




Quarterly Newsletter
 april
 may
 june

2024

Opportunities to volunteer are many...stop by & check us out!

Join us for an unforgettable 2024 Heritage Homes Tour in the Downtown & Ghent Historic Districts

Friday & Saturday, May 3-4 from 10am to 4pm

Our 54th homes tour and a cherished New Bern tradition! Savor the rich diversity of architecture that illustrates our town's amazing three centuries of history.



The **Heritage Homes Tour Committee**, led by co-chairs **Cathy O'Brien** and **Sharon Nelson**, is hard at work to bring you creative floral arrangements by local florists, live music, gardens in bloom, artists at work, and historical churches open for tour.

Truly, this year's tour will be a feast for the senses!

When you need a break, stop by the Attmore-Oliver south lawn and enjoy a "sit-and-sip" while you admire our heritage gardens and beautiful new Centennial Garden.

Special thanks to New Bern treasure Janet Francoeur for the artwork!



Update from Mickey Miller, Executive Director

So... my final newsletter. I have so much to say and so little space. I want you all to know how honored I am that you entrusted me with the leadership of this wonderful organization for the past eight years. I hope you are as proud as I am about how much we've done together to celebrate, preserve, and share our amazing history.

It's been my privilege to serve with such a grounded, no-drama, business minded board of directors. They have been my best sounding boards, cheerleaders, and mentors, always willing to roll up their sleeves to do whatever is needed.

To you, the membership – what a pleasure! You all give so generously, whether it's your time, your many talents, your patronage, or simply your visits at the office. You are who we serve, and you make this organization a force for good in the community.

There's a saying that if you love what you do, you'll never work a day in your life. That is absolutely true for me. It's a rare day when I don't pop out of bed, excited about how together we can share New Bern's fascinating stories. That's primarily due to the amazing staff, present and past – **Marissa Moore, Anthony Giardino, Sue Dunn, Pat Traynor, and Karen Bixler**. What a dream team! You have taught me so much. You have injected joy and laughter into each day, however busy or stressful. You have touched my heart.

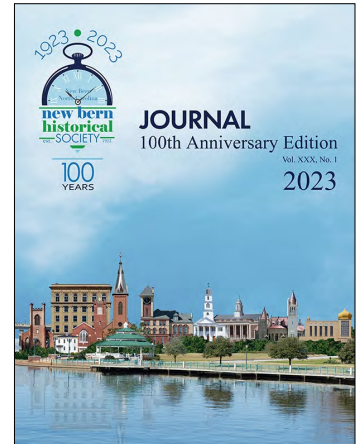
This is my fourth attempt at retiring and... I think this is it! Jon and I are not leaving New Bern, but it's time for us to spend more time traveling and enjoying our historic home. I plan to volunteer for the Historical Society, so this is not goodbye. I prefer to say Auf Wiedersehen - until we see each other again.

100th Anniversary Journal

Have you received your special 100th Anniversary Edition of the New Bern Historical Society Journal? With its creative cover artwork by graphics designer **John Klecker**, this remarkable keepsake edition is a tremendous accomplishment for the all-volunteer Journal staff and contributing authors. For the past five years, **Editor Jay DeLoach** has been the steady hand on the tiller, honing the Journal to a thoroughly professional, accurate, and absorbing publication. We're grateful for his leadership and vision, and for charting the course for incoming Journal Editor **George Howard** to follow.



Jay DeLoach, RADM (Ret)



Our Commitment to Storytelling by Claudia Houston, Historian

As we complete our year-long centennial celebration, we are committed to continuing the vision of our founding members for the next 100 years.

We currently have a membership of over 1300 and it grows daily. We are proud of our strong leadership and wonderful committed volunteers. We are a vibrant organization and want to continue to grow and tell the stories of our City for years to come.

So how will we tell those stories and what will they be? We try to discover and share with you inspiring tales about real people and their part in New Bern history. We have access to resources and information in a vastly different way than our ancestors did. Between the internet, artificial intelligence, and other technological advances, we can push a button and obtain information in seconds. Yet, how accurate are these sources? How

do we tell our story to the younger generation in a way that will inspire and challenge them? How do we engage those who live far away and who cannot participate in our events in person? Who are we not reaching? These are the questions we continually ask ourselves. We would love to hear your suggestions as to how we can continue to share our history in the coming years. Please share them by emailing me at nbhshistorian@gmail.com.

Historian and author Philip Gerard, now deceased, wrote "it is the job of the writer to put into words what is worst — and also what is best — about us. To light up our possibilities, discover the finest lives to which we can aspire, and to inspire our readers to greatness of soul and heart."

We would like to continue to inspire all of you.

Watch our website (www.NewBernHistorical.org) for details on the upcoming 2024 programs!

- Friday & Saturday, May 3-4: Heritage Homes Tour** / 10am-4pm / Historic Downtown and Ghent Neighborhoods
- Sunday, May 5: New Member & Volunteer Social** / Cinco de Mayo! / 2pm-4pm / Attmore-Oliver House Back Lawn
- Wednesday, May 29: Annual Meeting & Awards Dinner** / 5:30pm / The Maola at Riverside
- Sunday, June 9: Tee It Up FORE History Golf Tournament** / 11:00am / Carolina Colours Club & Pavilion
- Saturday, August 3: Ghostwalk Auditions** / 1pm / Attmore-Oliver House
- Thursday, August 22: America 250 Presentation** / Details TBD
- Friday-Saturday, August 23-24: New Bern Resolves 250th Anniversary Celebration**
- Saturday, September 7: Living History Day** / 10am—4pm / New Bern Battlefield Park
- Saturday, September 21: History Quest** / 10am—4pm / beginning & ending at New Bern Battlefield Park
- Wednesday, October 16: Lunch & Learn – *The Forgotten Mutineers*** by author Glen Swain / Carolina Colours
- Thursday-Saturday, October 24-26: Ghostwalk!** / 6-9:30pm / Cedar Grove Cemetery & other downtown locations

\$250 and above

- Ed Hancock and Patricia Beaver
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- Joe and Annette Hunt
- Don Ingraham
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- John Leahy
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- Nelson McDaniel
- Peter and Elaine Meyer
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- Jim and Kathy Morrison
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- Skip and Kathy Zimmerman



Sincere thanks to those who contributed to the **Annual Fund!** Your generous gifts go far to helping maintain our beautiful campus and the hallowed ground of Battlefield Park.

\$100 - \$249

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- Bruce and Sue Martin
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- Judy R. Rafson
- Lorraine Hale Music Instruction
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- Ann and Dave Super
- Linda T. Swindell
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- Martha Ross and Jerry Trenholm
- Deborah Wagner
- John Waters
- Betty Hatcher and Marshall Waters

Harry Goodman BATTLEFIELD Adventure Day

A Record Turnout!



Children "fall-in" for drill and marching orders!

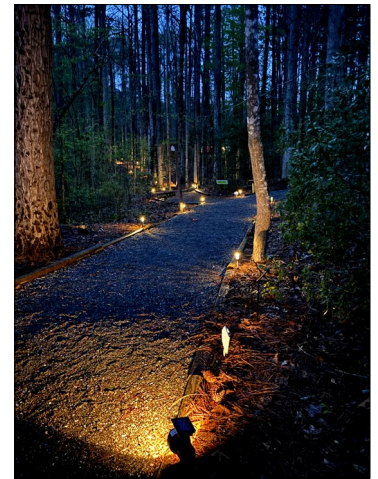
Another amazing event with over 100 kids and 100 adults at the New Bern Battlefield Park for our annual Battlefield Adventure Day. Led by the 5th, 7th, 26th, and 28th NC Regiment reenactors, Gary Riggs, cavalryman Chris Cook, and others, kids of all ages as well as history-loving adults got to experience Civil War camp life. The event culminated in an exciting mock battle and payday for the children. With the beautiful weather and yummy apple crisp, the day turned out spectacular for everyone involved. Keep your eye out for this event next spring!

This annual event is made possible through the generosity of the family of the late Harry Goodman, beloved Historical Society board member, volunteer, and Battlefield Park preservationist.

An Exceptional Event, Rain or Shine

The Hallowed Ground Lantern Tour a HUGE success!

Hundreds of visitors flocked to Battlefield Park on the evenings of March 21-23 to hear the riveting, sometimes heart-wrenching, tales of the Civil War, told from the perspective of those who were closest to it. A family savored letters from their loved one off fighting, two soldiers on opposite sides found common ground, a woman told the story of her heroic husband fighting for his freedom, and more. It all culminated with a realistic look at a Civil War field hospital brought to life right on the parade ground. The feedback? Overwhelmingly positive! This is the Historical Society's storytelling at its best. The consensus? You can't miss it next year.



Hats off to the talent!

A program like this is only possible with the time and talent of many selfless volunteers who made it happen:

Script writer-in-chief **Lori Favre** • Researcher **Claudia Houston** • Actors: **Mike Beckman, Gale Boulware, Cindi Broome, Nelda Coats, Rita DeSanno, Tommy Grzeika, Cathy Lane, Rachel McGuire, Laura Miller-McLemore, Dick Peebles, John Rock, Stephen Schmidt, Matt Schauer, Riley Simpson, Kyla Setliff, Christina Tolisano, Bill Brettschneider, Ray Laracuente, Dianne Morgan** • Special talent: **Gary Riggs** and reenactors from the 5th and 7th NC Regiments • Kudos to the dozens of volunteer guides, parking attendants, photographers, logistics helpers, ticket-takers, greeters, and battlefield guides.

Huge Thanks & Applause!

to our uber-talented
Director **Nancy Hitchcock**, Field
Hospital Director **Heide Lock**, Guides Director
Holly Prafke, and
Volunteer-in-Chief **Lisa Setliff**



We are grateful to **Title Sponsor Trader Construction**, generous donor & costumer extraordinaire **Mary Ann Murphy**, our "cider with a smile" friends at **Donna & Team New Bern**, and the other sponsors who made the event possible.



where the past is present...

Buy your tickets now for the 2024 Heritage Homes Tour!

As always, NBHS members receive a special membership rate. This is an important Historical Society fundraiser, so please come out and support!

This year's tour sites range from glorious to tiny, from 18th century colonials to Sears Craftsmen. These are livable family homes with rich stories and diverse architecture that illustrate New Bern's amazing history.

Special thanks to the Downtown & Ghent historic district homeowners for so generously opening their beautiful homes and gardens:



308 Metcalf Street

Watson Rental House
ca. 1880 - Beautifully restored & tastefully decorated to showcase this livable home's timeless style

Michael & Stephanie Rogers



301 Hancock Street

Stanly House Office & Quarters
(Dependency of Edward R. Stanly House)
ca. 1850 - Meticulously preserved, this quaint dwelling has a rich history as an office & servants quarters.

Charles & Mary Skinner



601 Pollock Street

Lawrence - Gaskins House
ca. 1880- 1890 - Curated to perfection, this home reflects the owner's deep ties to New Bern's history

Jim "Jimmy" Hodges



613 Craven Street

Charles O.H. Boyd House
ca. 1920 - This charming home is adorned with beautiful furnishings while retaining elegant original features

Rob Benson & Tina Bova



616 Middle Street

Elijah Clarke House
ca. 1760 - 1780 - Wonderfully preserved 18th century architectural beauty bursting with history and period decor

Jim & Ruthie Henderson

The Poster Home



301 Johnson Street

Jerkins-Duffy House
ca. 1830 - Listed on the National Historic Register, this stunning home & garden have a direct link with New Bern Historical Society's origins

Charles & Mary Ann Cleveland



624 East Front Street

Mary B. Gordon House
ca. 1885-1890 - Overlooking the Neuse River, this home & garden is a masterpiece of grace & elegance

Steve Love & Heather Ross

1402 Spencer Ave.

Brock-Wooten House
ca. 1913 - Sears Saratoga Model
Straight from the pages of a Sears catalogue, this Craftsman home epitomizes gracious southern living

Randy Toran & Robert Lane



1617 Rhem Avenue

Lillie Sara Suskin House
ca. 1926 - A tasteful blend of features appoints this stately Colonial Revival in the heart of the Ghent Historic District

Alan Norris & Amy Nowell



1801 Rhem Avenue

Merriwether L. Ferguson House
ca. 1929 - This art-filled Arts & Crafts bungalow with its lively garden & iconic artist's studio reflects her creative talents

Janet Francoeur



511 Broad Street Atmore-Oliver Heritage Garden

Stop in at the back lawn of the Historical Society from 11 am - 3 pm both days & refresh yourself with a sip! Admire our new Centennial Garden while engaging with a living history display. Plus enter to win exciting raffle prizes.



Stroll through the Historical Society's Heritage Garden based on a century old historical plant list. Master Gardeners will be on hand to guide you & answer your gardening questions.



Thank you to our loyal and generous Title Sponsors, without whom this event would not be possible!



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President's Message...by Joe Hunt

The Historical Society Executive Director, Mickey Miller, has announced her decision to retire in May after eight years of service. Under her leadership, the Society continued to grow and prosper. She led NBHS to new levels, growing membership from 700 in 2016 to just over 1300 in 2024. The popular Hallowed Ground Lantern Tour hosted at Battlefield Park was added to our list of events, as well as the History Quest and a very successful annual Golf Tournament fundraiser. Mickey steadily guided our signature event, Ghostwalk, through the COVID shutdown, grew our regular Lunch & Learn event from 90 to 130 seats, and helped to create the remarkable 100th Anniversary exhibit showcased for a year at the NC History Center.

Mickey added a Programs Director to the staff, facilitated the development of a Centennial Garden on the campus, and has overseen many improvements on the grounds. The expansion of

programs has greatly increased the usage of our greatest treasure, the New Bern Battlefield Park.

Mickey has worked tirelessly to achieve this list of accomplishments along with the support of our staff and volunteers. She has been a blessing to the Historical Society, and we will be eternally grateful for her dedication and contributions.

As much as we'll miss Mickey, I'm happy to announce that we have selected Historical Society Operations Manager Anthony Giardino to succeed her as the next Executive Director. A seasoned leader and Marine Corps retiree, Anthony is well-grounded in all areas of Society operations. We are confident he'll hit the ground running.



Anthony Giardino & Mickey Miller

New Bern Historical Society Board of Directors

2024 Officers & Appointed Positions

Joe Hunt, President
 Kathy Morrison, First Vice-President
 Egon Lippert, Second Vice-President
 Chris Kelso, Secretary
 Jim Morrison, Treasurer
 Eugene Lock, Battlefield Adjutant
 Claudia Houston, Historian
 Jim Hodges, Curator

2024 Directors

Joe Anderson	Nelson McDaniel
Carol Becton	Cathy O'Brien
Clayton Cheek	Mary Parrish
George Evans	Chris Richey
Lynne Harakal	Walt Teasdale
Terri Hickman	Karen Whitmore
Ken McCotter	Mike Williams

Staff

Mickey Miller—Executive Director
 Marissa Moore—Programs Director
 Anthony Giardino—Operations Manager
 Sue Dunn—Administrative Assistant

If you've been to any of our events, you've seen them. Cameras slung around their necks. Down on their knees getting just the right angle. Cajoling the audience to smile. Standing on a ladder to avoid the shadows. We're talking about the incomparable photographers **Kelvin Kestner** and **Melvin Kestner**, this quarter's pick for the volunteer spotlight.

Kelvin and **Melvin** have been taking photos for the New Bern Historical Society for an unbelievable 21 years! In that time they've snapped tens of thousands of pictures of Ghostwalk spirits, homes on tour, Friendraiser parties, and children at play. They have witnessed and documented so many important moments in the Historical Society's past, including the development of the Battlefield from an abandoned woods to a lovely park. And always with a warm smile, ready joke or anecdote about their Army service.

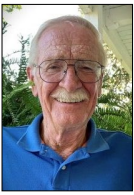


After two decades, the twins are stepping out from behind their cameras to enjoy our programs and events as guests.

Join us in thanking them for their immense contribution!

Melvin (L) and Kelvin (R) Kestner





Battlefield Park News...by Gene Lock, Battlefield Adjutant

During the first quarter, park volunteers did extra site work to prepare the grounds for Battlefield Adventure Day and The Hallowed Ground Lantern Tour. This included clearing

locations where the actors were performing, providing firewood for the reenactor's camp sites, placing woodchips on trails, and repairing the roadway. Park volunteers handmade 100 wooden toy rifles for distribution to the children who attended the event. Longtime battlefield guides **John Wright** and **Rod Rhodes** braved the swamp to do a cleanup of accessible areas and waterways, removing trash that had washed into this area during heavy rains.

Battlefield Adventure Day was a great success with record attendance. This event would not have been possible without the large contingent of Civil War Reenactors. Battlefield Park volunteer **Mark Trail** is also captain of the 7th North



Battlefield volunteer Rod Rhodes braving the swamp

Carolina State Troops reenactors. He arranged for a large group to participate from his and other reenactor groups. They are owed a huge thank you for how well they work with the kids and for making the entire day so successful. The event also saw our new cannon used for the first time and it was impressive each time it was fired!

The Hallowed Ground Lantern Tour was another great program showing off our park. It appeared that everyone who attended thoroughly enjoyed the event. A big thank you to all the park volunteers who helped these events take place. In addition to the park work, the volunteers managed parking, staffed exhibits and conducted groups for the Lantern Tours. Finally, thank you to all who came out and attended these two events!



Cinco De Mayo

Volunteer & New Member Social

MUSIC . FOOD . DRINK

May 5th | 2 - 4pm | All are welcome

ATTMORE-OLIVER HOUSE BACK LAWN
511 BROAD STREET

www.newbernhistorical.org

Let's celebrate Cinco de Mayo & YOU at the Spring Volunteer & New Member Social!

Sunday, May 5 from 2-4 pm on the AO House back lawn.

Come on out and sip one of our signature sangrias, enjoy great company and make new friends.

If you have volunteered for any program or event, sponsored an event, or joined the Society since last October, this party is JUST for you!

Reservations not required.

5th Annual Tee It Up *FORE!* History Golf Tournament

Sunday, June 9 • 12:30 pm • Carolina Colours Golf Club

Enjoy a great day of golf, a delicious dinner, and support the New Bern Historical Society all at the same time! Registration opens at 11am with a shotgun start at 12:30pm. Lunch available for purchase from 11am. Play includes cart, range balls & goodie bag. Compete for great prizes for 1st and 2nd place Men's, Women's, and Couples' teams, and four Hole-in-One prizes! Following the tournament will be a cocktail hour followed by a fabulous surf & turf dinner created by Chef Michael, and ending with a finale of awards, first class raffle baskets, and a silent auction.

Not a golfer? You can still help! The golf tournament has become a very important fundraiser, so please consider becoming a sponsor. Contact Marissa or Anthony at 252.638.8558 for more info.

Sign up now as teams fill quickly!





511 Broad Street
New Bern, NC 28560

252.638.8558
www.newbernhistorical.org

Mickey Miller / director@newbernhistorical.org
Marissa Moore / programs@newbernhistorical.org
Sue Dunn & Anthony Giardino / adminoffice@newbernhistorical.org

Office Hours: Monday - Friday 10am - 4pm

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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