



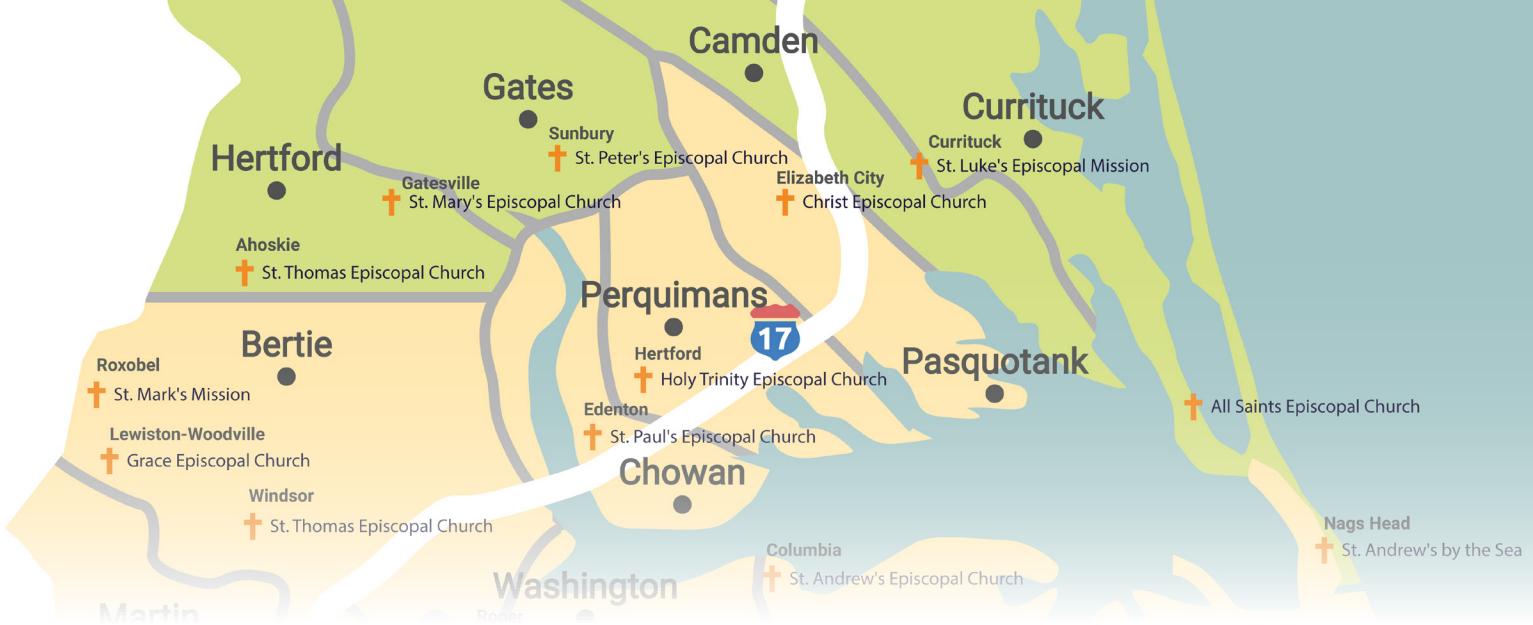
OUR STORIES:

A County by County Journey Through East Carolina



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HERTFORD COUNTY

Written by the Rev'd Jeff Douglas

In the 16th century, European settlers came and lived among the Native American people. The Tuscarora, Chowanoac, and Meherrin all lived in the region which became Hertford County. The Meherrin, although original inhabitants of southern Virginia, moved to settlements near the Chowan River in the 1730s. Today, the Meherrin Tribe of Hertford County is recognized by the State. Originally known as the Parish of Saint Barnabas, in 1759, land was taken from nearby Bertie, Northampton, and Chowan Counties to form the new County of Hertford.

The European settlers readily recognized this area as a suitable place for farming and agriculture is still the basis of Hertford County's economy, with tobacco, cotton, peanuts, corn, and soybeans as the staples. For years, the annual herring migration in the Chowan River provided a robust fishing industry until it shut down due to overfishing.

Winton was established as the county seat in 1766. As a port city, the Chowan River provided access to East Coast ports such as Norfolk, Virginia, transporting people and goods from Hertford county around the world. During the Civil War, the town of Winton was attacked and burned by Union forces in February 1862.

Calvin Scott (C.S.) Brown, pastor of Pleasant Plains Baptist Church, served as principal at Chowan Academy (later Waters Institute; even later CS Brown School), an all-black school founded in 1885. The Academy served African-Americans and grew into a boarding school serving students outside the region. Brown served as teacher and principal until his death in 1936. The well-regarded school remained open until Hertford County integrated its schools.

Katie Hart started the first public library in 1931. Ms. Hart started a bookmobile before she also opened the HC Negro Library in Winton in 1941. In spite of segregation and being opened to African-Americans, both the Bookmobile and the library were open to patrons of any race.

HERTFORD COUNTY

In the early 1970's, Dr. Dudley Flood, a Winton native, served as Assistant Superintendent for Public Instruction in NC as an innovative educator who oversaw desegregation in the state and continued to shape school curricula for many years. In 2019, the Dr. Dudley Flood Center for Educational Equity and Opportunity was established by the Public School Forum of North Carolina.

Other notable figures include John H. Wheeler, from Murfreesboro, who was appointed by President Andrew Jackson, as president of the U.S. Mint in Charlotte. In the 1860's Richard J. Gatling, invented the Gatling machine gun. Dr. Walter Reed, who studied tropical diseases for the Army, lived in Hertford County as a young man. In 1912, Robert Lee Vann, became the editor of the Pittsburgh Courier, the most widely circulated African American newspaper in the country.

With a median family income of just \$32,000 per year, endemic poverty is a legacy in our area. The loss of agricultural employment, a poorly educated, aging populace and the inability to bring in industry are the main challenges. Many people are hourly employees working part-time jobs in an effort to get by.

The pandemic has not caused severe economic disruption here as many already receive government assistance in some form to survive and employment has remained steady. We have, however, suffered our share of death and disease but have recently seen declines in our rate of infection as mask wearing and social distancing have been practiced.



CAMDEN COUNTY

Written by the Right Rev'd Rob Skirving

If we were actually walking the length of US Highway 17 “in person” and beginning in the north, we would be starting our journey in Camden County. One of the smallest counties in the state, by population, it is also one of the fastest growing, by percentage. Much of its growth has come from people moving into the county and commuting back to jobs in other counties of North Carolina and in the state of Virginia. Currently, the population of the county is about 11,000 people. About a third of the land in Camden County is dedicated to farming with corn, potatoes, wheat, soybeans oats, barley, cotton, pigs, chickens and beef cattle making up the bulk of the land’s produce. Camden County attracts many visitors who love to hunt, fish and participate in other outdoor sports.

The Great Dismal Swamp covers large portions of both Virginia and North Carolina, including northwestern Camden County. Evidence suggests that native Americans lived in the swamp for thousands of years before Europeans settled in the area. In the years before the Civil War, communities of African Americans lived in the swamp, building communities consisting of freed blacks and escaped slaves, including those traveling north on the Underground Railroad. The Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge was established by Congress in 1974 and currently includes more than 100,000 acres of land and water that are home to a wide range of plant and animal species. Hundreds of thousands of visitors make their way to the refuge every year.

In the late 18th century, Virginia and North Carolina collaborated in building the Dismal Swamp Canal, largely on the backs of slaves who dug the canal by hand. This canal, when completed, allowed for the transport of harvested timber. The canal is still in operation, connecting Chesapeake Bay and the Albemarle Sound, as a part of the Intracoastal Waterway.

Many of the slaves who dug the Dismal Swamp Canal were hired from landowners in Camden County. One of the most famous of these is a man named Moses Grandy, who twice raised the funds necessary to purchase his own freedom only to have his money taken and the deal broken.

CAMDEN COUNTY

The third time, he was successful, and found his way to Virginia. As a free man, Moses traveled and spoke in support of the abolitionist movement, raising money in order to free others from slavery, including his wife. In 1843, Grandy published an autobiography, titled Narrative of the Life of Moses Grandy, Late a Slave in the United States of America with the same goal of raising money to free slaves. A link to the text of his autobiography is included below.

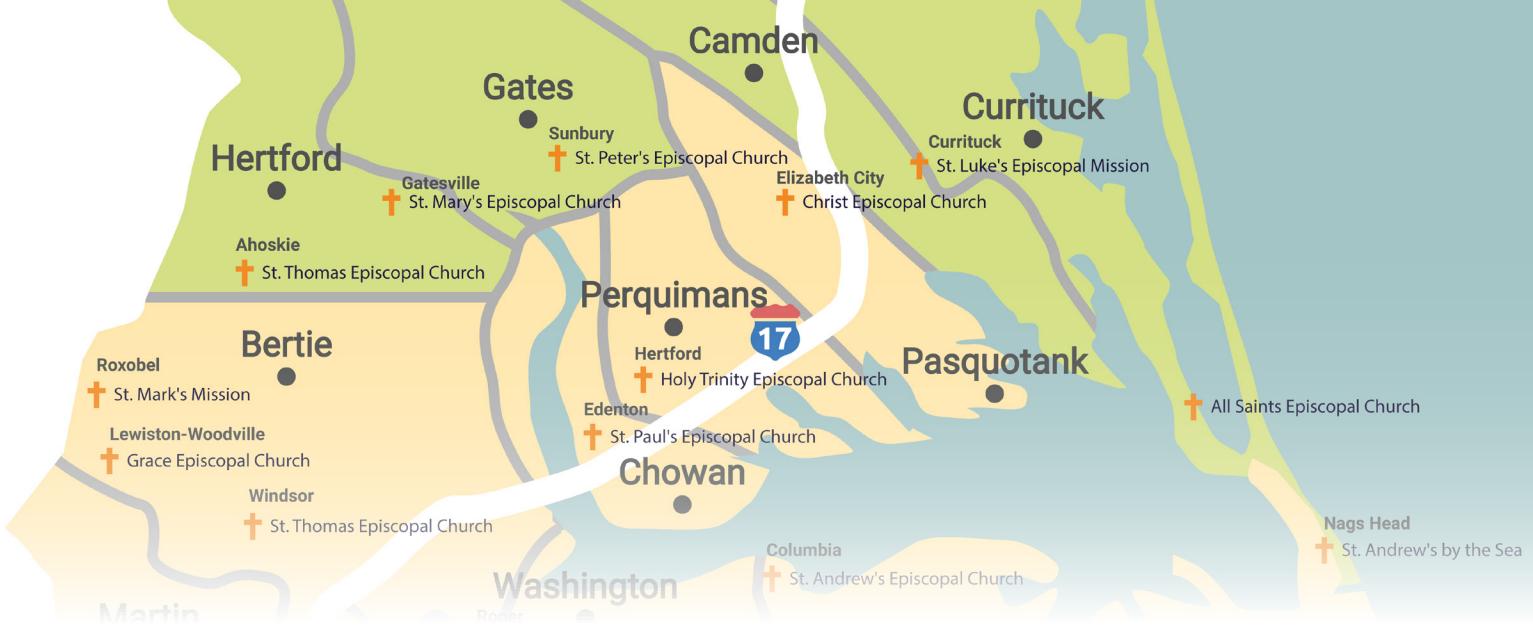
In recent years, Camden County has partnered with the NC Department of Commerce to explore possibilities for economic development. As a part of this work, a number of obstacles to growth were identified including a lack of industry, with a resulting low tax base, the lack of necessary infrastructure, and resistance to change from residents and previous leaders. COVID-19 has had a relatively low impact in Camden County, with 168 cases and 3 deaths at the time of writing.

Sources

Camden County: <https://www.camdencountync.gov>

Moses Grandy: <https://docsouth.unc.edu/fpn/grandy/grandy.html>

NCpedia: <https://www.ncpedia.org/geography/camden>



GATES COUNTY

Written by Susan Ward

The Chairman of [Gates County's Chamber of Commerce](#), recently said while speaking of Gates County “we are not in the middle of nowhere, we’re in the middle of everywhere”. What an epiphany! Whenever county residents travel throughout the state of NC, we often have to describe where we live in relation to what we are near...Edenton, Elizabeth City, Franklin and Suffolk, VA. Lately, I’ve noticed young professionals from Gates County on Facebook laughing as they compared stories about when they went off to college or work how they described where they grew up. Who they were speaking to determined what their answer might be. We are one of the few counties where people actually say they are from Gates County, not a city or town name! That being said, this exemplifies how the folks in Gates County regard their home county, one for all and all for one! The county seat is Gatesville with the other main town being Sunbury (both of which have an Episcopal Church, St. Mary’s and St. Peter’s) with various other townships and smaller crossroads populated by both traditional and new homes, country churches, farmland, woodland and swamps.

The main attraction for tourists is [Merchants Millpond State Park](#), known for its beautiful, massive bald cypress trees with “knees” showing just above the water with rustic hiking, canoeing and camping available. A modern visitor center offers information about the Millpond history with several museum-quality exhibits. A small gift shop operated by Friends of the Millpond help fund educational programs throughout the year.

Gates County was the home of NC Secretary of State, Thad Eure, known across the state for his hard work, friendly spirit and bow ties! A historic road sign was installed in 2019 to recognize him for his many years of service (1936-1989). The Gates County Historical Society has been vital in preserving the history of Gates County. Edith Seiling (age 101 at the time of this writing) was the driving force to create and continue the Historical Society. [Studio 32](#), our local art gallery and gift shop, recognized Mrs. Seiling in February 2019 for her contributions to the arts (including

GATES COUNTY

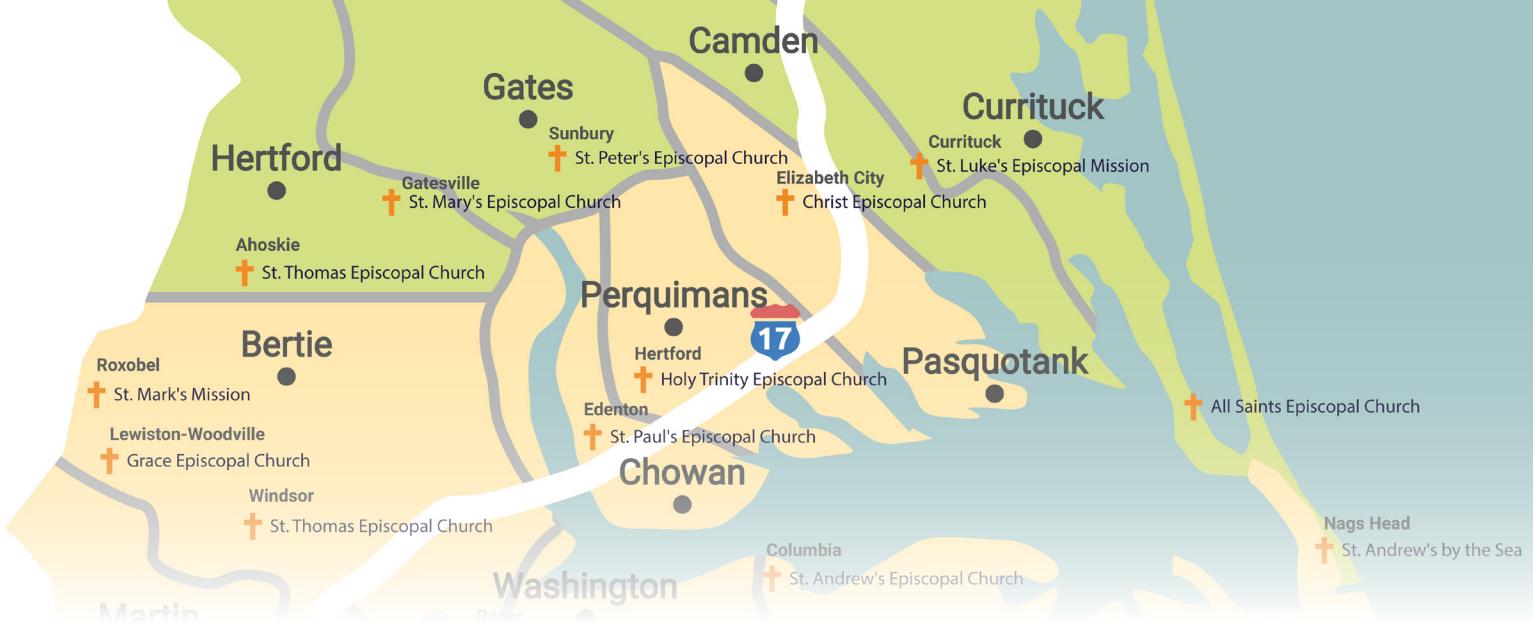
painting on glass) and was featured on NC Weekend on UNC-TV along with Studio 32 and their 50 local and regional artists, including her daughter and granddaughter!

For those interested in the early history of Gates County, two prominent names are Col John Alston and William Hunter. They were immigrants from England and received land as repayment for helping others in getting to the British Colony. They settled in the Bennetts Creek area of the county and were instrumental in early colonial life and politics of the NC colony. The statue of Horatio Gates, located in Gatesville, remains a controversy, and with a newly formed committee to study its relevance and appropriateness, soon we will know its fate. Another bit of local trivia is that the Sunbury Ruritan Club was the first chartered Ruritan Club in NC. That was in 1935 and they are still going strong helping our community.

Throughout the years, Gates County has been proud of their educational system (see [Gates County Schools](#)). Although small compared to many, we have produced many talented students in the fields of education, medical including many pharmacists, leaders in the non-profit world, the ministry, TV news, and print journalists, to name a few! The school system has been creative and progressive in finding ways to accommodate students living in a rural areas and helping them to be successful in an ever-changing world. Our educators are top-notch and go the extra mile!

We are a food desert with only one small grocery store and a few dollar stores over our 346 square mile county and very few restaurants. Transportation and health care continue to be problematic yet local governments always working to improve.

The coronavirus pandemic brought about 3 impactful events for our county. The first, Farm Chicks Honor Farm Stand, opened in March with a multitude of fresh vegetables. Their intentions were to help senior citizens in our community have a contact-less outdoor space to buy healthy food. They have remained open seven days per week! It has been a lifesaver for many in our community. The second event was the first ever protest for Black Lives Matter held side by side with our Sheriff's Dept. and organized by 2 former African-American students. Attendance was all ages and all races coming together, in masks, to support peace and justice. The third, signs of love (hearts) and positive messages have been posted by St. Peter's Episcopal Church, not only in Gates County, but in three other counties to spread love and hope during this challenging time. As I said earlier, all for one, and one for all in Gates County!



CURRITUCK COUNTY

Written by Lloyd Brinson

Currituck, Native American for “land of the wild goose,” has been a passageway and a destination for travelers and tourists of many species for hundreds, well, thousands of years. Located in the far northeastern corner of North Carolina, almost equidistant between Jamestown, Va. and Roanoke Island, NC, Currituck County is home to some of the oldest Atlantic Ocean ports, municipal buildings and schools in North America.

Our county is divided into three parts by Currituck Sound and its bays. Thousands of acres in Knotts Island, a close neighbor of Virginia Beach, and on the mainland next to Camden County are marshes, swamps and pocosins that serve as wildlife sanctuaries providing homes and rest stops for countless birds, both native and transient, as well as myriad other wildlife. Thousands of tourists drive south on the Caratoke Highway past large farms and farm markets through mainland Currituck to get to Dare County and to the northernmost strand of the Outer Banks, home to Corolla and Corova, part of Currituck County. Corolla is home to the northernmost lighthouse on the Outer Banks. The Currituck-to-Knotts Island ferry carries day travelers and a school bus mornings and evenings to give Knotts Island students access to middle and high school on the mainland.

Currituck County was established in 1668 as part of Albemarle County. It was then, and is now, a mecca for sports fishermen, waterfowl hunters, tourists, wildlife lovers and conservationists. The organization that became Ducks Unlimited began in Currituck County under the co-sponsorship of J. P. Knapp, a New York philanthropist and publisher of Colliers Magazine. Mr. Knapp built a home on Knotts Island and contributed financial support to schools and farmers' organizations locally and statewide. He provided the seed money to build a home for the N. C. Institute of Government in Chapel Hill.

Currituck “locals” enjoy watching the boat traffic as the seasons change.

CURRITUCK COUNTY

The Intracoastal Waterway runs through Currituck Sound from the Hampton Roads area and cuts through the mainland via the southern end of the Albemarle and Chesapeake Canal at Coinjock. In the spring, the Coinjock Marina's docks are lined with yachts large and not-as-large headed north for the summer. In the fall, until around Thanksgiving, the traffic is reversed, those same boats heading south for the winter. Commercial traffic on the Waterway knows no season. It is not uncommon for people fishing at the Veterans' Memorial Park in Coinjock to watch an enormous barge of scrap metal being pushed by a tugboat through the intracoastal canal headed for a recycling foundry farther down the coast.

Most of the population of 27,000 are middle and low income and are scattered in community "pockets" among sprawling farms. The food pantries, blessing boxes and similar ministries are constantly in need, especially now during the COVID-19 crisis. The well-traveled four-laned Carteret Highway provides a microcosm for the mixed blessings of the modern United States: The rich rural landscape, the farm markets, the exceptional restaurants – even a world-class vineyard – all leading to the natural beauty of the Outer Banks, create attractions that have caused an explosion of development in Moyock, the northernmost town in the county. The influx of the families moving into northern Currituck, most of whom will commute to Hampton Roads for work, is likely to stress the schools, highways and other parts of the infrastructure, challenging even the lucrative tax revenue from the pricey beach houses and businesses on the Outer Banks.

The conventional "points of interest" links I found did not reference one of the most remarkable landmarks in Currituck County. The historic Colored School at Jarvisburg is the oldest school for African Americans in North Carolina, perhaps in North America. The graveyard behind that shrine is the final resting place for one of many little-known African American heroes, Captain Benjamin J. Bowser, one of the leaders of the legendary all-black Pea Island Lifesaving Station, a unit of what would become the U S Coast Guard.

3 Things to Know About Historic Jarvisburg Colored School: <https://www.visitcurrituck.com/blog/3-things-to-know-about-historic-jarvisburg-colored-school/>

Things to Do in Currituck: <https://www.currituck.com/things-to-do.html>



BERTIE COUNTY

Written by Johnna Browne Lewis

Pronounced burr-TEE, Bertie County is named for the Lords Proprietors Henry and James Bertie. Bertie County is one of the largest counties in the state of North Carolina. With over 740 square miles of land, this expansive county has water on three sides. Bordered by the Roanoke River, Chowan River, and the Albemarle Sound, Bertie has some of the best fishing in the state. The county is also home to the Cashie River (CASH-eye), which begins and ends inside the county borders. The Sans Souci Ferry, which crosses the Cashie River, is a two-car ferry, that is one of only three remaining inland cable ferries in North Carolina. A land purchase in 2019 of 147 acres created the first public-beach access to recreational waters for county residents. The Bertie Beach neighbors the land that where archaeologists have found English artifacts circa the late 1500s and is believed to be an area where members of the Lost Colony established residence with Native Americans.

The backbone of Bertie's economy is agriculture, and the soil is perfect for growing peanuts; which makes the county one of the largest peanut producers in the state. The vast area of croplands and woodlands have hunters travelling from across the country to get a trophy buck. The County has eight incorporated townships which include Askewville, Aulander, Colerain, Kelford, Lewiston-Woodville, Powellsburg, Roxobel and the County Seat of Windsor. The county is the birthplace of former North Carolina Governor (1808-1810), David Stone, who made his home at Hope Plantation before moving to Wake County. Hope Plantation has been open to the public since 1965 to provide illustrations of the lives of Eastern North Carolina residents, including interpretations of the lives of enslaved persons during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Churches of various denominations are present, including one of the oldest Baptist Churches in the state of North Carolina; which is Sandy Run Baptist Church (1772).

One of the challenges faced by county residents is limited employment opportunities within the county, and many residents drive to neighboring counties for employment.

BERTIE COUNTY

Perdue Farms, Inc. and Avoca, LLC are two large plants in the county that provide jobs to area residents and beyond. Bertie is home of the Spooktacular 5k, the Aulander Peanut Festival, the Roxobel Ag Festival and several other wonderful community events. Professional Basketball player Kent Bazemore, who played for the NBA team the Sacramento Kings, is from Kelford. The county has a demographic makeup of over 19,000 people that is comprised of over 60% African American, over 30% White, and the remaining number made up of various other races such as Pacific Islander, Asian, and Hispanic. Bertie County is an economically deprived, food desert. The median household income is \$33,143 and most residents drive over twenty miles for fresh fruits, vegetables, and meats.

The Coronavirus pandemic closed the public schools for preK - 12th grade students and forced many area workers to stay at home. Mom and pop businesses like beauty shops, barber shops, florists, and restaurants suffered because of closures from the pandemic. The county is building a new public library and Agricultural Cooperative Extension Center complex in Windsor, which will open in 2021. We are a diverse county with a strong heritage that continues to adapt and grow as the world around us changes.

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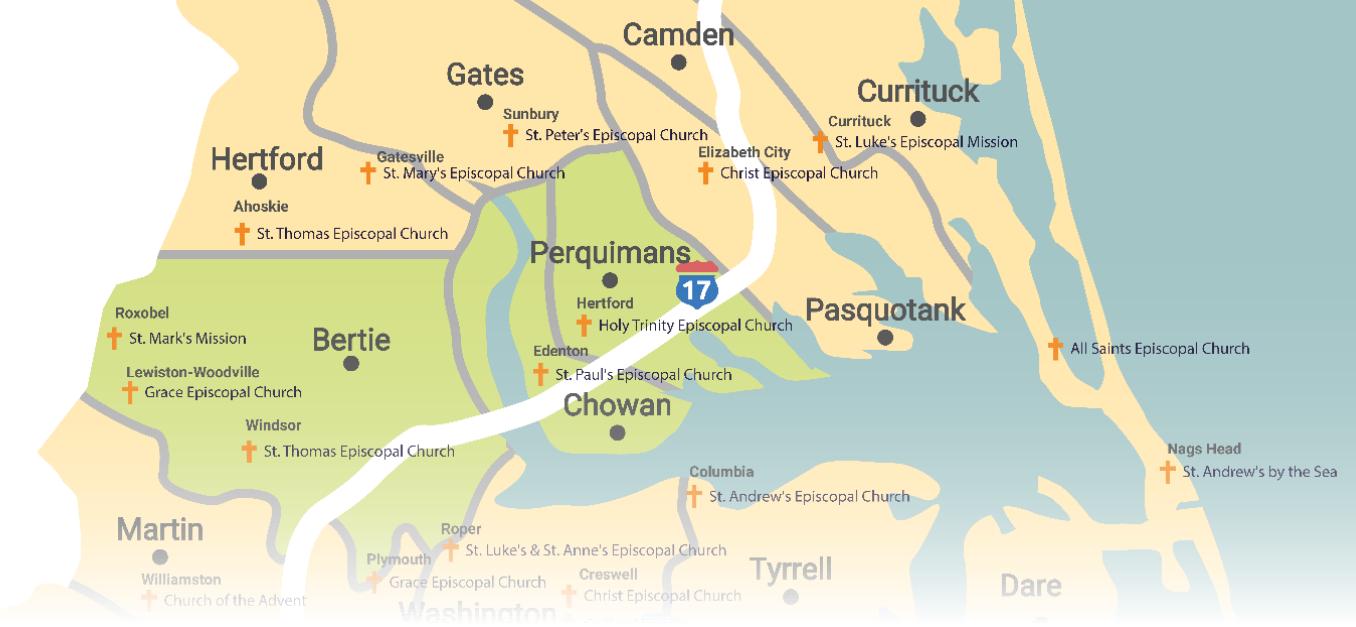
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CHOWAN COUNTY



PERQUIMANS COUNTY

Written by Philip McMullan

Formed in 1679, Perquimans County is one of the four original North Carolina counties, chartered by the Lords Proprietors over 350 years ago. The four comprise Carolina's "cradle of the colony". Hertford, the seat of government, was established in 1758; and it is one of the oldest towns in the state. Perquimans stretches 30 miles from the Great Dismal Swamp in Virginia to the Albemarle Sound and is served by navigable rivers on its east, west, and center. The county can boast of 100 miles of shoreline, offering unspoiled waterways. Lacking decent roads and bridges during colonial times, these waterways served as the road on which colonial waterborne farm 'trucks' (Periauger photo below) traveled to market. Smaller ocean-going vessels sailed from the wharves of the planters on Little, Perquimans, and Yawpim rivers, carrying the produce of the rich fields and dense forests to New England, to the West Indies and to England.

Natives have claimed that 'Perquimans' is the Algonkian word for "Land of beautiful women". Perquimans was occupied by the Weapemeoc (Yawpim) Indians in 1585 when Sir Walter Raleigh's explorers called this land "The Goodliest Soile under the Cope of Heaven". About 65 years passed before Englishmen came down from Virginia to settle in the county. Among the first to settle was George Durant whose deed from the Indian chief Kilcokonen is now in the Perquimans courthouse. It is the earliest surviving deed recorded in our State. The deed begins, "Know all men these Presents that I, Kilcokonen King of the Yawpims have . . . with ye consent of my People sold and made over and delivered to George Durant, a Parcel of land."

Nathanaell Batts and John Harvey were other well known early arrivals. John Harvey became the first of six Perquimans county residents (probably more than any other county) to serve as resident governor of Colonial North Carolina. The others were: John Jenkins (3 times), Thomas Jarvis (twice), Thomas Harvey, Henderson Walker, and William Glover. John Harvey and John Jenkins were governors during the Culpepper Rebellion when George Durant controlled the rebellion from behind the scenes.

PERQUIMANS COUNTY

Henderson Walker established the Church of England in Carolina. William Glover was governor during the Cary Rebellion. A second John Harvey of Perquimans was not governor but was a long-term speaker of the General Assembly. He led our Provincial Congress that declared North Carolina's independence.

George Fox, founder of the Society of Friends (Quakers), visited Perquimans in 1671. The first organized religion in North Carolina grew out of a Fox-led Friends Meeting on Phelps Point (now Hertford). Quakers immigrants soon dominated the Carolina General Assembly; a dominance that continued for years.

Fox first met with Joseph Scott on the land where Abraham Sanders would later build his Quaker homestead. Sanders' home is now the oldest brick house in the State (Newbold-White House photo below). The public business of North Carolina was transacted for many years at such Perquimans County planters' homes. Before the first courthouse was built, courts were held, councils convened, and a General Assembly meeting was held in Perquimans County homes. When you visit Hertford, be sure to visit the Newbold White House and our 1840s Holy Trinity Episcopal Church (photo below). Also, you may enjoy our museum praising New York Yankees Hall of Fame pitcher James (Catfish) Hunter of Perquimans County.

Periauger

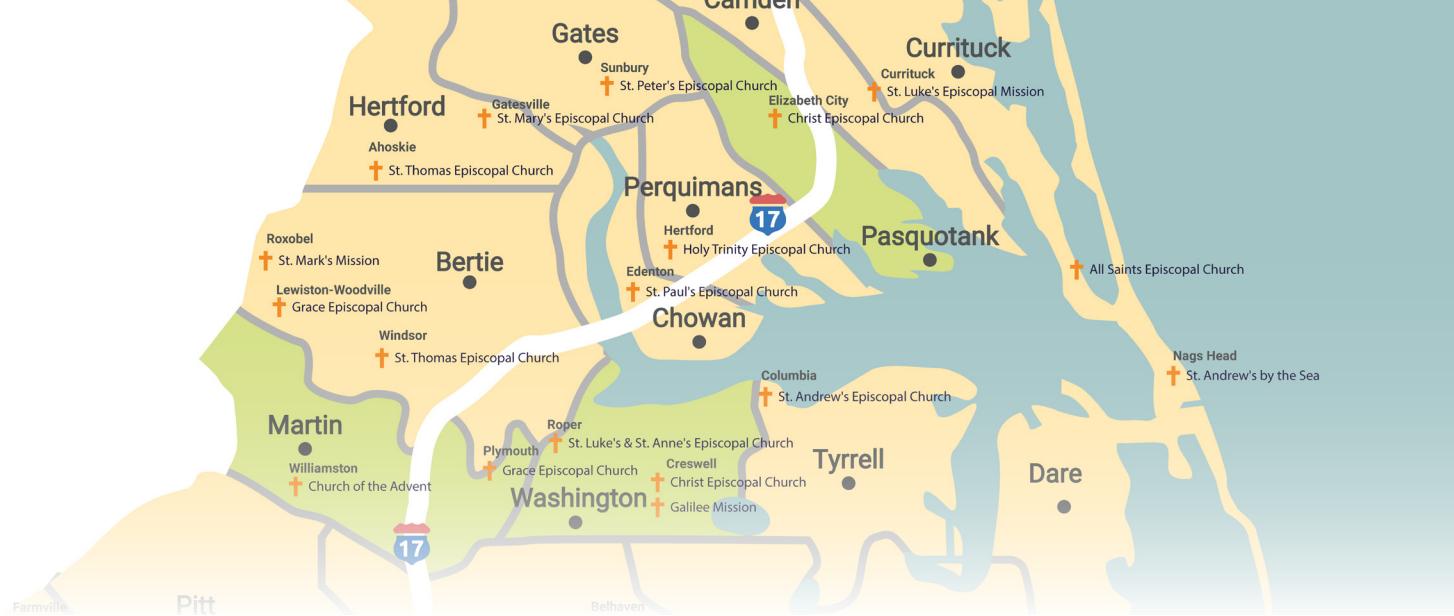


Newbold-White House



Holy Trinity Episcopal Church





MARTIN COUNTY

Written by Lucia Peel

There is just something special about Martin County. It's not simply the historic sites – although there are many. It's not the nightlife – honestly, there's not much. And it's not a "foodie haven" -- although our downhome southern cooking is excellent (and fattening). What makes this area so special are the people.

During the pandemic, it is volunteers from the local churches partnering to raise money to make sure all needy children are still receiving food even if not in school. And, it is these same churches collecting food items for Social Services and the local food bank. When times are even tougher than usual in this impoverished area, generous locals rise to the forefront.

It's a group of friends and family who formed the Hamilton Historic Commission to preserve St. Martin's Episcopal Church (circa 1881) and recently commissioned lovely gilded paintings by artist David Hewson. The Gothic-Victorian church was built with local materials except for the bell and the stained glass which were imported from England. The beautiful church is still used for a special Christmas mass every year.

It's a group of men who purchased the Sunny Side Oyster Bar from the original owners and have worked diligently to maintain its authenticity. If you can't steam it, you probably can't find it at Sunny Side Oyster Bar. One of the owners says: "All we have are oysters, shrimp, scallops, crab legs, sauce, butter, crackers and cold beer and broccoli and we sprinkle cheese on top of that." Despite the restaurant's sparse vegetable offerings — and only being open in months that have the letter "r" in their name — Sunny Side has remained a Williamston institution and a vestige of small-town USA since it opened in 1935.

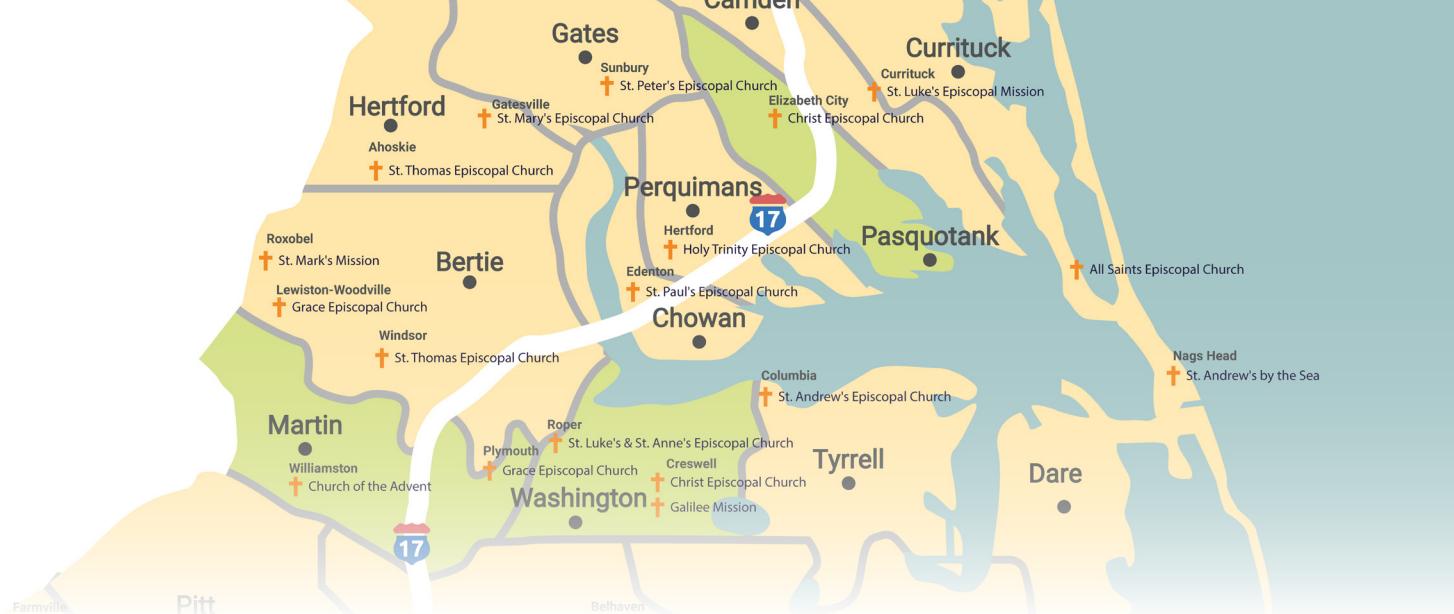
It's a group of fishermen, outdoor enthusiasts, nature lovers, hunters, tourism promoters, town and county officials who, when faced with yet another economic downturn, worked together to create

MARTIN COUNTY

Roanoke River Partners – an eco-tourism organization connecting visitors with opportunities to paddle, camp and explore the lower Roanoke River & the historic small towns found throughout the region.

It is an Episcopal priest who remained in the same parish for forty years because of his love for the people and the community. His spiritual outreach extended well beyond his own parish. When my father, a lifelong member of First Christian Church, was dying at UNC Hospitals of pancreatic cancer in 1984, this priest drove up regularly to visit, give comfort and simply watch Carolina football games with my Dad.

I waved goodbye to Martin County in 1976 when I left to go to UNC. As I packed, I told my father that I would not be coming back. He actually smirked. I've been back since 2003 and this town is my home and these people are my family.



PASQUOTANK COUNTY

Written by Daniel Cenci

Pasquotank County is located in the northeastern corner of North Carolina. The county is a peninsula, bordered by the Albemarle Sound to the south, the Pasquotank River to the east, the Perquimans River to the west and the Great Dismal Swamp to the north. Its proximity to navigable waters made it an early location for European settlement. The county is named for the Pasquotank Indians who inhabited the region prior to British colonization. The word Pasquotank means, “where the current divides.” The county was one of the four original precincts of the Albemarle County, which was established in 1664.

Although Pasquotank County began functioning as an independent precinct in 1668, it did not gain official county status until 1739. Some of the earliest religious activity in the county dates to the mid-1600’s when Quaker settlers from Virginia began establishing farmsteads in the region. In 1701 the acting governor established the Pasquotank Parish, and by 1708 an Anglican church and two chapels had been built in the county. An English vicar by the name of Charles Griffin was one of the first ministers to serve the parish, and in 1705 he founded the first public school in the state of North Carolina. His grave marker is located in the Episcopal Cemetery in Elizabeth City.

During the 18th century, the location of the county courthouse moved several times and in 1801, the county seat was moved from Nixonton to Elizabeth City. Elizabeth City (Originally Redding,) had been founded as a tiny port town along the Pasquotank River in the late 18th century. In 1793 work began on the nearby Dismal Swamp Canal, which would connect the coastal plain of North Carolina to the ports of Southern Virginia. The completion of the canal prompted the move of the county seat to Elizabeth City. Elizabeth City would become a wealthy and bustling port city for much of the 19th century. The town was named for local landowner (and tavern owner,) Elizabeth Tooley.

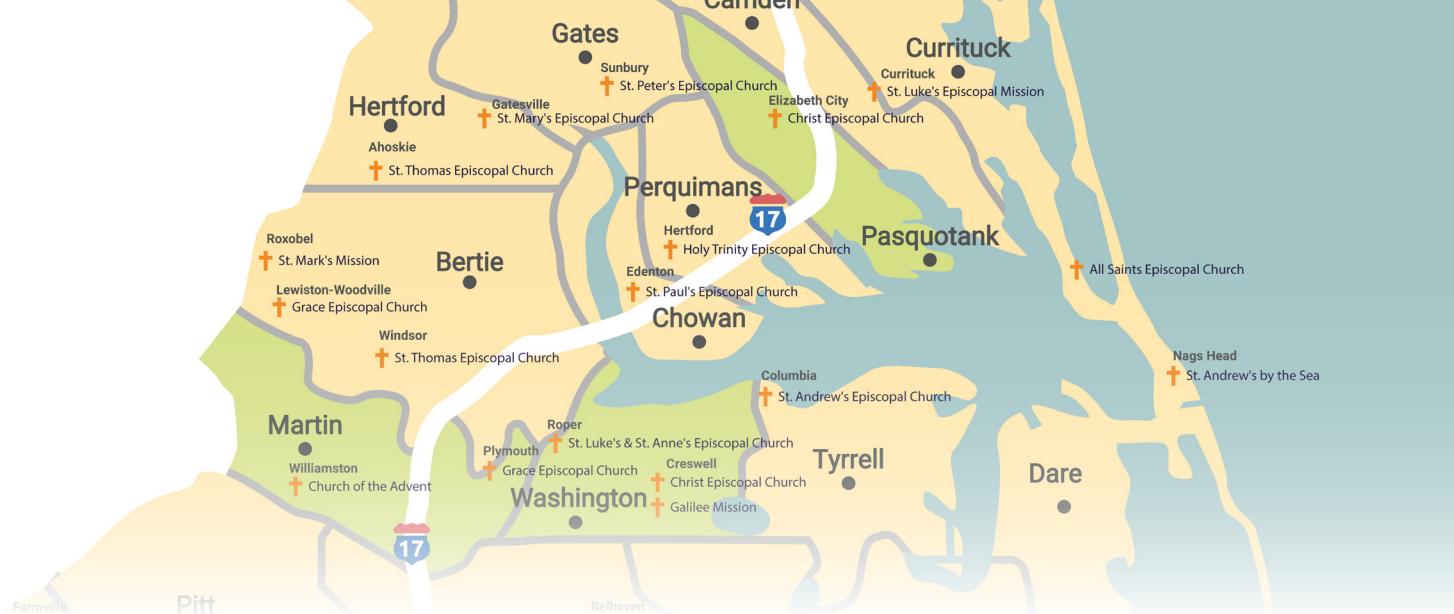
According to local legend, during the early 18th century, the famed pirate, Edward Teach

PASQUOTANK COUNTY

(Blackbeard,) frequented the waters around Pasquotank County and even maintained a residence near the south end of the peninsula. Pirate activity is said to have continued in and around Pasquotank County into the 19th century. Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries large farms and plantations spread across the county and on the eve of the American Civil War, Pasquotank County was one of the wealthiest counties in the state. Today, Pasquotank County contains the largest collection of existing antebellum homes in North Carolina.

In 1891 an African American representative from Pasquotank County by the name of Hugh Cale sponsored a bill in the North Carolina General Assembly to establish the “Elizabeth City State Colored Normal School” (Elizabeth City State University.) Elizabeth City State would become one of the premier institutions of learning for African Americans in the State of North Carolina, and currently is a highly ranked, multiethnic university and is part of the University of North Carolina System.

Today, Pasquotank County is rapidly changing. It continues to be a center for agriculture and maritime activities but is also seeing significant development as the suburbs of Hampton Roads spread south. Pasquotank County also contains the largest Coast Guard base in the United States. The base is one of the primary employers in the county and has significantly contributed to the revitalization of the county seat, Elizabeth City. The growth of the Coast Guard base has also brought a significant, transient population into the region.



WASHINGTON COUNTY

Written by Ashley Simpson

Washington County was officially formed in 1799. It consists of three incorporated towns: Roper, Creswell, and Plymouth, the county seat. Outside of the three incorporated towns, there are several unincorporated communities throughout the county that is known for its rich farmland and extensive forests.

Washington County is uniquely situated between several bodies of water. To the north of the county, you have the Roanoke River and Albemarle Sound, and to the southeast, you have Lake Phelps and Pungo Lake.

One of the unincorporated communities located on the Albemarle Sound that prospered early in its history is Mackey's Ferry. This area had its beginnings in the early 1700s when it was known as Lee's Point. Lee's Point served as a transfer "point" for lumber provided by the sawmill located in Roper at the time. In the early 1730s, William Mackey bought a ferry from his uncle, who lived in Chowan County. Mackey would create a ferry system that included four stops in Washington County and one stop in Chowan County. When William Mackey died in 1765, Lee's Point was renamed Mackey's Ferry in his honor.

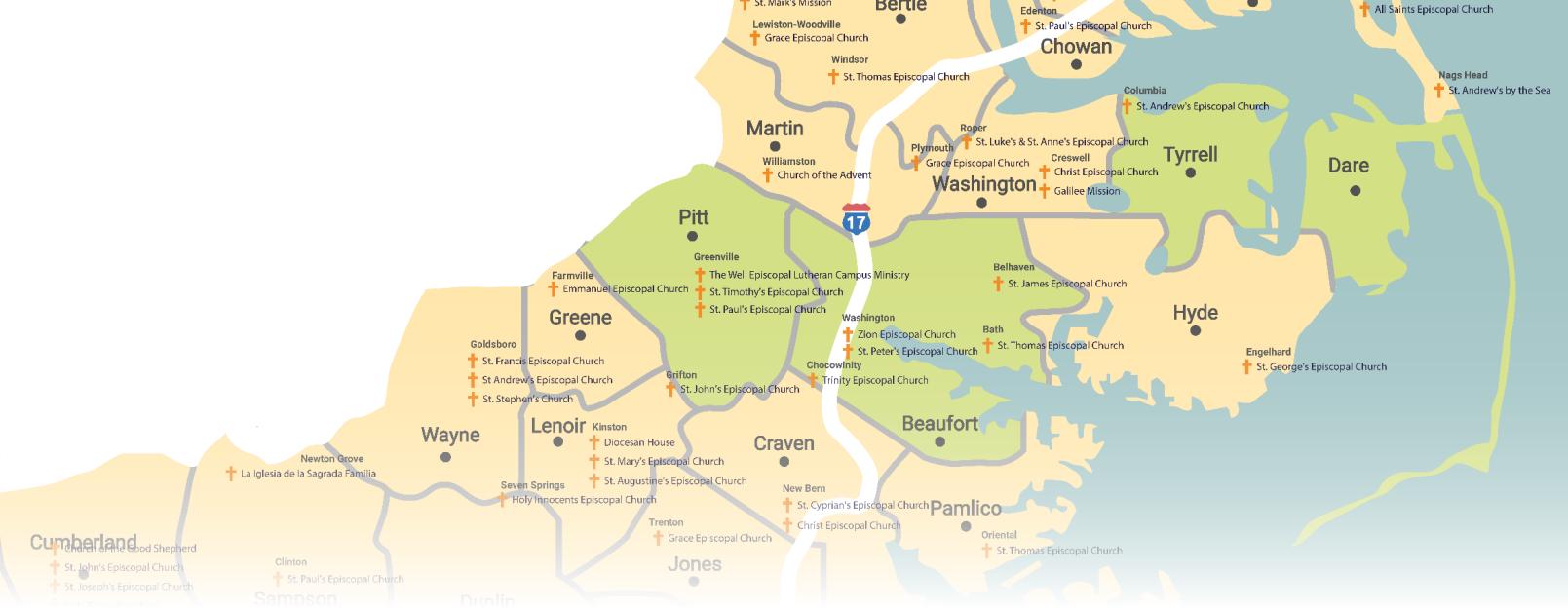
Mackey's Ferry reached its peak success in 1899 when the old two-vehicle ferry was replaced by Norfolk-Southern railway. They replaced the old ferries with the twin side-wheelers iron train ferry John W. Garrett, pictured below. In 1910, the John W. Garrett left Mackey's Ferry after Norfolk-Southern completed its 28,000-foot bridge across Albemarle Sound. In 1938, ferry use across the Albemarle Sound came to a complete halt with the completion of a highway bridge. Ferries were used in the area for 203 years.

The population of Washington County has been on a constant decline since the 1990s. As a rural county, only a little more than 50% of the population has an internet connection in their homes.

WASHINGTON COUNTY

Amid the current coronavirus pandemic, life in Washington County has not changed much outside of the regular adjustments people have had to make to continue working and living in safe conditions. Due to the county's rural nature, they have been able to keep their infection rate relatively low.





PITT COUNTY

Written by the Rev'd Bob Hudak

In the beginning were the Tuscaroras, an Iroquoian-speaking North American Indian tribe who perhaps lived for far more generations than we can imagine in the part of eastern Carolina which became Pitt County in 1761. For avid historians who wish to explore in more depth the fascinating story of Pitt County's history, I recommend reading the *Chronicles of Pitt County, N.C. 1982*. Here are a few highlights:

- The newly created county was named in honor of William Pitt, the elder, Earl of Chatham, who was then Prime Minister of England, and under whose administration England was successful in every quarter of the globe.
- For over a century Pitt County had relied solely on the growing of cotton for its cash crop whereas the Piedmont area of the state had concentrated on tobacco. In time, farmers in Pitt County viewed tobacco as a means of increasing their income – and by 1891 Greenville had its first tobacco warehouse. In time, Pitt County became the largest tobacco producing county in the nation.
- With the development of a tobacco market, businesses grew, and railroads facilitated growth in all areas of the county. By 1880, Farmville was a town which had shown steady progress. Grifton became a town between 1880 and 1890.
- Improvements in transportation and growth in business increased a need for education. The N.C. Legislature gave Pitt County the green light in 1897 to form its own Board of Education. Bethel was the first town in the county to vote a special tax and establish a graded school in 1902, followed by Greenville, Ayden, and Grifton.
- On October 5, 1909, the East Carolina Teachers' Training School was opened for the training of teachers for public schools. The school could hold 250 boarding pupils.
- In 1946 the only hospital available was Pitt General Hospital, a 42-bed facility opened in 1924 by four physicians. On February 8, 1951, the first patient was transferred to the 'most modern medical institution in the eastern part of the state' – a \$1.4 million facility with a 120-bed capa-

PITT COUNTY

city. All this was back in the days when Pitt County Memorial Hospital had 38 physicians on the medical staff, 50 nurses, and 75 support staff (AND...the cost of a private room with a bath was \$11.00 a day)!

- In April, 1977, a new Pitt County Memorial Hospital opened its doors the same month the School of Medicine received accreditation for a four-year medical education program.
- In 1790 when the first national census was taken, Pitt County had a population of 8,275. Today, Pitt County is a hub in the eastern part of the state with a population of 180,742 (2019 statistic).

Early Church of England communicants who had settled in Eastern N.C. were served by a series of circuit riders. Communion was rare with only three or four people participating. The first priest to serve eastern N.C. was Alexander Steward, rector of St. Thomas Parish in Bath. (I am grateful for Ann Harrison's historical research found in *The People of St. Paul's*, published in 2013.)

Ann makes note of the first organized Greenville congregation in 1825 named St. James. Rev. George Freeman reported on the congregation after a visit in 1827: "The congregation is small, consisting of a few gentlemen residents in town and two families in the country. One communicant lives in town; the other family is 17 miles away."

In 1846, the name of the parish was changed from St. James to St. Paul's – and in 1847, St. Paul's was admitted into the Diocese of North Carolina. According to the archives, the parish consisted of 15 whites and 22 black slaves who belonged to the white families.

In 1930, the Rev. A. Lillicrop requested funds from the Executive Council of the Diocese of East Carolina for the establishment of a Student Center to serve students attending East Carolina Teachers' College. The resolution was adopted and a specific area within the new parish house at St. Paul's became the home away from home for college students. The students named it "Friendly Hall" because of the warmth they felt there and the care they received from Mrs. Pick (Parnel Pickelseimer). According to one source, there would often be 40 to 50 students (Episcopalians and their friends) present.

In 1977, a new mission congregation came to birth when the St. Paul's Vestry officially approved what became the newest parish in the diocese: St. Timothy's. The new congregation began holding services on January 8, 1978, at the Seventh-Day Adventist Church in Greenville. It's good to know that there are four Episcopal Churches in Pitt County: St. John's, Grifton; Emmanuel, Farmville; St. Timothy's and St. Paul's, Greenville – all with their unique history in living the mission of the Church to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ.

Pitt County is one of the fastest growing regions in the state with both opportunities and

PITT COUNTY

challenges. Institutions like Vidant Medical Center and East Carolina University have attracted an extraordinarily diverse population of citizens many of whom first came here as immigrants. These neighbors - in many instances, spiritual companions - have enriched our cultural experience beyond what some of us expect or imagine.

Like many of the other 32 counties in our diocese, Pitt County has many good, resourceful, hard-working people struggling to keep their heads above water (even before COVID-19) – in need of health care. Likewise, we have people in Pitt County who live in the shadows of our community: good, hardworking people of faith who live in fear of either being suddenly deported or having a loved one in their family taken into custody. Fortunately, there are growing congregational relationships networking together to identify and serve the needs of our most vulnerable neighbors.

Since 2013 when it first began, the Interfaith Clergy Standing for the Community has formed a strong collaborative network committed to building bridges. Working closely with The Food Bank of Central and Eastern NC, along with public school social workers, the Interfaith Clergy started a “Community Feeding Our Children” initiative to assist students and their families in all 37 Pitt County public schools who qualify for the federally-funded Community Eligibility Program (more commonly called the ‘free lunch program’). It’s good to know that Emmanuel has a daily soup kitchen; St. Paul’s a weekly food pantry – and St. Timothy’s is a key leader in the daily lunch hour at the community JOY Soup Kitchen.

Our Interfaith Clergy Standing for the Community had a grand opening for the Pitt County Community Resource Center in October. This is a collaborative initiative established with the City of Greenville, Pitt County, United Way of Pitt County, Vidant Health Foundation, the North Carolina Council of Churches, and Lutheran Services of the Carolinas. Because we had the foresight to mobilize as an interfaith network during Hurricane Matthew, we were able to obtain the use of an 8,100 square foot warehouse that became a hub not just for our area, but for areas harder hit such as Bertie County. The newly established Disaster Relief Committee of our diocese at the time provided some generous funding made available by Episcopal Relief and Development.

As we journey from county to county, I’m grateful to share this resource that might be helpful to some of our parishes serving members of their communities during this pandemic who might be in need of supplies.

Some 75 congregations in Bertie, Martin, Beaufort and Pitt are now connected as our Community Unity Resource Center is equipped to store and make available such items as sanitizers, face shields and masks (a million arrived last month at The Center); baby and adult diapers, blankets,

PITT COUNTY

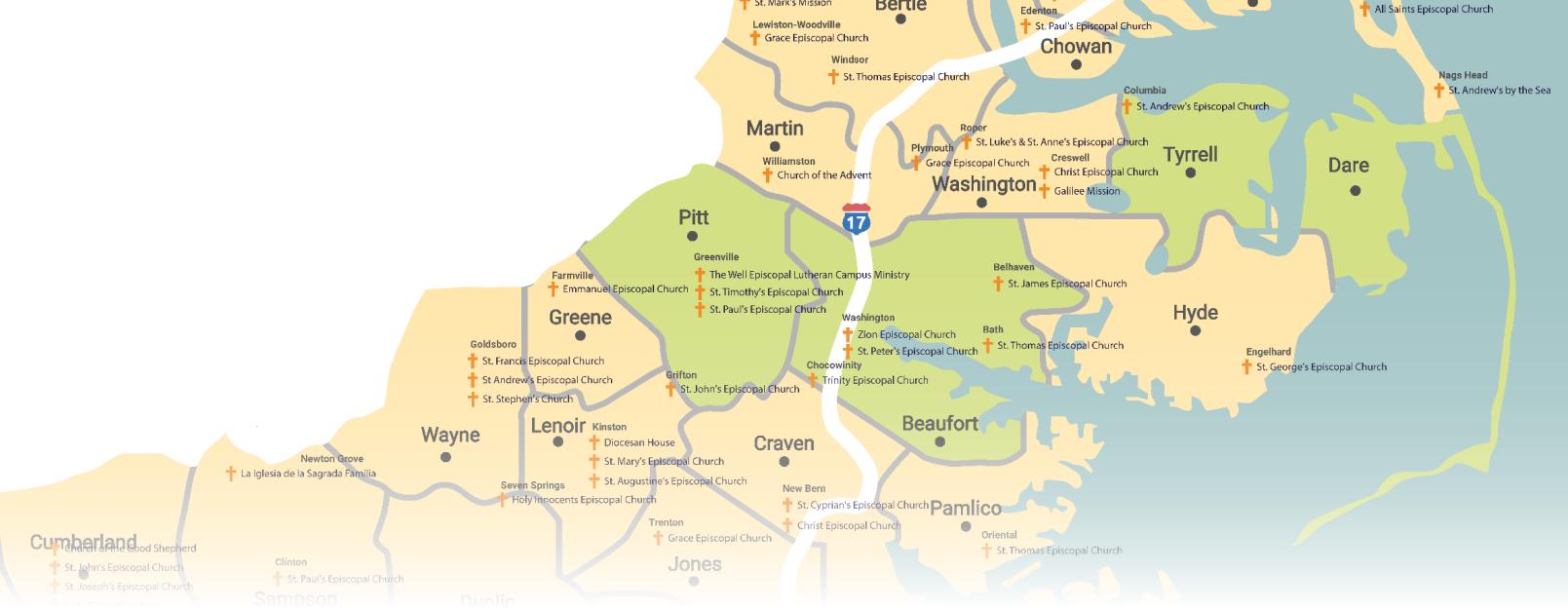
hygiene cleaning kits – and supplies of non-perishable food.

There's much more I can share, opportunities and challenges, given the racial reckoning stirred this summer by the death of several people of color, starting with George Floyd. But for now, it's enough to say that more than a few initiatives toward racial equity are taking place through cross-racial conversations in our churches and community which are aimed toward the transformation of our human hearts and minds. Miracles are happening as we put more energy into our hopes and dreams than in our fear.

In the beginning were the Tuscaroras...

The journey continues and as we move to the next county, I offer a Native American Prayer.

“Now Talking God
With your feet I walk
I walk with your limbs
I carry forth your body
For me your mind thinks
Your voice speaks for me
Beauty is before me
And beauty is behind me
Above and below me hovers the beautiful
I am surrounded by it
I am immersed in it
In my youth I am aware of it
And in old age I shall walk quietly
The beautiful trail.”



BEAUFORT COUNTY

Written by the Rev'd Fred Clarkson

Beaufort County is nestled amid six surrounding counties in East Carolina and it is dissected by the Pamlico and Tar rivers as they trend toward the state's interior in the direction of Greenville. The county was established in 1712 and boasts the oldest city named after the first president, Washington, the county seat, along with a few other towns such as Belhaven and Bath. In fact, Bath is the town where the oldest Episcopal Church in the state, St. Thomas, is located. The county has a strong Episcopal church presence with St. James in Belhaven, St. Peter's in Washington, St. Thomas in Bath, Trinity in Chocowinity, and Zion in Washington.

Washington was a revolutionary city surrounded by loyalist cities during the American Revolution and it served as a stopping point on the underground railway for enslaved persons, who were escaping prior to the Civil War. Much of the City of Washington burned during the Civil War, but many structures throughout the county date back to before American independence, especially if one heads to Bath with its serene, idyllic streets and waterfront parks. The rich history of the Beaufort includes some notable figures such as Blackbeard the pirate, who lived in Bath for a time. More recently and in a different vein, a notable resident was the Rev. Wendy Raynor, the first woman ordained in North Carolina, who served at Zion in Washington.

On the west side of Washington in Beaufort County, North Carolina there sits a building tucked away in a residential area that housed St. Paul's Episcopal Church for over five decades. St. Paul's was a parish whose membership was predominantly African American in number with over a century of history. St. Paul's was organized out of the determination of two women lay leaders Mrs. Maggie Bonner and Mrs. Allen Payton, who organized the Parish in 1904 where it engaged the community and helped many throughout its history. Its history included two structures built with the support of other Episcopal Churches in the county. The church was known for its work with youth and at one point had the largest Sunday school in town. Sadly, the town of which it was a

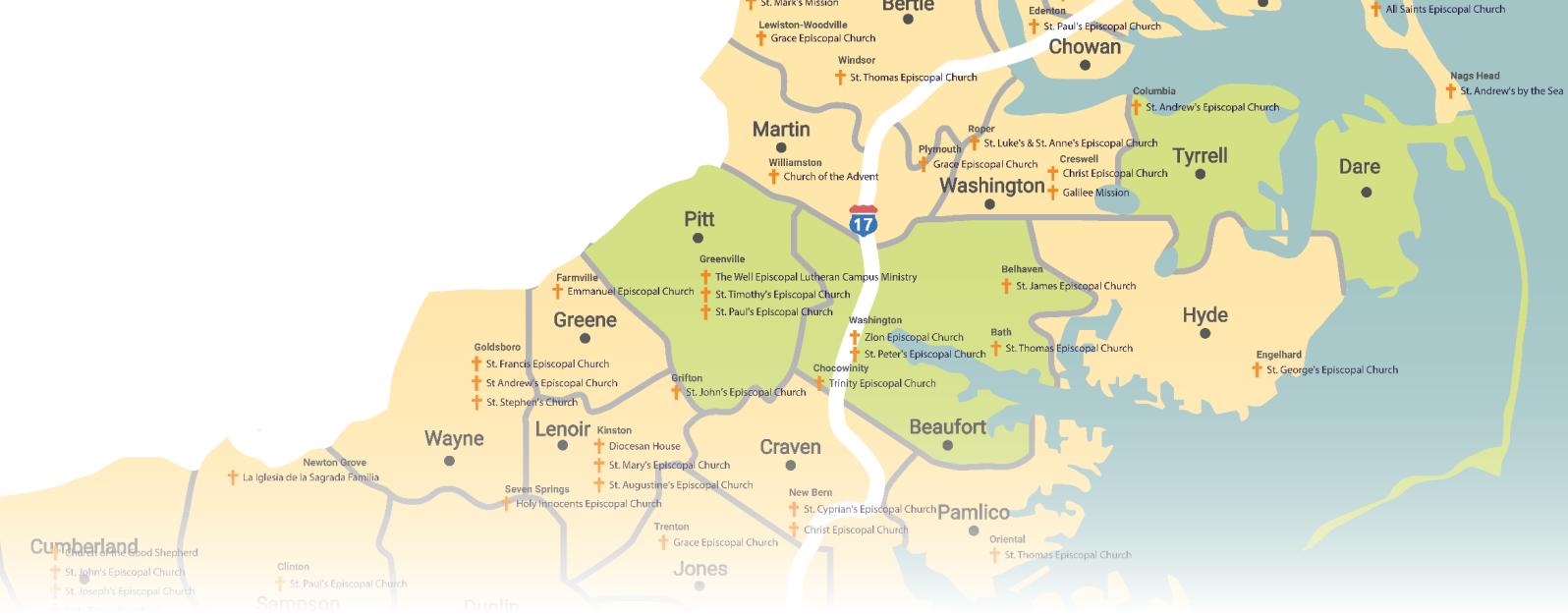
BEAUFORT COUNTY

part changed, leaving little to no room for residential expansion. The building that housed St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Washington closed in 2012, but the parish lives on in the former members who have become part of other parishes, and in the lives, it touched in the course of over a century of faithful service for the sake of the Gospel.

As folks participate in the Journey Through East Carolina, we might think about the practice of pilgrimage which takes place every year in December in Mexico as thousands of people walk hundreds of miles from their ancestral hometowns to the Basilica of the Virgin Mary of Guadalupe on Tepeyac Hill on the outskirts of Mexico City. St. Peter's – San Pedro Episcopal Church in Washington has a Spanish-Language service and has had it for over a decade. Some members of the congregation also participate in the pilgrimages in December, when they go home for several weeks in December. Under normal circumstances many people undertake a relatively short walk, in honor of the practice from Greenville to Washington in Beaufort County on the Feast day of the Virgin Mary of Guadalupe, which falls on December 12.

From a culturally diverse Vacation Bible School in Belhaven to an active outreach on the eastern end of Washington, to welcoming tourists in Bath, to Toys for Tots in downtown Washington, to Trunk or Treat in Chocowinity, Beaufort County's congregation are actively engaged with their communities.

As those who journey through East Carolina virtually move toward Wilmington a little over twenty miles of their journey will be in Beaufort county and they will go through the county seat of the city of Washington.



TYRRELL COUNTY

Written by Janet Walker

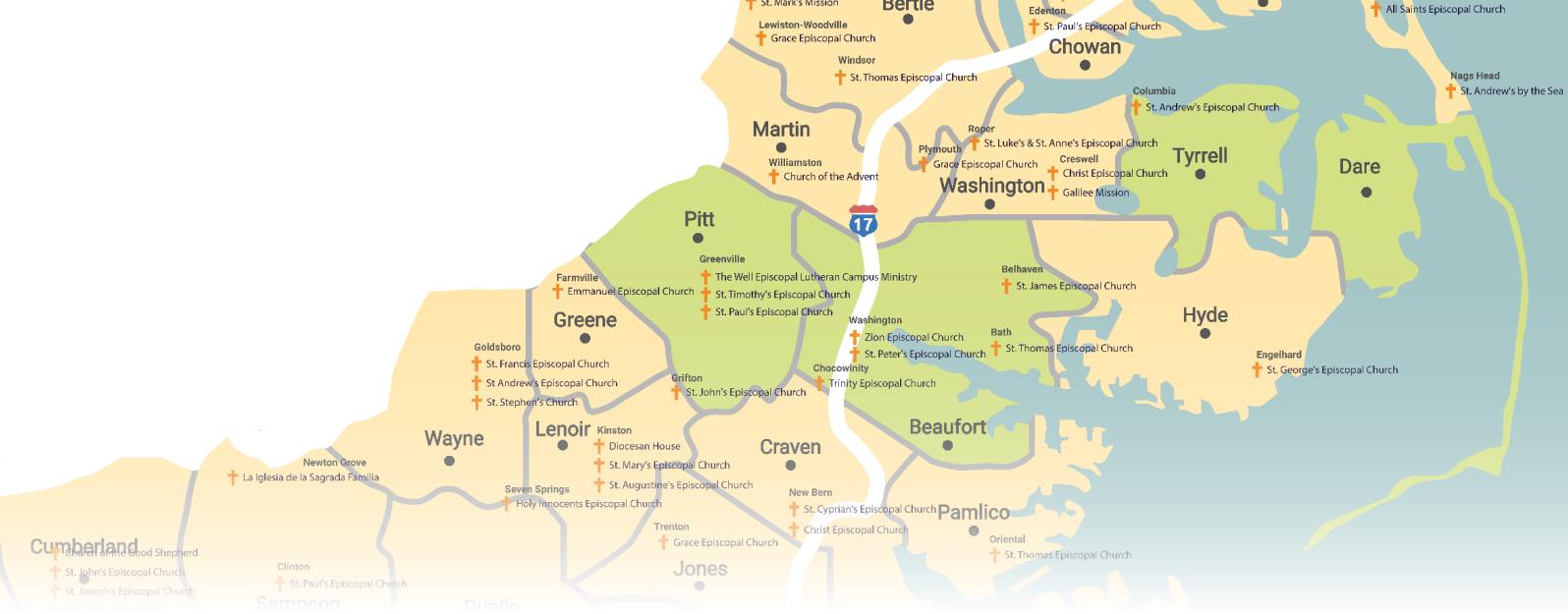
Tyrrell County was chartered in 1729 and named for Sir John Tyrrell, one of the Lord's Proprietors of the Albemarle. The county is located on the Albemarle peninsula. A place of natural beauty, it is bounded on the north by the Albemarle Sound, on the east by the Alligator River and the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway, to the south by Hyde County, and to the west by Washington County.

Columbia, the county seat, is the only incorporated town in the county. Unincorporated communities are Alligator, Gum Neck, Kilkenny, Sound Side, Frying Pan, Bulls Bay, River Neck, Scuppernong and Fort Landing.

Rivers, creeks, and canals abound in fish and wildlife, making the county a desired location for hunters, fishermen, bird watchers and bear watchers. The Pocosin Arts School of Fine Craft and Contemporary Craft brings artists to our area who instruct in person and now during the pandemic through virtual workshops. Classes are available for all age groups.

Tyrrell County is the home of the Tyrrell County Visitor's Center, which is operated by the Partnership For The Sounds, Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge, Columbia Theater Cultural Resources Center, the Eastern 4-H Center, and the Scuppernong River Interpretive Boardwalk. Annual celebrations are the Scuppernong River Festival and the Rivertown Christmas Festival.

Tyrrell County, the least populated and poorest county in the state, has been affected financially by the closing of a state prison, a winery, a large commercial laundry and will be affected by the a bank's forthcoming relocation. The pandemic has impacted all our businesses. Many people have either lost their jobs or had their work hours shortened. It is a difficult time; we are doing our best to help one another.



DARE COUNTY

Written by Tess Judge

Dare County is one of North Carolina's coastal counties and has a very interesting history. Dare County was named for America's first English child, Virginia Dare. This county was originally part of Tyrrell, Hyde and Currituck Counties. In 1870, the North Carolina Legislature passed an act which did separate out Dare County.

Manteo is the county seat and was named in honor of the Croatan who helped the English establish the Roanoke Island Colony. Dare County has five other communities within the county which are Kitty Hawk, Nags Head, Wanchese, Kill Devil Hills and Southern Shores. Dare County also includes Hatteras Island.

Before the English settlement, Dare County was occupied by the Croatans and was the location of colonization attempts. During the 1580's, Sir Walter Raleigh, who was a famous British adventurer, worked to establish a colony. Sir Walter Raleigh considered this a New World. He tried to establish this on Roanoke Island but the hardship of obtaining resources made this extremely difficult. After many years of separation from the Old World, rescue groups were not able to find any colonists. This remains a mystery today.

One of the very notable times in the history of Dare County was the success of Wilbur and Orville Wright's first flight, which occurred December 17, 1903. This is known in history to be one of the most important events of the twentieth century. The Wright Brothers National Memorial celebrates this event each year in December. This event certainly changed the way people travel all over the world today.

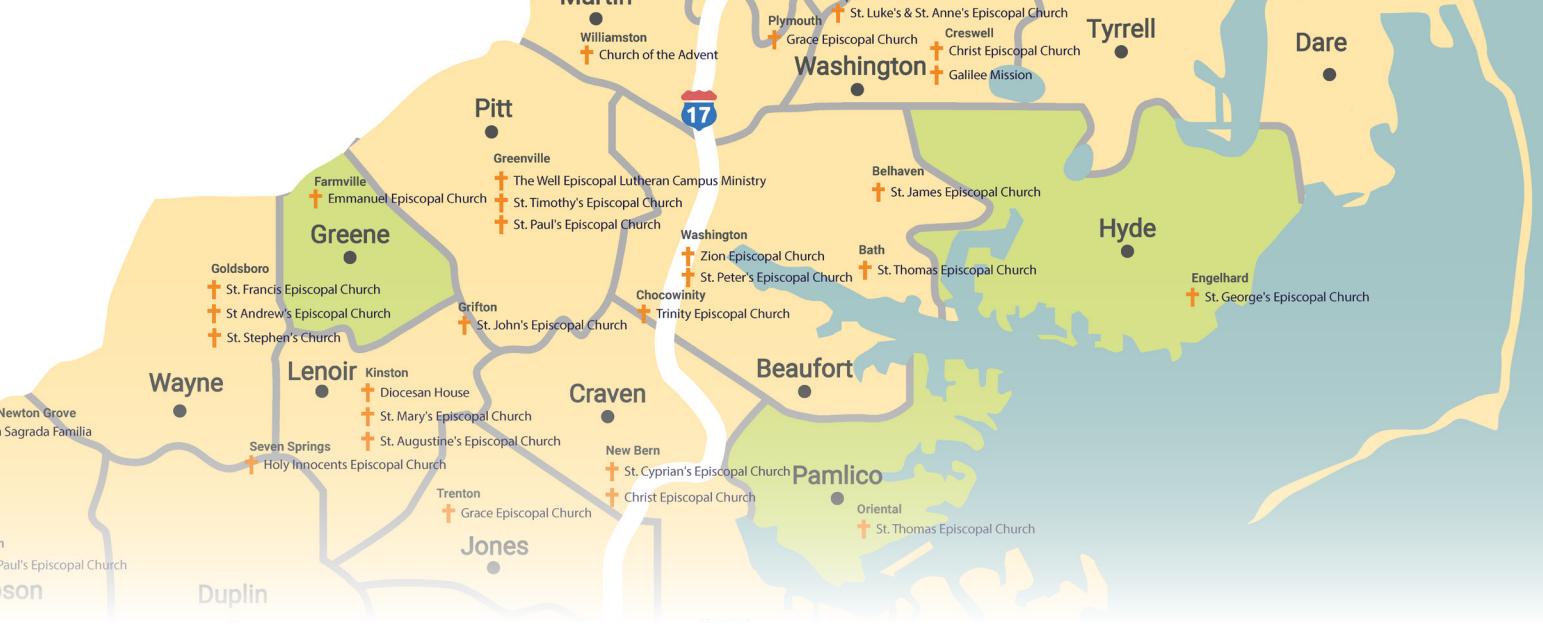
In 2018, Dare County had a population of 35.7k people with a medium age of 46.1 and a medium household income of \$58,012. Tourism and commercial fishing are the main industries in Dare County. Dare County has two Episcopal churches, which are St. Andrews by the Sea in Nags Head

DARE COUNTY

and All Saints in Southern Shores.

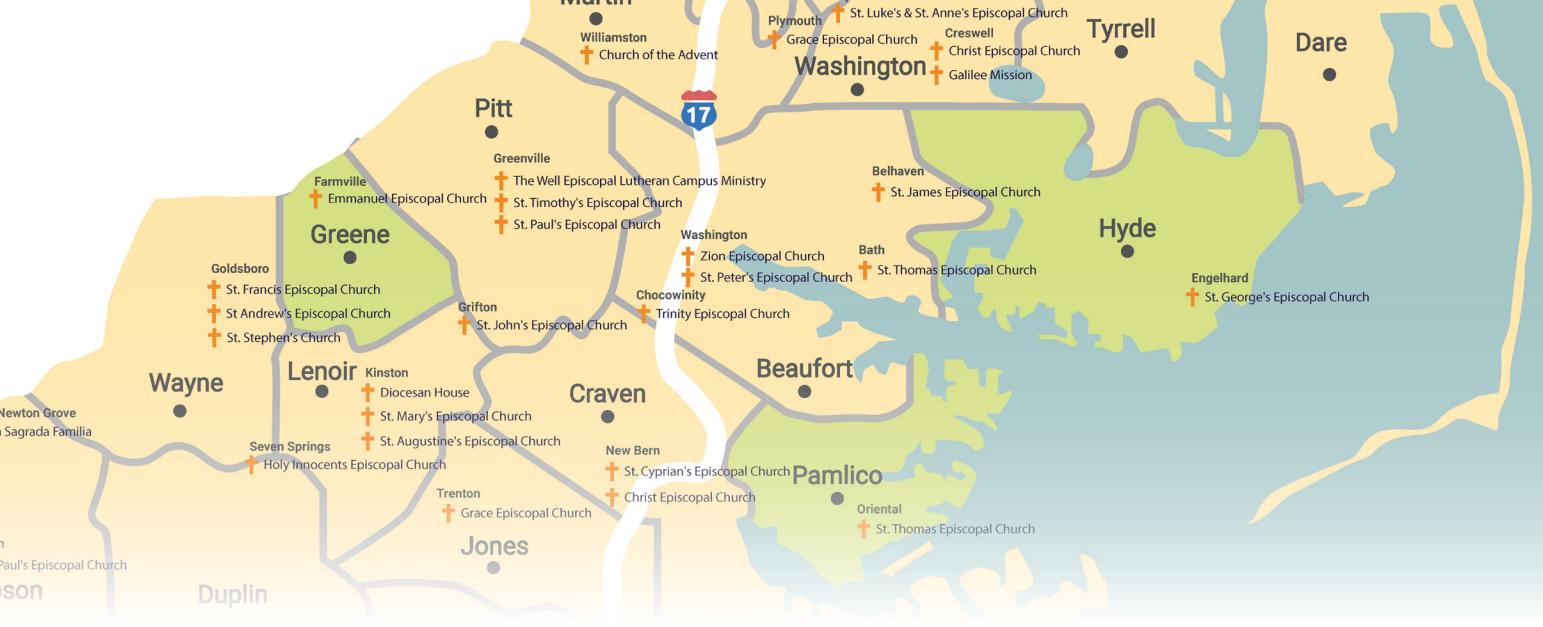
The COVID-19 Pandemic caused Dare County to close access to visitors for two months in the spring of 2020. This created a hardship for the county and its people as many work in the tourism industry in Dare County. Schools began online learning as well.





HYDE COUNTY

No story submitted



GREENE COUNTY

Written by George Mewborn and the Rev'd Tom Warren

Greene County is centrally located in North Carolina's coastal plain, bound on the north by Wilson County, east by Pitt, south by Lenoir, and west by Wayne. The county is bisected by the beautiful Contentnea Creek, a tributary of the Neuse River. The creek has played a major role in the county's development; large enough to navigate, the creek connected early settlers with trading centers like New Bern.

The Contentnea Creek basin was inhabited by the Tuscarora Indian tribe when Europeans made their first contact in the late seventeenth century. Colonial surveyor and naturalist John Lawson visited the region in 1700 and documented the topography, plant and animal life, and culture of the native inhabitants in "A New Voyage to Carolina" (1710). In 1711, tensions between the Tuscaroras and new European settlers to the region led to the beginning of the conflict known as the "Tuscarora War." The struggle reached its climax on March 20-22, 1713 with the battle of Neoheroka Fort, a Tuscarora stronghold on the Contentnea Creek five miles northwest of present-day Snow Hill. Colonial forces aided by Native American mercenaries defeated the Tuscarora, and by 1715, most of the natives had dispersed, many to upstate New York where the Tuscarora became the sixth nation of the Haudenosaunee. At the tercentenary commemoration of the battle in 2013, a monument was dedicated to remember the presence of the Tuscarora in their homeland; the monument is located on Highway 58 near the Neoheroka battlefield, which had earlier been added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2009.

Settlement by European immigrants in the Contentnea Creek basin began soon after the relocation of the native inhabitants. Present-day Greene County evolved from its colonial-era parent, Craven County, which was subdivided in 1746 to form Craven, Johnston, and Dobbs counties. Dobbs was later subdivided in 1779 to form Wayne County, and in 1791, Dobbs was dissolved when Glasgow and Lenoir were formed. Glasgow County was named for North Carolina's first Secretary of State James Glasgow, a resident of the county. However, when Glasgow was implicated

GREENE COUNTY

ed. in a land fraud, the county was renamed Greene in 1799 in honor of General Nathanael Greene of Revolutionary War fame (the county's flag is an adaptation of Greene's battle flag from the Battle of Guilford Courthouse in Greensboro, NC). Snow Hill is the county seat and was established as the site of the courthouse in 1811 and incorporated in 1828. Other towns in the county are Hookerton (1817), Walstonburg (1908), and Maury (1911).

On November 14, 1810, resident General Thomas Holliday made the following observations from his home at Hawlanding in Greene County:

"The first Settlements in Greene was made About the date of 1710 by emigrants from the North Countys of this State, Virginia, and some few from Mereland from which time for several Years they continued to live in a most retched State of poverty possessing few if any of the comforts of Life. But from prudence and industry . . . the inhabitance of Greene County have been well fed and well clothed for many years past, and at this time participates in many Luxurys of Life. . . . Greene County contains about 500 familys and is about equal in Sise to eighteen square miles which would be about 240 acres to each family, the everage welth would be about equal to \$5000 but as in all other places welth is very disproportioned Some possessing fare more and Some a great deal less. . . . The inhabitance Generally live in framed house with chimneys of brick which are comfortable but seldom eligant."

Holliday was somewhat mistaken concerning several facts—Greene County is 265 square miles (169,600 acres) and was settled beginning in the 1720s—but he was correct in describing the modest agrarian lifestyle of many early residents and the fact that wealth was often disproportionate among people in the county. Today, the county is still a farming community with some light industry and retail business. Although its 21,000 residents navigate with GPS and educate with laptops, they live amid fields of soybeans and peanuts, corn and wheat, cotton and tobacco, all surrounded by pine and hardwood forests where deer, foxes, and wild turkeys roam. One of the county's greatest assets is its progressive and innovative public school system, known nationally for its STEM program and incorporation of technology into the curriculum in grades K-12.

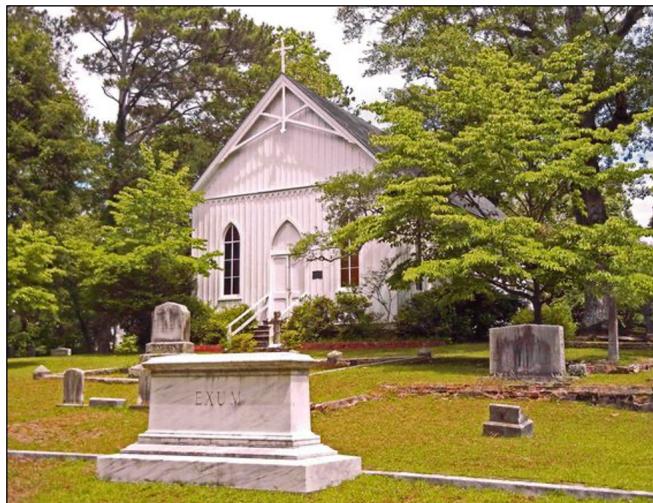
The primary Christian denominations in Greene County are Original Free Will Baptist, United Methodist, and Pentecostal Holiness. Episcopalians have had a significant historic presence in the county, however. The first Anglican congregation in the county (northern Dobbs County at the time) was organized by the Vestry for St. Patrick Parish on May 3, 1770. The assembly agreed to build a chapel on property owned by Abraham Shepherd and Captain John Murphrey adjacent to Contentnea Creek near Shepherd's Ferry (later the town of Contentnea). Contentnea Chapel, also called Little Goshen Chapel because of its location on an old field called Little Goshen, was completed by spring of 1772 and served an active congregation through the 1780's and possibly as late

GREENE COUNTY

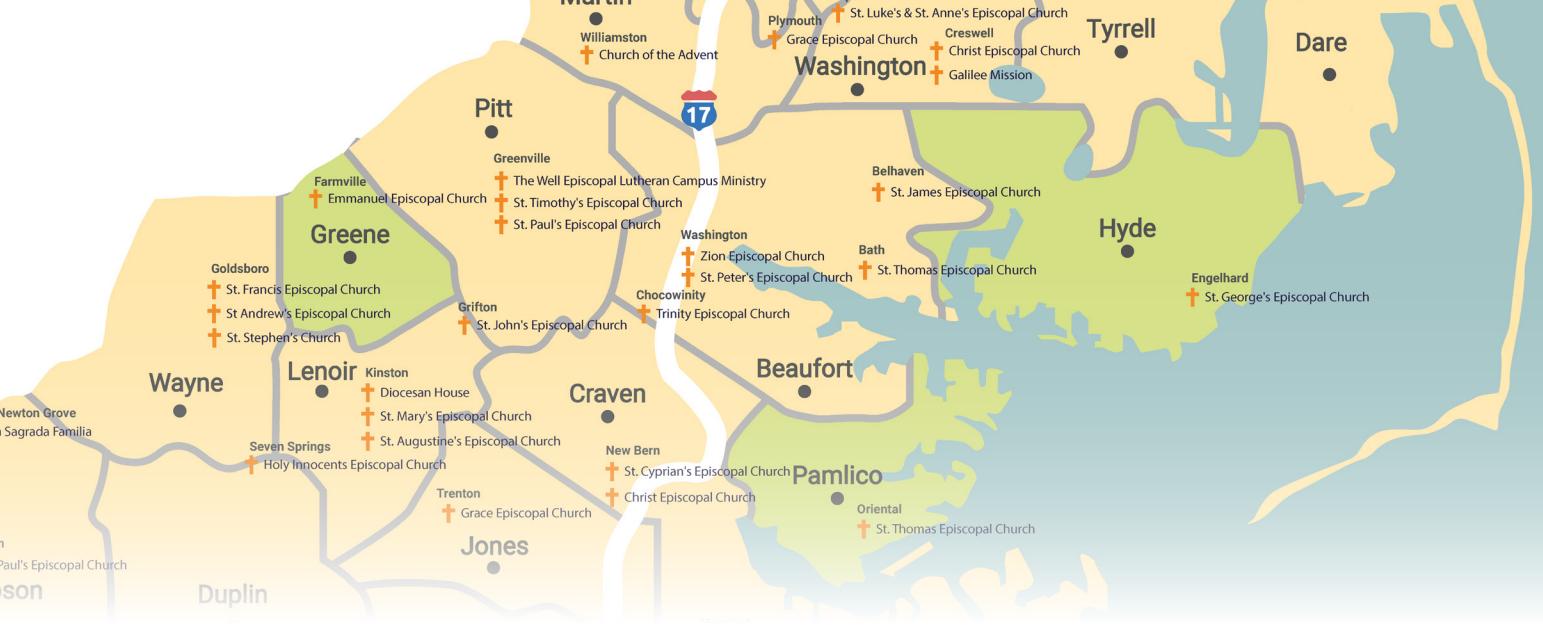
as 1812. The building was burned in 1865 by Federal troops at the end of the Civil War.

In the 1870's, the Diocese of East Carolina established a second mission in Snow Hill, and in 1884 the cornerstone for St. Barnabas Episcopal Church was set. Located on the highest point in the town above Long Branch and surrounded by a large cemetery, St. Barnabas is a pristine example of Carpenter Gothic Revival architecture. W. T. Faircloth and the firm of Porter and Graham constructed the white frame church between 1884 and 1887; it was consecrated in 1893. A free-standing frame bell tower, original to the church, is sited at its north elevation. The structure features one original stained glass window behind the altar depicting beautiful lilies, two stained glass windows that came from St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Kinston as that congregation moved from its building on King & Independent St. to its current Rountree St. location in the mid-1900's, original heart-pine pews, and its original stone baptismal font. In 1951, the church caught fire following an Ash Wednesday service of morning prayer; fortunately, the building was saved and painstakingly restored. In 1979, the church was added to the National Register of Historic Places. Although weekly services ceased in 1962, liturgies of the Holy Eucharist from the 1928 Book of Common Prayer have continued to be offered twice a year: one near the Feat of St. Barnabas (June 11) and another in the fall. In March of 2019, a formal relationship was established whereby the leadership of St. Mary's Church (Kinston) ensures the maintenance, oversight, and use of St. Barnabas Church.

Greene County's history is well-documented in three books: James Creech's "History of Greene County, North Carolina" (1979; reprinted 1999), Penne Sandbeck's architectural history "Greene along Contentnea" (2009), and "Greene County Heritage North Carolina" (2009) by the Greene County Family Researchers.



St. Barnabas Episcopal Church - Snow Hill



PAMLICO COUNTY

Written by Marian Day

Pamlico County is a small rural county of about 13,000 people in the Coastal Plain region of North Carolina. It was formed in 1872 from Craven and Beaufort Counties and named for the Pamlico Sound which was named in turn for the Pamlico Indians.

As an indication of how small the county is, there are 2 traffic lights, one each public primary, elementary, middle, and high school. There is a charter school and a Christian school. A ferry will take you south out of the county from Minnesota the Neuse river to Cherry Branch in Craven County.

The county's economy is based on tourism, commercial fishing and agriculture with crops consisting of corn, cotton, potatoes, soy beans and tobacco. It is home to diverse wildlife including many bird species, beavers, black bears, bobcats, deer, fox, snakes and alligators.

Boundaries for the county include the Pamlico Sound and the Neuse River which is 5 miles across at Oriental. Considered the sailing capital of North Carolina, it is a town of approximately 800 people and 2500 boats. Throughout the county are many rivers and creeks for recreational boating, canoeing and kayaking. This is also a great place for cycling as the roads are fairly flat with little traffic. On September 5, 1917, the Pamlico County School system inaugurated the first motorized school bus service in North Carolina.

Unfortunately Pamlico County is in a very high risk hurricane zone. Since 1930 over 100 hurricanes have impacted the county. Many homes and businesses have been flooded during these storms. As a community, folks will rally together, neighbor helping neighbor with the task of rebuilding.

Bayboro, the hub and county seat, is home to small businesses. The county's doctors, lawyers,

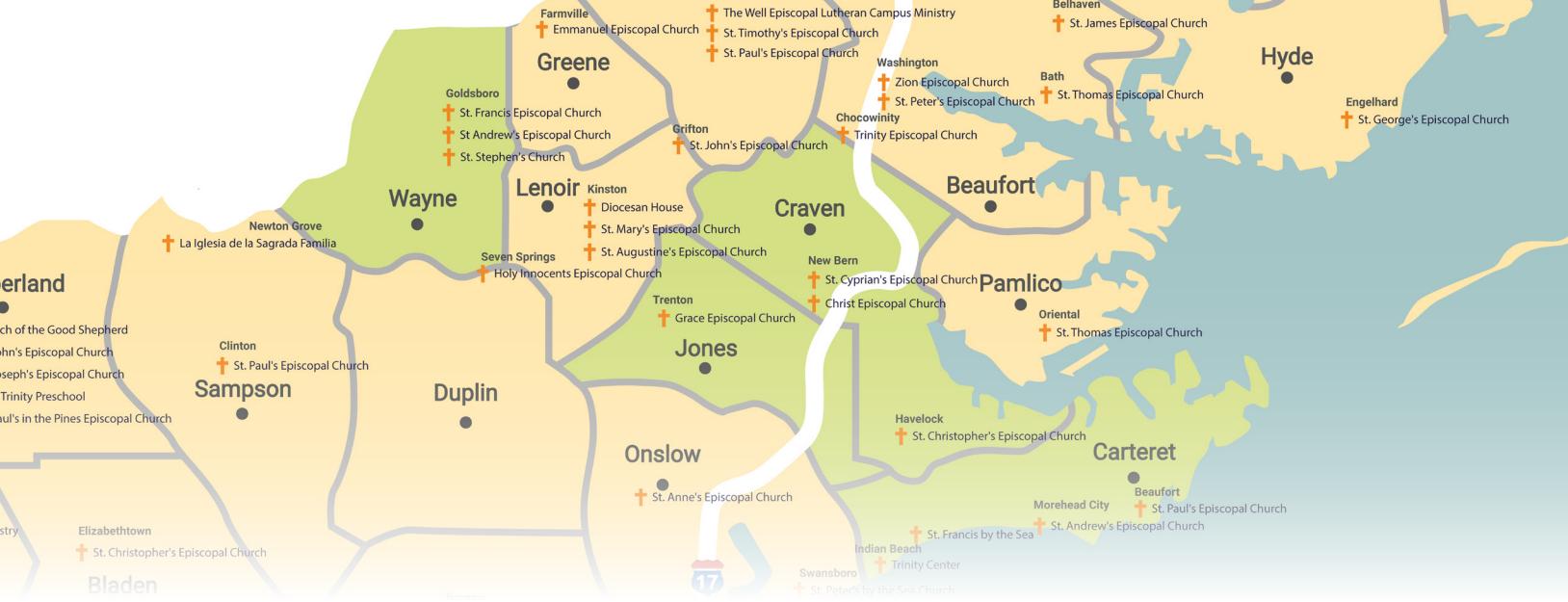
PAMLICO COUNTY

dentists, health department, daycare, and the public schools are all in Bayboro.

Using the Health Department facilities in the evening, HOPE Clinic began in 1998 as an outreach ministry of St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Oriental by a group of passionate volunteers. The vision of providing free medical care to low-income uninsured adults in Pamlico County immediately captured the imagination and support of the community, and has been a vital part of the Pamlico County region since it opened its doors in February, 1999. Other active volunteer agencies in the county include, Habitat for Humanity, Hospice of Pamlico Co., HeartWorks Children's Program, Meals on Wheels, Fishes & Loaves, Girls on the Run, Children's Theater Workshop and Women's Shelter.

Pamlico Community College was founded in 1962 as an industrial education center. It was recently named the #1 community college in America for student educational outcome and has 11 associate degree programs.





CARTERET COUNTY

Written by the Rev'd John Pollock

Continuing our journey through our diocese, we turn east off of Highway 17 just outside of New Bern for a unique flavor of eastern North Carolina called Carteret County. We first pass through the beautiful Croatan National Forest with miles of hiking trails and low country wilderness. Crossing rivers, creeks, wetlands, and estuaries; tall pine trees, sprawling oaks, and gnarly cedars soon give way to wind-blown scrub oaks, sand dunes and open skies overlooking the south-facing coastline of the Atlantic Ocean. The warm waters of the Gulf Stream draw a huge variety of fish. Pods of dolphins break the surface of the waves. Fresh seafood is in abundance. Both the University of North Carolina and Duke University have marine sciences extensions.

Looking eastward at night we see the glow of Cape Lookout Lighthouse which has guided ships through the shoals since 1812. The flagship of the infamous pirate, Blackbeard, The Queen Anne's Revenge lies at the bottom of the sea just a mile off Fort Macon State Park, a victim of these treacherous waters in 1718. Shackleford Banks, one of several federally protected barrier islands and the southernmost island of the Outer Banks, is home of herds of wild horses that have roamed the dunes, marshes and beaches for hundreds of years.

Hardy and tough, these horses have endured hurricanes, droughts, nor'easters and wars; much like the long time residents who inhabit another distinctive part of the county simply referred to as "Down East."

Down East is made up of several distinct fishing villages. Seafood is the primary industry today; but a century ago, a small fish called menhaden were caught in nets just off shore, and processed in factories in Beaufort and Morehead City to produce fertilizer which was transported by railroad all over the country. The labor force for menhaden fishing were Black men who worked long, hard days setting and hauling in nets. It was dangerous work, for very little pay. Full nets weighed thousands of pounds. These fishermen were known as "Chanteymen" because of the songs they sang to

CARTERET COUNTY

coordinate hauling in the nets. The rhythmic songs called “chanseys” were sung to lift both their nets, and their spirits.

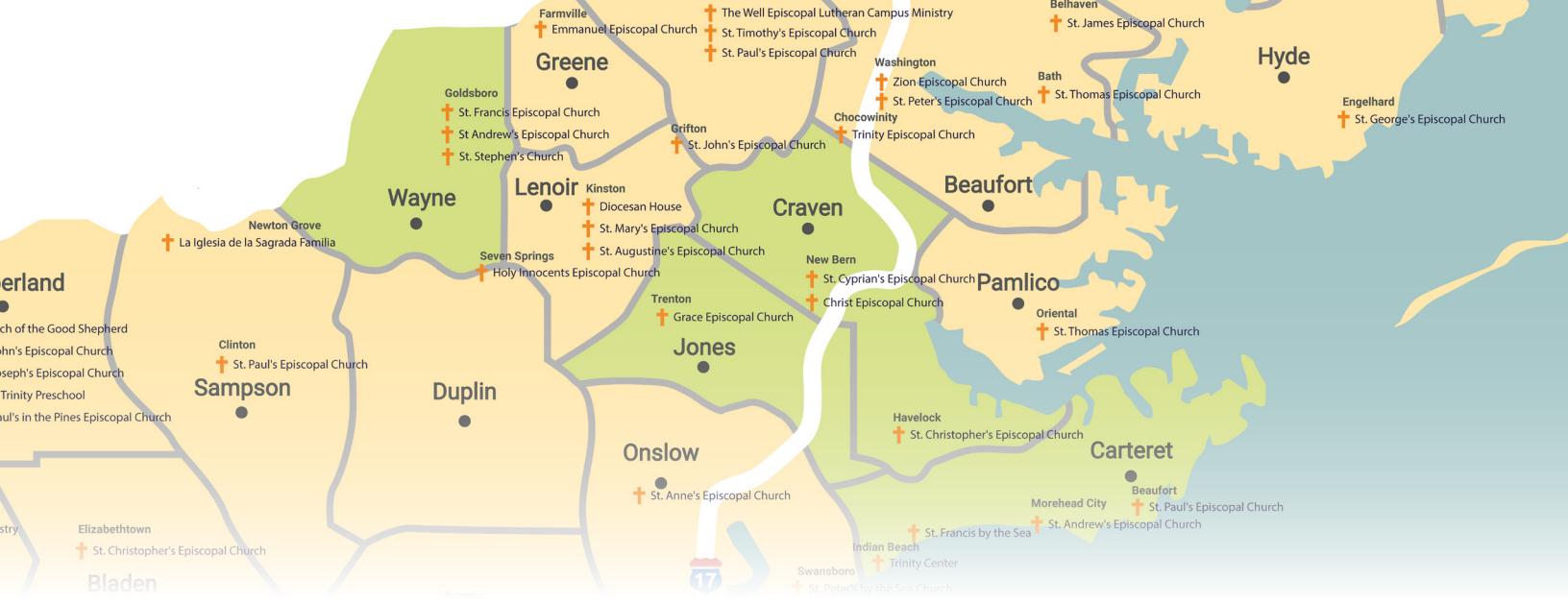
One such Chaneyman of Carteret County was blues singer and guitarist Richard “Big Boy” Henry. Born in Beaufort, Henry worked on the menhaden boats as a young man. The chanseys he heard and sang early in his life influenced his career as a blues musician. After a long musical career Richard “Big Boy” Henry returned to Carteret County where he was instrumental in the work to preserve the cultural musical treasure. Had it not been for Henry, the distinctive Chaney music and culture might have been lost to history. At the Core Sound Waterfowl Museum and Heritage Center in Harkers Island you will see and experience more of Down East culture.

Carteret County is also the home of Trinity Center which includes the Conference Center, Camp Trinity, Sound to Sea, and Pelican House. Visiting Trinity Center is a perfect way to enjoy the natural beauty of the barrier island. From Cape Carteret to Down East, and from North River to the Atlantic Ocean; Carteret County is an East Carolina treasure.

The impact of the pandemic on Carteret County has been substantial. Our small hospital has been pushed to its limits, and is taking a physical and emotional toll on healthcare workers. Carteret County is no stranger to storms in life. Whether hurricane or pandemic, the people of Carteret County will always pull together, singing a song of unity and strength.

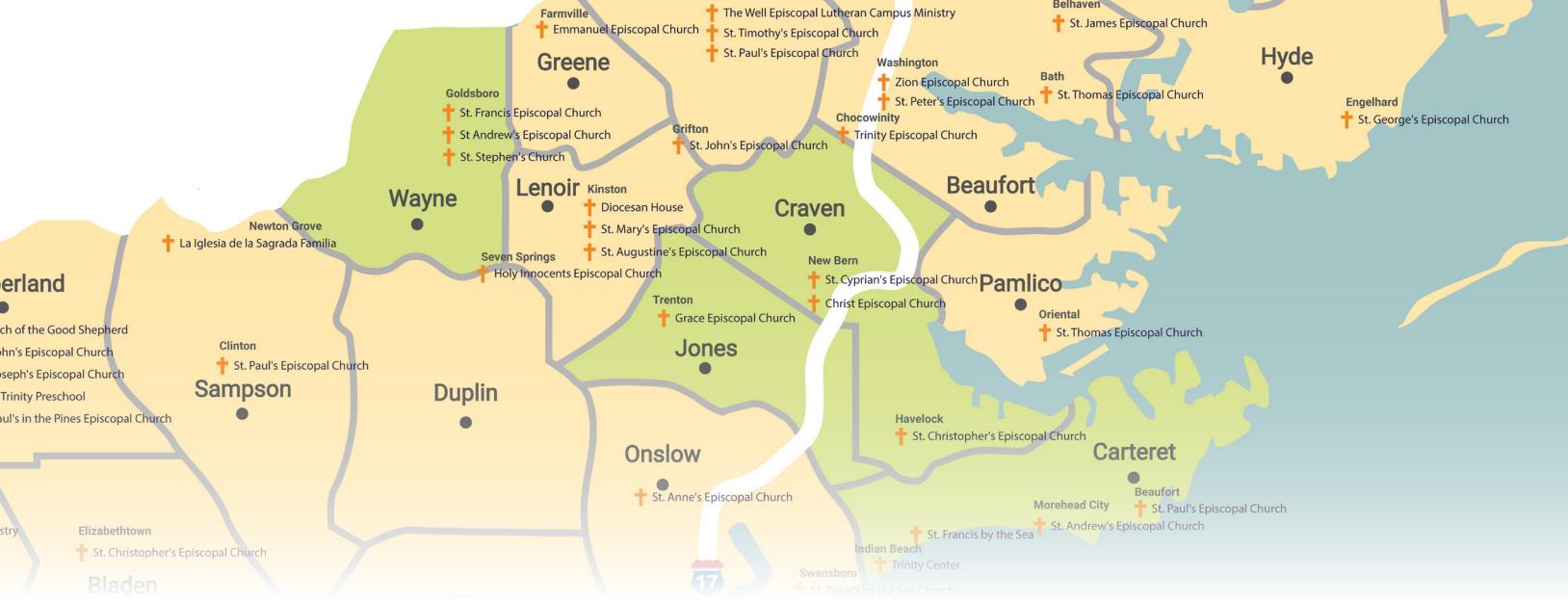
Core Sound Waterfowl Museum, & Heritage Center: <https://wwwcoresound.com/>

The Foundation for Shackleford Horses: <https://www.shackleford-horses.org/>



JONES COUNTY

No story submitted



RAVEN COUNTY

Written by Nelson McDaniel

Craven County, formed in 1705 as Archdale Precinct of Bath County, was renamed Craven County in 1712. At the time, it included what is today Carteret County, Jones County and much of Pamlico County. Only ten years later Carteret County was formed, followed by Pamlico and Jones Counties in the 19th century. Today Craven County has about 100,000 citizens and New Bern is its seat. The county remains defined by forests, swamps and rivers, most importantly the Neuse River and its tributaries. During much of its history, the forests played an important economic role, particularly the production of naval stores and lumber. Farming has played an important role and, in modern times, various industries have provided economic vitality. The rivers and waterways connected the county to other parts of the world, as well as the Post Road and, in the mid nineteenth century, the construction of the railroad.

The largest employers in Craven County today are NADEP which employs civilians at Cherry Point Marine Air Station and Carolina East Medical, a highly regarded hospital. In addition, industries like BSH and Moen are major sources of employment. Many smaller industries and businesses are critical to the economy. The Craven County Schools and Craven Community College serve important roles in the education of many.

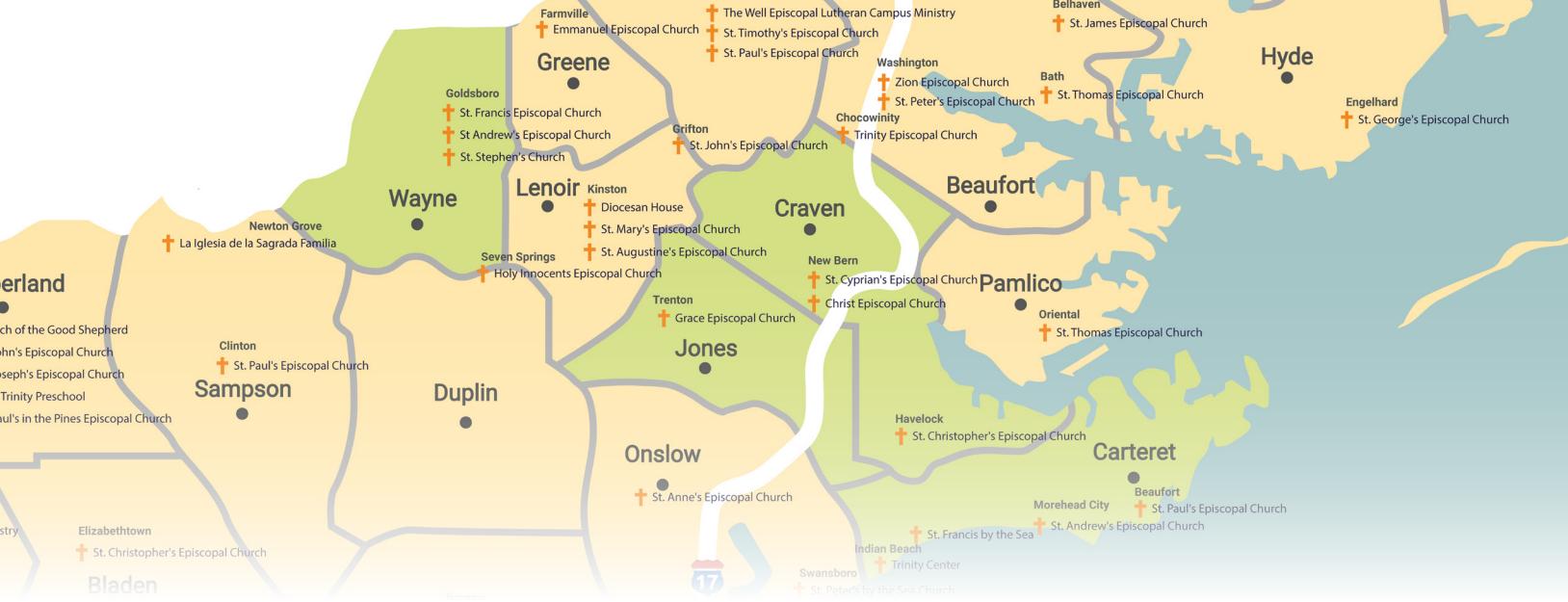
New Bern, founded in 1710, the largest town in the county, is an important tourist attraction because of its importance in North Carolina and American history, its vibrant commercial districts and its beautiful historic residential areas. In the early 1770's, the first permanent capitol of the colony, then state, was built by Governor William Tryon, and its remarkable restoration is the centerpiece of heritage tourism. Many other sites such as the New Bern Historical Society and Battlefield, the Craven Arts Council, the Firemen's Museum, the James City Historical Society, and beautiful historic churches provide an important experience for visitors. Christ Episcopal Church, founded in 1715 was the founder of the first school chartered in North Carolina and the Diocese of North Carolina. St. Peter's AME Zion is the mother church for the movement in the south.

CRAVEN COUNTY

Historical leaders like William Gaston, Bayard Wootten, Caleb Bradham, are among many whose stories are very revealing.

Of particular note are the stories of black leaders from the area. These stories, long shamefully neglected, are now the focus of much research and are at the center of our common history. From the 18th century, this area had an exceptional free black community and a large number of enslaved people. Free blacks played important roles in civic and commercial life. Many were patriots during the Revolution. In the mid nineteenth century, life became much more difficult. New Bern's occupation/liberation by Union troops in 1862 revealed remarkable black leadership such as Abraham Galloway and George Henry White. Sadly, this success attracted the attention of white supremacists, and much of the movement was crushed.

Today, Craven County faces challenges similar to other areas with the pandemic, racial justice issues, affordable housing needs and revitalization efforts. In addition, questions of resiliency occasioned by devastating hurricanes add layers of challenge. Community spirit remains strong. If we embrace the common struggle, we will succeed.



WAYNE COUNTY

Written by Gregory Smith

Wayne County, North Carolina, located in the Coastal Plain region, has six bordering counties: Wilson, Greene, Lenoir, Duplin, Sampson, and Johnson. It was founded in 1779, carved from Dobbs County, and named for Revolutionary War hero, General Anthony Wayne. Goldsboro is the county seat.

Wayne County July 2019 US census* estimates a population of 123,131, including 12,045 veterans (years 2015-2019). The five largest ethnic groups are White (Non-Hispanic) 62.8%, Black or African American (Non-Hispanic) 32.4%, Latino/Hispanic 12.8%, Native American and Alaska Native 0.9%, and Asian 1.3%. Median household income is \$44,416 with a per capita income of \$25,277, and a poverty rate of 18.6%. There are 14.8% under age 65 without health insurance, and 11.6% under age 65 are disabled. Some residents are still recovering from hurricanes and flooding of the Neuse River.

Higher educational institutions include Wayne Community College, University of Mount Olive, and Goldsboro Campus of North Carolina Wesleyan. The Wayne County Public School System is comprised of nine high schools, nine middle schools, fourteen elementary schools, and one special education school. There are six private schools, and one charter school. All schools are on hybrid schedules, including in person and online classes, due to COVID-19.

Wayne County is home to Seymour Johnson Air Force Base (AFB), the third largest military facility in the state. It was named for Goldsboro native and test pilot Naval Lieutenant Seymour A. Johnson, who died in a plane crash in 1941. The base was activated during World War II on June 12, 1942 and deactivated in May 1946. It was reactivated on April 1, 1956 after local community leaders campaigned for its reopening, and subsequently was annexed by the city of Goldsboro in 1977.

WAYNE COUNTY

Wayne County is the sixth largest swine producer in the United States. Additional top county employment statistics:

- Seymour Johnson AFB 6,171 employees
- Wayne County Public Schools 3,067 employees
- Wayne University of North Carolina Healthcare 1,448 employees
- Wayne County Government 1,100 employees
- Case Farms 1,100 employees
- O'Berry Center 1,053 employees
- Cherry Hospital, regional inpatient facility for the mentally ill, serving 38 counties, 1000 employees
- Founded in 1926, Mount Olive Pickle Company, the number one pickle brand in the United States, with more than 500 employees

Wayne County January 5, 2021 COVID-19 statistics are 7,727 confirmed cases and 151 deaths compared to the state of North Carolina 575,396 confirmed cases and 7,000 deaths. Numerous county offices are closed or have limited access, forcing residents to rely on online services.

*<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/waynecountync/PST040219#PST040219>



HOKE COUNTY

Written by the Rev'd John Frazier

This is a short review of Hoke County, North Carolina in the Episcopal Diocese of East Carolina.

Let me begin by sharing the origin of Hoke County, North Carolina. From the World Wide Web I found that what is now Hoke County was separated from Cumberland County in 1911. It was named after a Confederate General. While I am not surprised, I am disappointed. As an American of African descent, I am discouraged about the naming of Hoke County in which I live and love, that it is named after a person with such a lack of righteous principles. Perhaps this is something that can be improved upon in the hope of coming years. We all need to have a conversation about how we can appreciate the courage of our Southern Fathers and yet, at the same time, disapprove of their lack of morality.

Full disclosure, I did not know that Hoke County was even in the Diocese of East Carolina for the first twenty three years I worshiped in this Diocese while living in Carteret and Craven Counties on the coast. There were no representatives at Diocesan functions from any parish in Hoke County because there was no parish in Hoke County; there is still no Episcopal parish in Hoke County. Hoke County is the most western County in the Diocese of East Carolina.

I have lived in Hoke County North Carolina now for fourteen years. What I like about the location of Hoke County is its proximity to the beach, to Fort Bragg, to the Interstate highway systems that connect rural North Carolina with the Raleigh - Durham area.

In addition to the roads of this county are the places the roads will take us within the county. There are three places of note:

HOKE COUNTY

First, there is the Carolina Horse Park at 2814 Montrose Road, Raeford, North Carolina 28376. The horse park does not stable horses but provides a venue for horse shows and races. The property consists of 360 acres. The Horse Park has been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and is in need of business. Their next big event is the Carolina International CCI on March 18. Please check them out on the Web at info@carolinahorsepark.com.

Second is the Sky Dive Paraclete XP at <https://skydiveparacletexp.com>. I have often driven by this place and have seen people in parachutes descending into Hoke County. The Sky Dive Paraclete XP is located at 143 Airport Drive, Raeford, North Carolina 28376. It is a very inclusive and welcoming place. Their ad reads: "Welcome to Skydive Paraclete XP, the premier destination for skydiving in NC. Located in Raeford, North Carolina; we are just minutes from Fayetteville and a short drive from Raleigh, Greensboro, and Charlotte. Skydive Paraclete XP is the #1 choice for sport and tandem skydiving in NC!" Please check it out, you will be amazed!

Lastly is Fort Bragg. Hoke County is surrounded by five North Carolina counties and Fort Bragg (Also named after a Confederate General). There are many Episcopalians who attend Episcopal parishes in both the Dioceses of East Carolina and North Carolina. We do not have an East Carolina parish presence in Hoke County. I was so grateful when on June 6th, 2020 when two priests, a deacon and our Lay Dean of the Upper Cape Fear, joined me (also a priest) at my home as we prepared to attend the viewing of George Floyd. It was sad about the circumstances around the death of George Floyd, but to have Episcopal clergy in Hoke County meant a lot to me. It took us longer to drive to the site where the viewing was than the time we spent in the building itself. We were rushed through, masked and socially distanced. The impact of the Coronavirus has really hurt the economy of Hoke County and the effects seem to be, at times, overwhelming.

Hoke County has satellite hospitals from both Moore County (More Regional), and Cumberland County (Cape Fear Valley). Such sites could perhaps be used to administer vaccines when available. As of this writing, we have to go outside the county to get it.

I love Hoke County. The people are surprisingly friendly. I don't think many of the Christians here are aware of the Episcopal path of the Jesus movement. It is my continued hope to bring new hope to Hoke.



LENOIR COUNTY

Written by Sandy Skirving

As we continue our journey through the diocese of East Carolina, we find ourselves slightly west of Highway 17 in Lenoir County. Lenoir County, at almost the geographical center of the diocese, is situated half way between Raleigh and the coast. Its main municipalities consist of Pink Hill, LaGrange and Kinston, with Kinston being the county seat. The diocesan offices are located in Kinston because of this central location, being 2 hours 30 minutes from Currituck in the northern part of the diocese and 2 hours 7 minutes from Shallotte in the south. The Neuse river runs through this county which is bordered by the counties of Wayne, Duplin, Jones, Craven, Pitt and Greene.

Lenoir County, incorporated in 1791, was named for General William Lenoir, a Revolutionary War hero. (<https://lenoircountync.gov>) Demographics for this area show that the population that describes themselves as white is 56.4%, Black or African American is 40.4% and Hispanic/Latino is 3.1%. Lenoir County is home to one main institution of higher education, Lenoir Community College, and one main hospital UNC Lenoir, both of which are located in Kinston. The County is known for its traditional farming with poultry, pork and crop farming being the most popular. It has a deep-rooted history of tobacco and cotton farming, which has declined greatly in recent history. Kinston, as the hub of the county, needed to reinvent itself and therefore has seen a resurgence into farm-fresh award-winning dining, (Chef and the Farmer) a vibrant arts scene, (Arts District) and music that touches the soul and lifts the spirit. (African American Music Trail) (<https://lenoircountync.gov>) That, along with the rich history of the civil war (The Battle of Kinston (1862) and the Battle of Wyse Fork) on display, breweries and distilleries, retro and boutique hotels are all hoping to entice tourists to the region. For history buffs, The Battle of Wyse Fork (1865) was the second biggest civil war battle in NC behind the Battle of Bentonville. (<https://lenoircountync.gov>)

LENOIR COUNTY

Discussion of the effects of COVID on the county cannot be undertaken without mentioning the economics and health of the area. Lenoir County has a poverty rate of 22.1% compared to the state at 16.8%. According to a study done in 2017, 77% of farms have inadequate or no internet access. 11.3% of Lenoir residents have poor or no access to internet. This has an enormous impact on children who are home because of remote learning. (<https://nass.usda.gov>)

Financial barriers contribute to not having access to proper healthcare, and in turn, to the overall health of the county. According to the 2018 Lenoir County Community Health Assessment the leading causes of death are Diabetes, Cerebrovascular disease, cardiac disease and cancer. Poor nutrition, lack of proper housing, lack of reliable transportation and inadequate access to healthcare can contribute to these diseases. As we know, COVID affects people with co-morbidities as those mentioned above. As of January 6 there has been a total of 3,473 cases of COVID along with 79 deaths in Lenoir County. 10 of those deaths occurred in the first week of January 2021. (<https://usafacts.org>)

I am writing this article because the original asking was to Kinston native and parishioner of St Mary's Episcopal in Kinston, Adrian King. Adrian passed away on Monday January 4 from complications of COVID.



CUMBERLAND COUNTY

Written by the Rev'd Deacon Mary Mac Shields

Located in the southeast region of North Carolina, Cumberland County provides “History, Heroes, and a hometown feeling” to our diocese. This is the motto of Fayetteville which is the county seat and the largest city in the area. Although the history of the county is dominated by Fayetteville and Fort Bragg the Suburban areas- Raeford, Spring Lake, Hope Mills, Rockfish, Stedman and Eastover- all contribute to the diversity of the area and it’s “hometown feeling.”

Historically, the county was first inhabited by Siouan Native American peoples such as the Eno, Shakori, Waccamaw, Keyauwee, and Cape Fear people. They were the people of the area for more than 12,000 years. The colonization of the land began with a settlement of immigrants known as Highland Scots. The Cape Fear River provided a navigable waterway to attract settlers and as the population grew it was decided to establish the area as a separate county. A legislative act in 1754 divided Bladen County thus creating Cumberland County. The Cape Fear River provided an inland port and the county became a major transportation center for the early agriculture economy. Cross Creek, as the area was first named, became the county seat in 1778. The Revolutionary War impacted on the entire state and contributed to the renaming of many places. The county seat was renamed for the Marquis de Lafayette. And though many cities and counties have his name, Fayetteville was the first and the only city named for him that the Marquis actually visited during his tour of the United States in 1825. After the Revolutionary War and before North Carolina had created a state capitol, Fayetteville was often a meeting place for the North Carolina legislature. In 1789 two major events took place in the county: the ratification of the U. S. Constitution and the charter for the University of North Carolina, America's oldest state university.

The county seat was ravaged by fire in 1831 and again during the Civil War by Sherman's army.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY

Recovery was slow for the area. In 1918 Camp Bragg, an artillery training center for the U.S. army was built as a temporary facility. The facility was closed in 1921 and later reopened as a permanent army post named after General Braxton Bragg, a North Carolina native. Today, Fort Bragg provides for the major part of the county's economy.

The early history defined the county with its heroes however over time Cumberland County would provide heroes for the state, the country and the world. The military presence in the county has provided heroes that have guarded the freedom of America throughout the 21st century. From World Wars through the Middle East engagements, military personnel have been trained at Fort Bragg. At present the following units are among the those which provide for our freedom: The 82nd Airborne Division, The United States Army Special Operations Command, and the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School. Cumberland County has welcomed many presidents and world dignitaries when they visited the commands at Fort Bragg.

The military continues to provide us with distinguished heroes but there have been other notable heroes associated with Cumberland County. The nation's first well known African American novelist, Charles W. Chesnutt grew up in Fayetteville. He was instrumental in the establishment of Fayetteville State University. Hiram Revels, the first African American United States senator was from Fayetteville. Sports heroes also have connection to the county. George Herman "Babe" Ruth hit his first homerun as a professional baseball player in Fayetteville. Jim Thorpe of Olympic fame had an early baseball career in 1910 with the Fayetteville Highlanders.

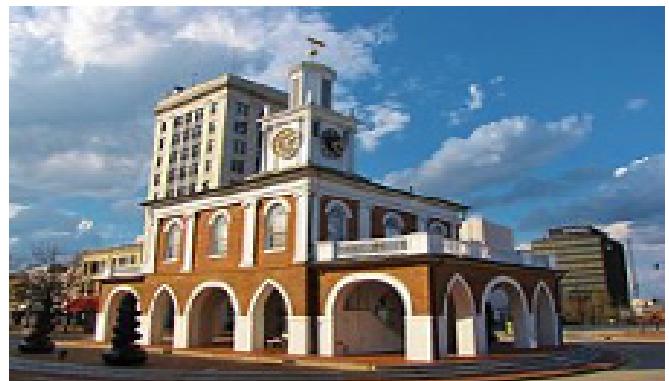
History and heroes aside, it is the hometown feeling that makes Cumberland County an inviting place in which to move, learn, pray, and live. Diversity is abounding in the county. The population is one of many cultures- Asian, African American, Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders, Hispanic and Latino. You can find restaurants that offer any type of ethnic cuisine from Thai to Vietnamese. There are three higher educational centers: Fayetteville State University, Methodist University, and Fayetteville Technical Community College. The same type of diversity can be found in religious organizations: Jewish, Muslim, Catholic, and Protestant. The Arts play an important part in bringing all the different ethnicities together. There are four main performance establishments in the county: Cape Fear Regional Theatre, the Gilbert Theatre, Crown Coliseum and Cameo Arts Theatre.

The natural beauty of the County can be enjoyed at the Cape Fear Botanical Garden, The Cape Fear River Walk, The FTCC rose garden and one of the top Ten zip lines in the United States. And sport fans will be cheering that a new Baseball Stadium has been recently built to house Cumberland County's Minor League, the Woodpeckers. This team is a Class A-Advanced affiliate for the Houston Astros.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY

There is limited attendance at these activities now. The Coronavirus has impacted on every aspect of our lives. Many businesses have closed and the unemployment rate has increased exponentially. The damage of recent hurricanes still needs to be repaired. The Market House, once Fayetteville's emblem, has been damaged as the Black Lives Matter movement reacted to the injustice seen throughout the country. The Market House is no longer being used as the county seat's emblem and there is a movement to remove the edifice completely. The name of Fort Bragg is under scrutiny. The history of General Braxton Bragg does not exemplify the county's as well as the country's values and hope for the future.

The county recognizes that change is always inevitable. New history is being made. There are new heroes emerging in our community as the hometown feeling continues to bolster justice and unity throughout Cumberland County.





ONSLOW COUNTY

Written by the Rev'd Deacon Carol Eaton

Welcome to Onslow County. European Settlers who were mostly English settled in the colonial precincts of Carteret and New Hanover in 1713. In 1734 part of this land was established as Onslow County. This county was named for Arthur Onslow who was the longest serving speaker of the House of Commons.

An important figure in the history of Onslow County was Captain Otway Burns, Jr. He was born in Swansboro and played an important role in the War of 1812. As the war broke out he and his business partners bought a ship and renamed it the Snap Dragon. Although the ship operated privately during the war, it was given permission to attack enemy shipping. It had a crew of 100 sailors and 8 cannons. Between 1812 and 1814 the crew captured more than forty British ships and its cargo. After the war he moved to Swansboro and built one of the state's first steam-powered boats and named it Prometheus. He became a shipbuilder and later a North Carolina senator. Unfortunately, he lost all his money and became penniless until Andrew Jackson appointed him to be Keeper of the Brant Island Shoals Light Boat near Portsmouth, NC. He spent his final days there until his death in 1850. His tomb is located at Old Burying Grounds, Ann St. United Methodist Church in Beaufort, NC.

Onslow County is located in the southeastern coastal plain of North Carolina. Its flat, rolling land covers 763 square miles and 143 square miles are covered by water. Incorporated towns include Holly Ridge, Richlands, Swansboro, North Topsail Beach, and part of Surf City while Sneads Ferry is an unincorporated town. Jacksonville, which was named for President Andrew Jackson in 1842 is the county seat. Until the mid 20th century Onslow County has been largely rural with its economy based on agriculture and connection with the sea.

ONSLOW COUNTY

The demographics show Onslow County as a growing population in 2000 about 150,000 and in 2010 of 177,772. In 2000 the racial make-up was 72.06% white, 18.48% African American, 7.25% Hispanic or Latino, and 1.68% Asian.

Politically Onslow County was Democratic until 1968 then solidly Republican with the election of Richard Nixon. In 1976 Jimmy Carter was the last Democrat to be carried in Onslow County.

Onslow County is unique because of the presence of Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, the largest base along the east coast. It was established in December 1942 and was named in honor of General John Archer Lejeune who was the 13th Commandant and Commanding General of the 2nd Army Division in World War I. Its mission according to their website is “to maintain combat-ready units for expeditionary deployment.” Camp Lejeune and the surrounding community is home to 170,000 people which include active duty, dependents, retirees, and civilian employees. It occupies about 153,439 acres with 14 miles of beach on the Atlantic Ocean. It includes the Naval Medical Center which is designated as a Level III Trauma Center giving access to those in the county specialty physicians which might not be available in the area. Camp Lejeune generates over three billion dollars in commerce from payrolls and contracts. Six U.S. presidents have visited Camp Lejeune while in office: Franklin D. Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy, Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama.

Some challenges facing Onslow County include: a need for additional classrooms and more funding for school construction, an increase in businesses and industry because of the growing population, the threats of ongoing hurricanes, storm surges, flooding along the coast, and the opioid crisis. The pandemic has also impacted the county from health care, remote learning in the schools, laid off workers, loss of jobs, and businesses that have closed. There has been a huge spike in the need for assistance as seen when more than 8,000 cars on December 13th lined up at the Onslow County Fairgrounds to receive giveaway food.



SAMPSON COUNTY

Written by the Rev'd Eric Grubb

As we continue our Journey Through East Carolina, we pass through Sampson County. Sampson is one of the larger counties in North Carolina, with a sprawling 963 square miles. The story of Sampson County is truly a story of that land. The ancestors of the Coharie Tribe, one of eight state-recognized tribes in North Carolina, lived around the Coharie River for the fertile land and beauty around the river. The first European settlers were mostly of Scot-Irish descent and arrived in Sampson County as early as the 1730s. These earlier settlers were later joined by other colonists from New Bern and even by pioneers from the Northern States of New Jersey, Connecticut, and Massachusetts. These settlers were all drawn to this area because the land was perfectly suitable for cropland and had abundant timber access. In April of 1784, Sampson County was officially established by the North Carolina General Assembly.

Today, the land is still the heart of Sampson County. Agriculture has grown into a prosperous industry in the county. Sampson remains one of the most agriculturally diverse counties in the states. That diversity often makes Sampson one of the leading producers of many of North Carolina's commodities like pork, turkey, and sweet potatoes.

The agricultural center of gravity also provides Sampson County with a rich cultural life with several festivals, like the Old Sorghum Festival and AG Day, that gather people throughout the county, which fosters a close-knit community feel. Sampson County is also known as the barn quilt capital of North Carolina. Driving through the county along the many barn quilt trails, you can spot any number of the over 150 quilts decorating barns, sheds, and homes. These trails are a favorite tourist sight as people soak in the beautiful natural landscape along with these timeless pieces of American folk art.

SAMPSON COUNTY

To date, there have been 5,817 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and, sadly 74 deaths. Due to the nature of the essential work that predominates much of Sampson County, many of the farm and meat plant workers are at high risk of exposure.

Sources:

Barn Quilt Trails: <https://www.visitsampsonnc.com/barn-quilt-tours/>

Sampson County Agriculture: <https://www.visitsampsonnc.com/sampson-county-ag-facts/>

Sampson County: <https://www.ncpedia.org/geography/sampson>



DUPLIN COUNTY

Written by Jim Hayes

On April 7, 1750, the Colonial General Assembly of North Carolina in New Bern established [Duplin County](#) naming it after Sir Thomas Hays, Lord Dupplin, a Scotsman who served on the Board of Trade and Plantations for the English Crown in the 1740s. Duplin County was created from the northern part of New Hanover County north of the Northeast Cape Fear River. Originally, it encompassed land that became Sampson County in 1784. Today, the county comprises 819 square miles making it the 9th largest in the state.

The county's earliest immigrants were the Welsh, who arrived in the early 1700s. They were soon followed by the Germans, the Swiss Protestants, and the Scotch-Irish in the 1730s and 1740s. Concurrently, French Huguenots and English migrated from Virginia, while Scots and African Americans migrated from the upper Cape Fear region. Today, Duplin County's estimated [population](#) is 58,856 (49th largest in the state) and is principally white (71.24%) and African American (23.75%). Of these, only 32.9% practice religion, chiefly Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, and Pentecostal.

The earliest settlements were established along the Northeast Cape Fear River and larger creeks for obvious reasons. An early settlement on the east bank of the Northeast Cape Fear River named Sarecta became Duplin's first incorporated town in 1787 (it no longer functions as a town). Others were established on the west side of the river at Goshen Swamp and at a place known as Golden Grove, which became the incorporated town of Kenansville in 1852 and is today's County Seat. Modern-day Duplin County has 10 incorporated towns: Calypso, Faison, Warsaw, Kenansville, Magnolia, Rose Hill, Teachey, Wallace, Greenevers and Beulaville.

DUPLIN COUNTY

Duplin County's abundant longleaf pine forests made the production of naval stores, such as resin, tar, pitch, and turpentine harvested from these forests, the county's first industry. It was extremely lucrative and was a significant part of the economy until the late 1800s. Initially, log rafts transported products down the Northeast Cape Fear River to be sold in Wilmington. Later, paddle-wheel riverboats replaced rafts because they were faster, more efficient, and could easily transport supplies, goods, mail, and people on return trips. In 1840, when the Wilmington and Weldon Railroad was completed in the western half of the county, rail transportation rapidly replaced river transportation. The towns of Wallace, Teachey, Rose Hill, Magnolia, Warsaw, Faison and Calypso sprung up as depots along its route. Today, Duplin county is served by Interstate 40, U.S. Highway 117, and a network of NC Highways. Rail and air services are provided by CSX Rail and the Duplin County Airport.

Other large [industries in Duplin County](#) include chicken and turkey packing and the Duplin Winery, the oldest in North Carolina and the largest in the Southeast. Duplin County has a strong agri-cultural heritage. Its output when combined with that of neighboring Sampson County is estimated to be about one-sixth of the world's food supply! Additionally, it has more hogs than any other U.S. county – 2.2 million, which exceeds the hog population of most states.

The coronavirus first appeared in Duplin County in March 2020, at which time all public schools were closed indefinitely. The first positive case was reported in late March 2020 and the first Duplin resident died of the virus on May 1, 2020. Despite the virus, however, 74.7% of voters turned out for the 2020 election. On December 22, 2020, [Duplin County moved from the orange level \(substantial\) to red \(critical\)](#). To date, there have been 4,894 cases and 83 deaths.

Duplin County is covered by a patchwork of farms, thick pine forests, and small towns populated by industrious, hardworking, and friendly people. The county's many important contributions to the State and the Nation are often not apparent beneath its quiet, rural and idyllic beauty. It is, nevertheless, a place to visit and appreciate for the reasons described in this paper.



BLADEN COUNTY

Written by Linda Burney

Welcome to Bladen County. The county lies in the [Coastal Plain](#) region of southeastern North Carolina. It was formed in 1734 from [New Hanover County](#) and named for English commissioner of trade and plantations Martin Bladen. Its earliest inhabitants were the [Waccamaw Indians](#). Colonial newcomers to the region included [Highland Scots](#) and English settlers. Once North Carolinas largest county, Bladen County has been named the “Mother of Counties” because all or part of 55 of North Carolina’s modern counties were formed from its original land. It now contains some 879 square miles and is the fourth largest county in the state. Originally, Bladen contained over 1,000 lakes and was the state’s most beautiful county. The lakes, believed to have been created by a bombardment of meteors 100,000 years ago, have developed into important recreational areas and tourist attractions. Within its present boundaries, seven of them remain which includes White and Jones Lakes, examples of the famous (and scientifically mysterious) Carolina Bays.

The county seat, [Elizabethtown](#), was established in 1773 and incorporated in 1895. The town was named for either the “sweetheart” of Isaac Jones, owner of the land the town was built on, or for Queen Elizabeth I of England. “Tory Hole,” near Elizabethtown, was the site of a key [Revolutionary War battle](#) in August 1781. Other communities located in Bladen County are Clarkton, [White Lake](#), East Arcadia, Bladenboro, Dublin, and Tar Heel.

The county’s physical features include the [Cape Fear](#), South, and Black Rivers and the [Bladen Lakes State Forest](#) and Game Land. In former times, the county contained as many as 1,000 lakes; today, it has far fewer, but Bladen County farms produce [swine](#), [tobacco](#), [blueberries](#), peanuts, and cotton. Industrial enterprises include peanut processing and the manufacture of textiles and clothing, plastics, and resin products. An interesting factoid is that Bladen County is also the home of

BLADEN COUNTY

the oldest documented [*Taxodium distichum*](#) (bald cypress) at 1622 years old. Bladen County hosts a number of annual festivals and events, such as the East Coast Delta Kite and Glider Competition. In 2019 the population of Bladen County was estimated to be 33,407.

With close proximity to the Atlantic Ocean, Bladen's climate is influenced by maritime conditions in its southeastern portions. Temperatures in Bladen may reach 105°F in summer and dip as low as 10°F in winter. These extreme temperatures are of short duration. The average yearly temperature is 63°F and the average yearly precipitation is 49.06 inches.

Bladen County is abundant in natural recreation areas. There are three rivers within its boundaries, with the Cape Fear River, the largest, bisecting the county. Fishing and hunting has been reported to be excellent throughout the county. White Lake is commercially developed and attracts thousands of visitors annually. Bay Tree Lake is a growing private resort development. Jones and Singletary Lakes are state owned parks. The climate is good for outdoor recreation with nine months of moderate weather per year.

Tucked away in Southeastern Bladen County, one of the last remaining inland river ferries which shuttles local residents and farmers across the Cape Fear River between the tiny crossroad towns of Kelly and Carvers Cree. Many consider the Elwell Ferry a living relic of early transportation within North Carolina.

Though the Pandemic has slowed life down in Bladen County it still is a county on the move. You'll find "down home" folks with a focus on the future. It is that "down home" attitude that has led to support coming from all areas within the county – neighbor helping neighbor. There is a strong work ethic and high productivity, which is the result of the agricultural heritage of the people of Bladen County. It is this strong work ethic that has helped to make success stories for over 40 existing industries. Bladen County is very fortunate to have diversity of industries offering employment opportunities in food processing (Smithfield Foods), manufacturing and assembly, textiles, chemicals and agri-business. There is an abundant available labor supply and workforce training is available at [Bladen Community College](#) for new and expanding industries.



ROBESON COUNTY

Written by the Rev'd Gene Wayman

There are several things that make Robeson County a unique place to live and work. The first of these is its racial diversity. Since 2008, Robeson County has been identified as among the 10% of U.S. counties that are “majority minority”. Its combined population of American Indian, African American and Hispanic residents constitute more than 68% of the total. Members of the state-recognized Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina, make up most of the 38% of the population who identify as Native American. Clearly the history of the county, from its founding in 1787, is the story of European Americans, Native Americans, African Americans, and mixed race Americans coexisting in North Carolina’s largest county by land area.

Agriculture and timber have always been principle sources of income. The Lumber River served as a source of transportation of logs to customers in South Carolina and enabled this industry to develop. The economic fortunes of the county have varied over the years, but at present it is ranked as North Carolina’s poorest county. Industrial, technological, and professional jobs are lacking in the area. On a positive note, the University of North Carolina at Pembroke is located in the county. It developed from a normal school established there in the late 19th century for the training of teachers for students classified as Indian. The university is a vibrant institution that makes a profound contribution to the life of the county.

Another positive attribute of the county is the courage and tenacity of its people in the face of adversity. Flooding from hurricanes Matthew and Florence devastated Lumberton, the county’s major city and economic hub. In 2016 and 2018 these storms caused the Lumber River to flood, destroying homes, businesses, and having a huge economic impact. Friends and neighbors talked about the first storm as if it were a lifetime event. Once the community got some distance from the

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wreckage, the water marks would start to fade. Maybe the psychological damage could dissipate too. It couldn't happen again? But then in September 2018 Hurricane Florence came and 24 inches of rain fell, flooding the same areas. Freshly renovated houses were destroyed again. Rebuilt houses were ruined. After the second flood, many residents left the county to relocate. The long-term effect of hurricanes is weighing on the community.

The question lingers in the mind of residents: will this happen again? In the midst of all this, the county is making plans to persevere. Recently, an award of more than \$3.7 million to the city of Lumberton and Robeson county for the development of an industrial park was announced. Civic leaders believe the project will attract new business and industry to the area. In short, the leadership of the county has been relentless in finding ways to cope with the counties' challenges. They continually present a positive image to prospective business partners that in terms of labor cost, taxes, and cost of living, Robeson County is the most affordable option for new and existing industries. The spirit of Robeson County is the Spirit of resilience - "together, we will find a way."



COLUMBUS COUNTY

Written by Susan and John Deans

Columbus is North Carolina's third largest county, having a land area of 954 square miles. It is home to one of the state's [largest natural lakes](#), Lake Waccamaw and a [NC state park](#). Founded in 1808 and named for Christopher Columbus, the county is home to [The Green Swamp](#) and its indigenous Venus Flytrap as well as sections of the Waccamaw, Lumber and Cape Fear Rivers. In fact, 16 sq miles of the county are covered in water.

Diverse is a word that comes to mind when describing the people who call Columbus County home. The population of approximately 55,000 includes a variety of racial and ethnic groups. Columbus County is home to the unique and centuries old [Crusoe Island](#) community. The people of Crusoe Island are well known for their [unusual dialect](#), work ethic and craftsmanship. They are especially known for making [dugout canoes](#), bread bowls and other wood crafts.

The People of the Eastern Star also known as the [The Waccamaw Siouan Indians](#) are one of eight state-recognized Native American tribes. Their homeland is situated in eastern Columbus County and southern Bladen County. The tribe hosts a POW WOW each year that celebrates their heritage. This delightful and culturally rich event is open to the public.

Resilient and hopeful are some other words that come to mind when telling the Columbus County story. Due to hurricanes Matthew and Florence, the area has experienced two 1000-year flood events in the last four years. Many homes, businesses and livelihoods were lost, not once, but twice. [Fair Bluff](#), in western Columbus County, was completely [decimated by the flood waters of the Lumber River](#) in 2016 and again in 2018. Despite these losses, the people of the county are hopeful and have demonstrated courage and resilience in the face of adversity. Many are diligently

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Many are diligently working at ongoing revitalization efforts.

Disparity exists among residents in regard to education, socio-economic status, quality of life and health. The COVID-19 Pandemic has had a significant impact on the county which has seen more deaths per capita than other counties in the region. Efforts have been made to improve the overall health and wellness of county residents with public information campaigns and the addition of parks and walking trails. Events such as [Take the Lake](#), an annual fitness event with a festival atmosphere is held at Lake Waccamaw, each year over the Labor Day weekend. This event is free and open to all ages and fitness levels.

Capitalizing on the climate and natural resources of the area, agriculture and forestry are big drivers of the county's economy. However, due to a loss of industry and big tobacco, unemployment is an issue for some residents. There are organizations making strides to improve life for those who call Columbus County home. The [Columbus Jobs Foundation](#) and [Southeastern Community College](#) (SCC) are working to bring industry to the county and fine tune a skilled work force. The college, located in the county seat of Whiteville, recently opened an Advanced Manufacturing Training Center that focuses on preparing individuals for 21st Century jobs. [The Columbus County Chamber of Commerce and Tourism](#) works diligently to promote small business and tourism, especially ecotourism, in the county. The county's largest employers are SCC, International Paper Company and Columbus Regional Health Care Center, the only hospital in the county.

There are so many more things we could share about our beloved Columbus County. We invite you to come visit and see what's so very special about this place we call home.



BRUNSWICK COUNTY

Written by the Rev'd Deacon Sally Learned

In the southeastern most corner of North Carolina sits Brunswick County. Brunswick has one of the largest land mass area of all counties in NC and has in the past ten years experienced a 47% population growth making it one of the fastest growing counties in the nation. Brunswick extends from the north at Leland and the Wilmington suburbs, south to the SC state line. The 1790 census included 3,071 people and the 2019 estimated population was 142,820.

The historic settlement of Brunswick Town was formed in the 1750's with the old St. Philip's Church started in 1754 and completed in 1768. The settlement survived wars and disease and the walls of the old church still stand. Clergy were notoriously low paid, faced peril, and were short tenured. The current St. Philip's Church in Southport worships at the site annually.

The Brunswick County economy has historically been centered around fishing, agriculture and tourism with a small amount of industry mixed in. Construction is probably the fastest growing economic sector. The three mile wide swath of land along the coast is home to many old beach communities and has become a higher wealth area as retirees and real estate investors move in. The new population growth has brought a significantly higher median income so that the county currently has a divide between retirees with over \$100,000 in annual income and other residents working in part time or service industries. The influx of new people has driven the median income to \$80,000 a year which reduces federal investment in the county.

However, if we move inland from the developed coast the census data shows a different picture with areas that have overlays of poverty, substandard housing, lack of affordable housing and food deserts. There is no public transit system in the county other than limited human services

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transportation making access to jobs and services a challenge.

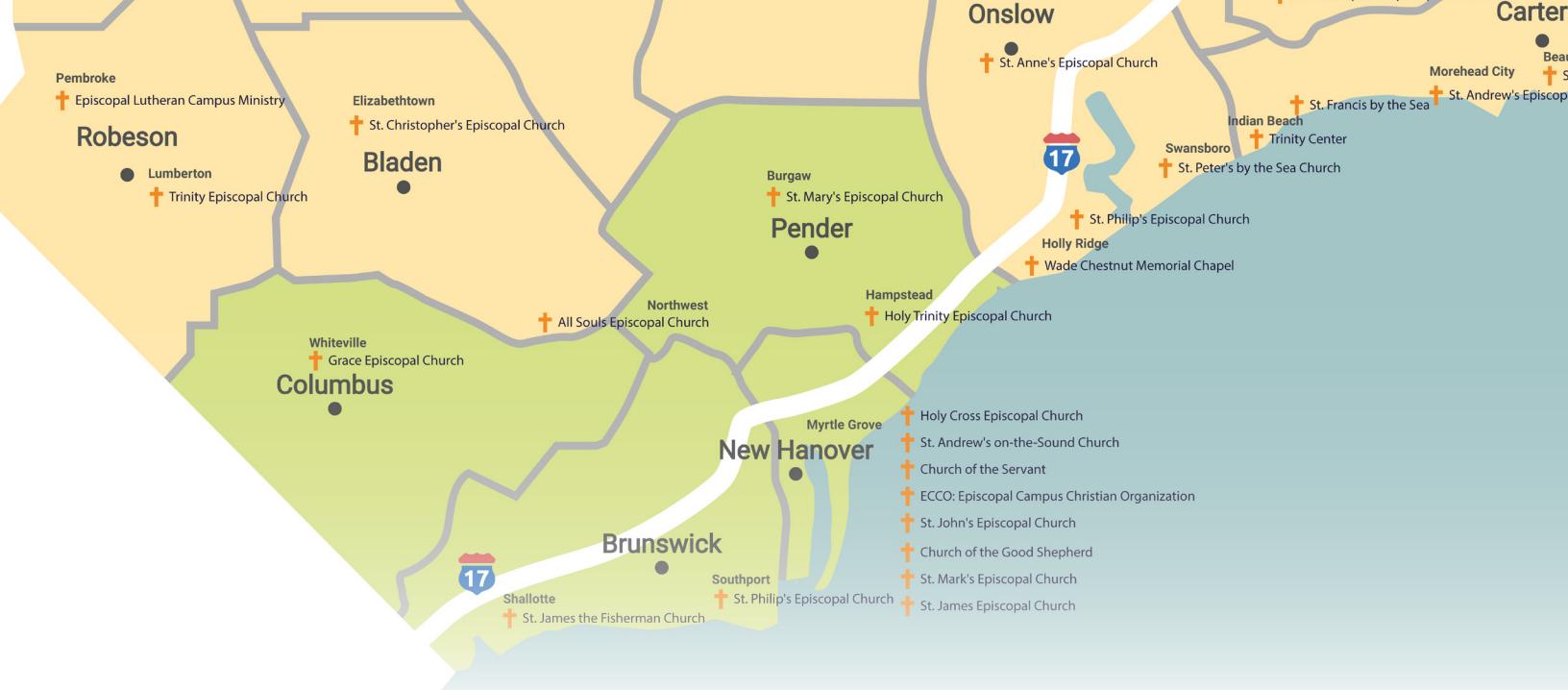
Brunswick County churches and nonprofits have stepped up to meet growing needs for basic human essentials: providing food for a county where 25% of the individuals are food needy; developing a nonprofit health clinic; providing assistance for emergency needs; providing winter shelter for homeless individuals and families; and starting a nonprofit to offer transitional housing for homeless families and advocate for the development of affordable housing.

With its large coastline Brunswick is a hurricane magnet for the east coast and the natural disasters of the last five years have taught us all how vulnerable our population is. We have pulled together as a group to support one another and started to develop infrastructures that can move us all forward.



PENDER COUNTY

No story submitted



NEW HANOVER COUNTY

Written by Kenneth Chestnut, Sr.

This is a brief account of Wilmington's shameful history 122 years ago. In recent years, several books have been written documenting these events as well as a well-done documentary film called "Wilmington of Fire" by Christopher Everett. This film has been shown in St. Mark's Episcopal Church on two occasions and at other venues.

At the end of the 19th Century, Wilmington was majority black, racially integrated, and the largest City in North Carolina. On November 10, 1898, white supremacists staged a coup which overthrew the legally elected local Fusionist government. They threatened and removed opposition black and white political leaders from their positions in office. Historians consider this the only successful coup d'état in the history of the United States. This armed mob of whites also killed an estimated 60 to 300 black citizens and destroyed their property and businesses. This included burning the state's only African American owned daily newspaper, The Record, and running the owner and publisher out of town. This coincided with a larger effort across the state, and the South white supremacists were working to reverse the advances made by former slaves.

The 1898 Memorial Park on north 3rd Street in Wilmington is shown in the photo below. It has an inscription describing the events in November of 1898.

In addition to the coup d'état, the murder black residents of Wilmington and others who were chased out of Wilmington, the properties of many black residents were taken and given to whites.

I can only imagine the fear of the black citizens in these neighborhoods as they were chased and had to hide in swamps along the river, or in Pine Forest Cemetery near 16th and Red Cross Streets.

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We can better understand what an angry, charged up mob can look like based on the insurrection that we saw at the Capitol on January 6, 2021. This provides some insight into what the black citizens of Wilmington faced on November 10, 1898. This is particularly significant to me because this area where most of the killing and burning took place was on the north side of the City where I grew up, including Red Cross Street and the area where St. Mark's was then, and is currently located.

However, growing up and attending school here in New Hanover County, neither my classmates nor I knew anything about the massacre and coup. It was kept quiet, and people did not want to talk about it at all. Why is it essential for everyone to know about this dark period of history in Wilmington and other cities during this period? We should all be aware of our past so that it will not be repeated.

We also need to know this history, so we have a better understanding of why some things are the way they are today. What we do know is that this scar on Wilmington has had a severe impact on the City. In 1898, Wilmington was the largest city in the state and had a black population in the majority. Today, Wilmington's black population is less than 20% and it is the 8th largest North Carolina city. These changes, as well as others, still impact the City of Wilmington even today.

Everyone should also be aware of this history because if there is going to healing and reconciliation, this story must be told. The band-aid must be removed entirely so that healing and reconciliation can take place. I consider November 10, 1898, to be Wilmington's Good Friday, and we know that we cannot have Easter Sunday without knowing of Good Friday.

This effort towards reconciliation started in 1998 when a biracial 1898 Commission was established, and a park and monument was built near downtown. See the attached photo. In addition, the NC Office of Archives and History placed an historical marker recognizing the Wilmington Coup that was unveiled on November 8, 2019. It is located on Market Street in front of the old armory building where the white mob gathered before going into the black communities on the north side of town. See the attached photo.

One example of this healing that I witnessed was when "Wilmington of Fire" was shown at St. Mark's the second time. Descendants of the white mob attended and apologized to the African American Community for what their ancestors had done in 1898. This was a very emotional and moving moment. Below is a photo of that event at St. Mark's.

I recommend that everyone read the books on this history and see the documentary film I referred to earlier to learn more about this event. We should also look at pathways for healing and

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reconciliation in this Community. I believe another pathway event occurred in 2019 when Wilmington City Council agreed to dedicate Third Street as Major General Joseph McNeil Way in honor of an African American Wilmington native who was one of the Greensboro Four that sparked the integration of lunch counters and eating establishments across the Country. Finally, I believe our own Presiding Bishop Michael Curry gives us some pathways to reconciliation in his current book “Love is the Way.”

