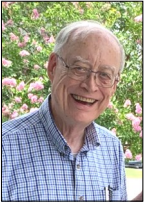
Both portraits now on display in the Attmore-Oliver House.



It's a pleasure to turn the spotlight onto someone who prefers to stay quietly outside of its glow, and that's just what we're doing this quarter. Introducing the multi-talented **Margo Fesperman**, who since 2020 has been tackling a tough and thankless job - Technical Editor for the annual Historical Journal. What does a technical editor do, you ask? If you've ever tried academic writing, you know. To produce a highly professional, well-written, research-based publication like the Journal requires hundreds of hours of proofreading, revising, verifying, researching, rewriting, and editing. Margo's strong background in library science and communications have given her the right tools for this enviable task. Cheers, Margo -- we salute you!



"Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart." – Elizabeth Andrew



Historical Society President's Message...by Joe Hunt

The New Bern Historical Society is at the midpoint of our 100th anniversary celebration. We completed our fiscal year on June 30, and again we had an exceptional year. Our centennial exhibit opened at the Tryon Palace History Center, a record number of tickets were sold for Homes Tour, we made the Lantern Tour an annual event, the annual meeting was held at the New Bern Battlefield Park for the first time, and the Society has exceeded 1200 members. And the weather cooperated with all our events! The Historical Society has come a long way in the last 100 years thanks to many committed volunteers, board members, directors, and staff who have dedicated themselves to making the Society the force for good it is today. During my time in New Bern, Directors **Joanne Ashton**, **Newsom Williams**, **Lynne Harakal**, and **Mickey Miller** have each met different challenges and raised the Society to new levels. We are indebted to them, all who preceded them, and our loyal members for our success.

Since our founding, we have been blessed with strong board leadership. Ours is a "roll up your sleeves and get to work" board that tackles the hard jobs, including grounds maintenance, gardening, events planning, and manual labor at the battlefield. We are sorry to see two of our hardest-working directors step down this summer. **Jon Miller** came on board in 2012 as we began planning the Battlefield History Walk project. His no-nonsense leadership as Battlefield Adjutant for the past ten years has been key to Battlefield Park's great popularity and growing importance as a historical and educational site.

In her nine years on the board, **Gerri Olvaney** has excelled at everything she has undertaken - and she has done it all. The "Sergeant Major", as she is called, has contributed greatly to just about every major event and program, culminating with years of leadership of the ABC Yard Sale. Jon and Gerri have both left a lasting legacy and will be sorely missed.



Battlefield Park News...by Jon Miller, Battlefield Adjutant

After 11 years as a board member and Battlefield Adjutant I will be stepping down from my leadership role for the New Bern Battlefield Park. I am pleased to announce, if you haven't already heard, that **Gene Lock** will be taking my place.

Gene has been a volunteer worker and guide for several years and will take charge without missing a beat.

In the last decade there has been a tremendous amount of change to the physical nature of the park but also an upward trajectory in its use as a way of telling New Bern's history. New trails have been blazed, observation platforms and bridges have been built, new land acquired to expand its boundaries, and many informational panels were produced. They all help to explain the battle that took place in March of 1862 as well as the three subsequent battles and the transformation of James City. Events such as Battlefield Adventure Day, the Hallowed Ground Lantern Tour, and Living History Day have driven an ever-increasing number of visitors to the park long after the events are over. The park has been recognized by awards at the state and local level and is truly one of New Bern's gems.



Left: Jon Miller, right: Gene Lock

All of this work has been done by volunteers. The thing that amazes me the most are the handful of people who show up week after week, regardless of the weather, and go home filthy after a morning of hard labor. A lot of sweat and blood has gone into the work out there. Every now and then a passing visitor will remark "you all do a great job here, the park is beautiful", and we go home feeling good about it.

Since our spring newsletter we have cut down and cut up a number of dead trees, replaced trail timbers, laid down a lot of

trail surface material, repaired potholes in the road, cleared out the roadside drainage ditch and kept the Visitor Center clean for the visitors who use it all day, every day. We have given tours for the public and helped with the Annual Membership meeting held there which many of you attended. So the work never ends.



Above: John Wright

We were honored to be visited in May by the Communications Director and the Legislative Assistant for **Congressman Greg Murphy**. The two staffers share an interest with Congressman Murphy in the history of the area comprising the 3rd North Carolina Congressional District. They enjoyed learning about the community effort to preserve and develop Battlefield Park as well as the battlefield tour led by **Gene Lock**.

Our Board of Directors, the NBHS staff, and many of our Society members have been actively engaged in all that goes on out there. I am grateful for all they have done to support the park's mission. You will still find me out there getting dirty with the rest of them, and I encourage new members to come out and join us!



Above: Harry Fones, Gene Lock, Claudia Houston, Joe Hunt, Col. Ray Celeste (USMC/Ret)



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Sue Dunn and Anthony Giardino / adminoffice@newbernhistorical.org

Office Hours: Monday - Thursday 10am - 4pm (Friday 10am - 1pm)

The Historical Society is proud of the relationships we have developed over the years with the local business community and thank them for their continued sponsorship of our events. Please recognize and support our business partners who generously contribute to the New Bern Historical Society.

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JIM HODGES, CURATOR
NEW BERN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

KATHY BEAL

