



WAKE GENEALOGY WATCH

News from the Wake County Genealogical Society

Vol. 7, Issue 2

Winter 2024

Our Winter Schedule

Jan 23

Bounty Land, Military Pensions, & Alt. Records

Debra Dudek

Feb 27

Roots of Hope: Legacy of John Hunter

Ernest Dollar

Mar 26

Where Your Ancestors Walked: Virtual Heritage Travel

Lisa Lisson

Apr 23

Topic/Speaker announced soon

[Full details at wakeupogen.org](http://wakeupogen.org)

Inside

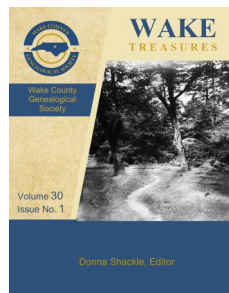
Family History Writing	2
Shiloh Community: Freedmen's Village since 1830	7
Historical and Architectural Surveys as Gen Resources	10
NGS Publishing Prize - Jack McGeachy	11
Wilson Library Infrastructure Updates	11
Irene Kittinger 1925 - 2023	12
Raleigh Senior Tech Ed Service Expansion	12
Events	13

Happy Holidays ~ Have Fun Browsing *Wake Treasures*

We have some very exciting news for all of you who are interested in Wake County research and ancestors. Wake County Genealogical Society has recently decided to change the way we share our *Wake Treasures* Journal content with you at the Wakecogen website. I think you will enjoy this surprise.

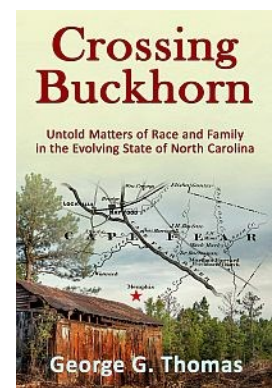
Recently, the Society voted to change our method for disseminating information usually found in the journal to other formats including our social media sites, our newsletter, and our website. In the spirit of increasing our support to the genealogical community, the Board also voted to make all past issues of *Wake Treasures* available to both members and non-members alike!

Yes!! Journal access is now free and open to all, visitors and members alike. This change makes all content from the last thirty plus years (1991– 2022) browsable at your convenience.



Please visit our website and check out all the goodness nestled in those pages. Access all the content from the [WCGS Publications](#) tab on our homepage. You will find links to each issue, a subject index for the first 25 volumes, and within each issue is an index full of ancestor names and locations. It's as if Santa came along and left a nice prezzy in your genealogy stocking!

I want to call attention to a new family history book just now hot off the presses from our own program chair, **George Thomas**. The book is entitled ***CROSSING BUCKHORN: Untold Matters of Race and Family in the Evolving State of North Carolina*** and is available in paperback at [Amazon](#). *Crossing Buckhorn* explores George's ancestor, Joseph Thomas, and his close bonds to his community and cohorts in early northeastern North Carolina and beyond. If you are interested in migration paths to and through North Carolina or are interested in early race relations within a tri-racial group (Tuscarora, white and black) who coexisted for many generations and locations, you will enjoy reading George's book. Check the [preview](#) on Amazon. As well as being a noteworthy family history, you will find it to be a good read. I am in!



Recovering the Lost Stories of Our Communities' Early Leaders

By Christopher Hunt Robertson, M.Ed.

*Christopher Hunt Robertson has charmed us several times in the past with his unique scrapbook style family histories. The most recent being **Carolinian Robertsons: The Family of Adjutant General T. R. Robertson** published in the Summer 2023 issue of this newsletter. I find his writing and presentation style to be so captivating and approachable for even the novice family historian that I asked him to share his creation process with us. I hope you are inspired to put your family - whether leaders, scoundrels or quiet, orderly citizens - to paper! - CD*

Over the past decade, we've certainly learned that Americans have a variety of opinions regarding leadership. The good news is that we don't need to limit our purview to the present: our past leaders still have much to show us. Our libraries' bookshelves are filled with biographies of inspiring leaders of every sort, ready to show us how to form ambitious goals for worthwhile causes and then, despite various challenges, get things done. Since

most of those biographies pertain to those who led on the national or international stages, we often know less about the early leaders of our own local and state communities.

Raleigh may be among our nation's fastest growing cities, but this boomtown hasn't materialized overnight. New residents are attracted here by a diverse economy and a rich culture that have evolved over many generations, and Raleigh's current boom is deeply rooted in its region's history. Thanks to the past efforts of the Wake County Genealogical Society, the North Carolina Society of Historians, and many other local and state researchers, we already have many stories to share with newcomers about what makes Wake County distinct, and in our opinion, special.

Countless interesting stories for counties across the state, including Wake, still lie deeply buried in our historical newspapers, awaiting the attention of inquiring researchers determined to document and present their findings.

Each of us likely knows people who've made considerable contributions to our communities in various ways: they're locally significant leaders, moving us forward. And of course, as the state's capital, our community hosts a variety of visiting leaders as well. In the past, such leaders were often recognized in community newspapers, but if no biographical sketches were

Excerpt from the **Bieber/Beaver** book features Thomas Beaver (1814—1891) and uses narrative, news clippings, post cards and photos to help tell the story. View in context [here](#).

Page 212 - Chapter 4 - Leaders of the Other Mainline Protestant Denominations in Pennsylvania, the Midwest, and Beyond - **Methodist**

Rev. Peter Beaver (1782 - 1849) - Methodist Minister

Like many Pennsylvanian Methodist, Presbyterian, and Church of the Brethren Beavers/Biebers, including Gov. James Addams Beaver, Rev. Peter Beaver was descended from George Bieber, the Alsatian immigrant brother who had remained in Chester County when his two brothers moved on to Berks County. **Rev. Peter Beaver is described as a first-generation itinerant Methodist minister who was able to preach the Methodist faith in German to Pennsylvania's many German - Americans. He had the distinction of being ordained by Bishop Francis Asbury, the "Father of American Methodism."**

One of Peter's three sons, Thomas Beaver (1815 - 1891), was a Philadelphia merchant before moving to Danville, PA, to oversee an iron foundry. As described below, Thomas became very wealthy but was also a generous philanthropist.



Top - Center Photo: This obelisk marks Rev. Peter Beaver's grave in the New Berlin Cemetery of Union County, PA. (Photo posted by Ruth Williams at FindAGrave.com.)

Thomas Beaver contributed \$125,000 to build this Methodist church in honor of the Rev. Peter Beaver, his father. (That gift would be valued today at about \$4,000,000.)



Below: "Harrisburg Daily Independent" (PA) of Jan 30, 1890

Beaver Memorial United Methodist Church of Lewisburg, PA (Faithstreet.com Photo)

Thomas Beaver (1814 - 1891) - Son of Rev. Peter Beaver Iron, Steel and Coal Industrialist, and Educational and Religious Philanthropist

Thomas Beaver gained his wealth as a trustee of the Danville Iron and Steel Works. In addition to the Methodist church in Lewisburg, he also established the "Thomas Beaver Free Library" in Danville, shown in the historical postcard at right. He was very generous in his later years, establishing endowments at Lafayette and Dickinson Colleges.



His Danville mansion is shown at right. He died in 1891. By 1898, the house, surrounded by ironworks and workers' housing, was abandoned in poor repair. From 1898 to 2018, the house served Catholics as the Holy Family Convent, and has since hosted the Geisinger Medical Group.

(Source: Helen "Sis" Hulse for the "Danville News," April 4, 2018)



Thomas Beaver



A \$125,000 Church, and a Circulating Library from Thomas Beaver.

LEWISBURG, Pa., Jan. 30.—Hon. Thomas Beaver, of Danville, who is building a \$125,000 church as a memorial to his father, who was a leading Methodist Episcopal minister half a century ago, yesterday notified Rev. David H. Shields, the pastor of the Methodist Episcopal church of this place, that he would place a circulating library of over 1,000 volumes in the building. The church edifice, one of the finest structures in the State, is now nearing completion. It was begun two years ago, is built of Ohio stone, and is Gothic in style. Everything will be completed and furnished and given to the Methodist Episcopal congregation, unencumbered, about May 7th. Although a Presbyterian, Mr. Beaver has made this magnificent donation as a perpetual monument to the memory of his father, the Rev. Peter Beaver, one of the pioneers of Methodism, and among those who were ordained by Bishop Asbury nearly a century ago.

Recovering the Lost Stories - *cont'd*

prepared, or they had no descendants, their stories often dissipated from public memory as their contemporaries passed away.

Fortunately, online newspaper archives now allow us to visit the past. By sifting the archives, we can gather the puzzle pieces which, when carefully assembled, can help us recover our lost stories. Though libraries remain invaluable, we can now efficiently research from our homes as well. Online archives currently place billions of newspaper pages available at our fingertips.

If someone had suggested to me ten years ago that I might write and publish eight biographies presenting some of North Carolina's past local and state leaders, I would have been skeptical. But this avocation has been so enjoyable and worthwhile that I'm happy to share a few tips with others who might, in turn, recover more of our lost stories.

Preliminary Research

Many who research local history start by exploring their own family lines. But if curiosity leads you elsewhere, you might consider unrelated subjects as well. (That certainly helps with objectivity.) Either way, be ready for surprises. Your research findings may build upon or contradict earlier accounts or may catapult oral history to unexpected heights.

Narrow your focus to a person, family, group, community, or event. First, choose your subjects of interest. In the narrative sense, I'll refer to them as your characters. Your research may eventually lead you to add other secondary characters, such as relatives, neighbors, or co-workers on various projects, and your cast of characters may expand or contract as your story unfolds.

After identifying your characters, and this can't be emphasized enough, compare existing genealogies until you can identify with certainty your subjects and their exact relationships with one another. Many families repeat family names so differentiating persons with similar names is critical and sometimes challenging. If you make assumptions and don't fully

verify your subjects' critical dates and familial relationships, your narrative may not withstand review later.

Next, I suggest creating a timeline. Over your timeline, record the overlapping lifespans of your primary characters by birth and death dates. That will help to determine your narrative's general time frame. Then under your timeline, record the dates of significant events and developments that were occurring in your characters' community and region. That will help you begin to imagine your characters' historical context.

You've already begun to identify the elements of a story: the subjects and their relations (characters), their community and biographical timelines (setting), and their personal/family/community challenges (conflict). As you ponder these elements, questions will arise that may broaden your scope and open up new lines of inquiry, driving your research forward.

Read Widely

Don't re-invent the wheel. Read what others have already written regarding your characters and their communities. About 1940, North Carolina boasted its first city with 100,000 residents, which was Charlotte. So if you're focused on the state's earlier years, you'll be studying rural or town communities.

County history books, often available through free downloads online, can be especially helpful. Such histories often introduce early local leaders and may even provide detailed biographical sketches. These can offer a wealth of information, but read with a critical eye. Some errors of earlier researchers arose from a failure to verify facts, but deliberate fabrications also occasionally occurred. Unfortunately, some families employed hack writers to produce embellished hagiographies of their ancestors.

Contact the relevant county libraries to inquire about any family folders they may have. Each of our counties has a public library with a North Carolina Room and I suggest that you contact its librarian for

Recovering the Lost Stories - cont'd

recommendations. I usually send an introductory email since, at any given time, librarians are busy helping many researchers. Remember that the librarians' role is not to do our research, but to point us toward resources. (I'll add that both libraries and county genealogical associations often have a list of local genealogists willing to research for a fee. That may be helpful but be sure to fully consider all related costs.) I prefer to visit the communities of interest myself, to get a sense of the place as well as to gather information. Historical landmark buildings are literally touchstones to the past.

Newspaper Archives and Primary Sources

You're now ready to meet your characters with a deep dive into the historical newspaper archives. This is the most exciting stage because you'll begin to discover who your characters really were: what they did, where and when, and with whom. Historical newspapers are awesome resources as they're written by contemporaries, not by writers simply quoting each other many years later.

Appreciate that you may well be the first to research your subjects in our generation's internet age.

Earlier researchers would had to have traveled from library to library, tediously skimming countless newspapers - often with little to show for their efforts. I suggest that you start with a monthly subscription to one of the larger online newspaper archives,

Newspapers.com (my personal preference) or NewspaperArchives.com. North Carolina State University has also recommended additional online resources: <https://www.lib.ncsu.edu/guides/history/newspapers>.

When researching databases, you'll need to search on your characters' names under every conceivable variation. In my latest book, *Carolinian Robertsons*, I found the same youth, Thomas Ross Robertson, named as "Ross Robertson" and "T. Ross Robertson." In his early adult years, he appeared as "T. R. Robertson," and as "Thomas (or Thos.) Ross (or R.) Robertson." In his later years, as Adjutant General of the North Carolina National Guard, he appeared as "Adj. Gen. Robertson" and as "General Thomas R. Robertson." At the beginning of my book, I provided his full legal name and then stated, "To simplify, he'll usually be referred to throughout this book as T. R. Robertson." Eventually, I found myself casting a wider net by simply searching for "Robertson." Although this brought in many extraneous references that had to be ruled out, it ensured that I would not overlook any relevant news items; also, I found many

Page 23 - Chapter 1 - Dr. Hunt - Professionally Progressive (Medical Leadership - County Crisis Management)

Fighting the "Blue Death"

The "Blue Death," caused by an unknown strain, often had a grim prognosis. The new type of flu struck fast, causing two or three days of high fever, often leading to death. The lungs of victims filled with fluid and their skin turned a dark blue, as their respiratory system failed and their tissue was starved for oxygen. In many cases, less than 48 hours passed between the first sneeze and the last breath.*

In North Carolina, this flu strain first appeared in Wilmington and quickly spread westward along the rail lines. Soldiers in crowded training camps were especially vulnerable. At the railroad station that served Camp Greene near Charlotte, coffins were stacked from floor to ceiling, taking home the bodies of young soldiers who never saw the war.*

At first glance, Transylvania County's lower death rate made little sense. It shared a large border with South Carolina, the state with the pandemic's highest death rate. It had a railroad - a primary path of flu transmission. As a resort destination, it received guests from around the nation. And it had no hospital. The legally enforced quarantine, started early and strictly enforced, along with a steady stream of health education in the local paper by Dr. Hunt, appear to have been very successful in Transylvania County.

* Adapted, in part, from "NC and the 'Blue Death': The Flu Epidemic of 1918; Harry McKown; 'This Month in North Carolina History'; Oct. 2008. (Provided by Univ. of North Carolina Libraries/ Southern Historical Collection.)

Excerpt from *Health and Hospitality* tells of Dr C.W. Hunt's experiences during the "Blue Death" influenza pandemic of 1918-19 and uses narrative, new clippings and a grand jury case account to bring his ancestor to life. View in context [here](#).

Dr. Hunt's grand jury case, described above, was a significant event. Before the Flu Pandemic of 1918/1919, quarantines were seldom attempted in North Carolina and usually failed due to non-compliance. But Dr. Hunt was beyond pleading for voluntary compliance. With respect to quarantines and vaccinations, he "eloquently pleaded for the prompt enforcement of laws of health." Compelling compliance would criminalize individuals and businesses for non-compliance.

The reporter implied that Dr. Hunt's arguments were successful - setting an important legal precedent in Transylvania County. But he

Brevard News - August 1, 1918

JUDGE M. H. JUSTICE ON HEALTH LAWS

In the closing of a learned and impressive charge to the Grand Jury, his Honor M. H. Justice, at the request of our health officer, Dr. Hunt, charged the Jury as to their responsibility in enforcing the health laws, passed by the State and County Boards of Health.

A tense interest pervaded the Court room and earnest attention shown upon the faces of the Jury, as his Honor eloquently pleaded for the prompt enforcement of the laws of health. He impressed the fact upon the minds of all of his hearers that those who fail to obey all of the laws of the Board of Health, especially those relating to quarantine, and the prompt reporting of all contagious diseases occurring in the family, and that all of those who fail to comply with these laws should and must be indicted.

His remarks upon the necessity of vaccination for the prevention of smallpox, were to the point and when he informed the Jury that he personally was not at all afraid of smallpox, having been vaccinated, they seemed to appreciate his Honor's interest in their health and the health of the people at large.

Our county is to be congratulated and Judge Justice complemented upon this important step taken by him, in referring to the laws of health in his charge. This is the first instance to our knowledge of any judge showing this interest in the people and can well be followed by all of the judges of our state.

His Honor was in line with the present effort of our Government in preventing the spread of contagious diseases, protecting the bone folks and thereby our boys in the camp.

further stated, "Our county is to be congratulated and Judge Justice complimented on this important step taken by him. This is the first instance to our knowledge of any judge showing this interest in the people and can well be followed by all of the judges of our state."

The writer felt that the ruling merited legal significance statewide. Regardless, the order certainly had practical significance for the state. One month later, when the flu pandemic reached North Carolina, Dr. Hunt had legal standing to enforce a strict quarantine. Transylvania County would model how successfully a legal quarantine could slow the spread of infection and save lives.

Recovering the Lost Stories - cont'd

references to family members that might otherwise have gone unnoticed.

You may doubt that your characters will have been referenced at all in newspapers, but historical newspapers were quite different than ours today. They often focused on local residents from all social strata, with much attention to personal and social news. Aside from the usual birth and marriage notices and obituaries, you may encounter events from their daily lives: church activities, departures for education or military service, travels for business or pleasure, the arrivals of guests, or the prize they won for growing their county's largest pumpkin. You may also learn of their challenges: times of sickness, the deaths of loved ones, or a sudden crop loss from a storm. You may find that after their barn was lost to fire, their neighbors rebuilt them another twice as large. Document these challenges as the better biographies shows their subjects' humanity and grit as they pick themselves up and move forward. By connecting these life events, you'll recover the plot of your lost story.

If descendants are your target audience, you may want to broaden your focus to connect your characters to their larger family or clan, creating a family history. If presenting to the public, you might narrow your focus to present the historical contributions (significance) of a few of the more notable characters, a more biographical approach. Be open-minded, as the lost story you recover may be quite different than the one you had anticipated. Let facts tell the story. Real life often renders more surprises than we could ever have imagined.

While researching, you'll want to triangulate sources to verify facts, preferably with primary documents (wills, government records, diaries, letters, speeches, photographs, etc.) Unverified genealogies and local histories often quote each other, repeating the same false statements. Don't assume something is true simply because multiple researchers have repeated it.

Presenting Your Story

After recovering your lost story, you'll be ready to write your historical narrative. A variety of historical writing models can be found online, some chronological and others thematic. I'd suggest that you also visit your local library, grab an armful of biographies, and find a format that seems optimal for arranging your material. (You're also welcomed to view my e-books. They can be read online free of charge and without website registration. Simply go to books.google.com and type, "Christopher Hunt Robertson."

Be open-minded, as the lost story you recover may be quite different than the one you had anticipated. Let facts tell the story. Real life often renders more surprises than we could ever have imagined.

- C. H. Robertson

I'm a big fan of the scrapbook format, inserting actual copies of the newspaper items, photos, and primary documents, with commentary added. Those items can be presented within the text or in addenda. Rather than simply referencing items, provide copies for your readers to examine. Any newspaper issue published before 1923 is out of copyright and can be freely reproduced. For newspapers published between 1923 and 1964, copyright had to be renewed or they would also have entered the public domain. Later works can be published with the permission of the current copyright holder. Academic style guides will help you with proper attribution to avoid plagiarism.

For privacy reasons, avoid referencing living persons. If you choose otherwise, do so only with their explicit permission.

Recovering the Lost Stories of Our Communities' Early Leaders

At the beginning of my books, I add an introduction to provide an overview and to state my subjects' historical significance at the local, state, or regional levels. An afterword at the end allows you to draw conclusions and to offer suggestions for future research.

I hope you'll discover the puzzle pieces you're seeking regarding your persons of interest. But I can almost guarantee that, in the process of searching newspaper archives, you'll encounter fascinating glimpses of how our communities evolved - and from

a most interesting source, from the eyes and ears of contemporaries.

Dr. Catherine Kerrison, who recovered much of the carefully concealed life story of Sally Hemmings, has noted:

"It is the historian's job to excavate buried stories, to capture historical legacies, to make visible an invisible past."

I'll look forward to reading *your* lost-and-found story!

View all of Christopher Hunt Robertson's Free Ebooks Online

"Building America's Educational and Religious Institutions: Two Contributing Families"
(Google Books E-Book Series)

"The Alsatian Bieber (Beaver) Family: German-American Educational and Mainline Protestant Leaders of PA, NC, the Midwest, and Beyond"

(2022 NCSH Excellence Award)

Contributions to PA, NC, the Midwest, Etc. (Educational, Religious, and State/Local Government History)

"The Last Rosenwald School of Burke County, NC: An Historic Gem Recognized: The Legacy of John C. and Martha R. Corpening"

(2016 NCSH Excellence Award)

Contributions to Western NC (Educational, Religious, and African-American History)

"Building a New South: Five Contributing Families"
(Google Books E-Book Series)

"William Johnston: Carolina Railroad King"

(2020 NCSH Excellence Award)

Contributions to NC, SC, GA, and VA (Railroad, Bank, Hotel, Legal, and State/Local Government History)

"Carolinian Robertsons: The Family of Adjutant General T. R. Robertson of Winnsboro, SC, and Charlotte and Raleigh, NC" (2023 Release)

Contributions to SC, NC, and FL (Military, Railroad, Legal, and Hospital/Educational Philanthropy History, as well as Charlotte's Uptown Commercial Development):

"Railroad Builders: The Dunavant Family of Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee" (2015 NCSH History Award and Family History Book Award)

(Separately Published 2015 Supplement: "The Family of Henry Jackson Dunavant and Louise Wert Dunavant, and Related Families")

Contributions to VA, NC, TN, and AL (Railroad, Hotel, and Golf History; Also Built the Dunavant Manufacturing Co., the First Mill of Morganton, NC, Later Known as the Alpine Cotton Mill):

"Health and Hospitality: Dr. and Mrs. C. W. Hunt of Western North Carolina" (2018 NCSH Book Award)

"Esley Hunt: Early Portrait Photographer of NC, VA, and TN" (Biog. Sketch)

(Subject Presented in 2021 by the NC State Archives Director on Cable TV)

Contributions to TN, NC, SC, FL, VA, and DC (Public Health, Medical, Hotel, and Professional Photography History)

"Full Steam Ahead: The Family of Brig. General Charles Lutterloh and Eliza Comerford Lutterloh of Central and Eastern NC" (2018 NCSH Book Award)

Contributions to NC, FL, and TX (Steamboat, Medical, and Local Government History)



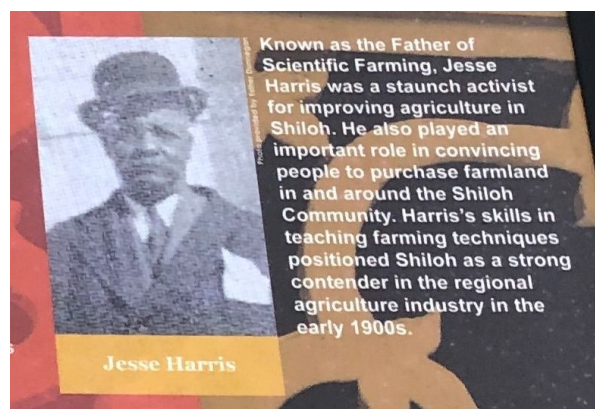
Christopher Hunt Robertson, M.Ed. - Educator and Historical Biographer (Eastern and Midwestern U.S.)

[Read Christopher's full bio here](#)

Shiloh Community: A Freedmens village since 1830

Contributing – **Saundra Cropps**

Shiloh Community in Cedar Forks township started in 1830 as a rural community of free people of color. This community is home to over 57 farmers on property extending from the Durham County line to south of McCrimmon Parkway. It was annexed into the town of Morrisville, NC in 1987 (although it predates Morrisville by almost 200 years). It is important to note that the remaining farmers in Shiloh community today are the living descendants of those original freemen who settled this part of Wake county from the 1830 and on through the years after Emancipation.



[source](#)

The Shiloh Leaders historic marker describes Saundra's great grandfather [Jesse Harris](#) as being known as the "Father of Scientific Farming".

"Jesse Harris was a staunch activist for improving agriculture in Shiloh. He also played an important role in convincing people to purchase farmland in and around the Shiloh Community. Harris's skills in teaching farming techniques positioned Shiloh as a strong contender in the regional agriculture industry in the early 1900s."

To understand the challenges faced by black farmers in the post-Reconstruction era, it is helpful to consult the [WAKE COUNTY HISTORIC FARM CONTEXT \(1918-1968\) AND SURVEY UPDATE](#). The section on Black Farmers (p59 - 62) describes their efforts to succeed despite exclusion from county farm extension programs. They are described as taking the initiative to organize their own resources, founding the Negro Farmers County Council in 1945 to address farm improvement practices. With help from the NFCC and their Negro Farm Agent, progress was made, and many home demonstrations within the Shiloh community are featured in the report.

While the community of free blacks predated the Civil War by many years, it grew in the aftermath of the war. During that growth, Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church became the spiritual hub of the community in 1867. Prior to that some of the free folk of color worshiped alongside their white neighbors at the nearby Cedar Forks Baptist church. After the war, as the number of freedmen in the Shiloh community swelled, they withdrew from



[source](#)

WCGS member and Diversity officer Saundra Cropps has deep roots in the Shiloh Community as you will come to read. The community and many of its members, including Saundra's great grandfather, Jesse Harris and other ancestors, are commemorated on various historical markers within its bounds.

The marker for the [Shiloh Community](#) states that it was a "rural community of free African Americans and slaves, developed in the Cedar Fork Township in the late 1820's. By 1870, Shiloh was a self-sufficient community with a public school, co-op store, midwives, recreation center and church. ... This thriving community, home to over 57 farmers on property extending from the Durham County line to south of McCrimmon Parkway, was annexed into the town of Morrisville, NC in 1987."

Shiloh Community - cont'd

Cedar Forks wishing to "practice independent action in religious matters." Shiloh Church was organized and early meetings were "held under a brush arbor on the property of Major Weaver, with approximately fifty members under the leadership of Rev. Ed Cole, the church became the institution of religious and social cohesion for the community." More of Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church history can be read [here](#).

That brush arbor of those early services became the location of the first church. It was built very close to where I-540 is now. The Wake Cemetery Survey entry for the "old" Shiloh Church lists it as being near the intersection of Church Street and Weaver Forest Way. This would have been the property of Major Weaver. The land surrounding the original church was developed in the building of I-540 and the Providence Place Subdivision. There was also a cemetery there which served as the resting place for the earliest Shiloh residents.

Another notable person referenced on the Shiloh Community historical marker with Jesse Harris was Reverend James Dunston (1854-1924), third pastor of the Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church from 1882 to 1885. The contributions of Rev. James Dunston had a profound effect on Shiloh's history and endurance as a community. He was instrumental in securing land ownership, education, and economic development for the residents of Shiloh.

About 1966 the Church was moved further south down Church Street to the current building and



location at 922 Church Street. This is across from the location of the new Shiloh Grove Subdivision, land that was formerly the Barbee farm. If you visit the area, you will see development encroaching on all sides. Driving out of the parking lot, you used to be able to drive Barbee Road through to NC 54. It is now a dead end due to a railroad track upgrade in the last 10 years. Much of the surrounding land has been developed into a community park.

A new cemetery sits on the Church property as well. The remains of 53 resting souls of the original cemetery were relocated here. The known names are memorialized on the marker shown here.



[source](#)

Second in the second column of this marker you will find mention of "Jessie" [sic] Harris and Roxanna Mills Harris. These are Sandra's great grandparents. They are the parents of her paternal grandmother, Mary Harris Russ, who is listed last on the third column. Many of the sons and daughters of Jesse and Roxanna

Shiloh Community - cont'd

Harris are also included on this stone - these would be Sandra's great aunts and uncles. In addition to Harris and Mills surnames, the Jesse Harris family tree includes Barbee and Mayo. This makes Sandra's relationship confirmed to all but three on this stone. I wonder if we could connect the others with a little more research time? Congratulations to Sandra. This is a heritage to take pride in and honor.

In addition to the people listed here, there are about 200 others buried in this cemetery. Information on the markers can be found on [Find a Grave](#) and [USgwarchives.net](#). There are many descendants of the founding freedmen resting here to be found on these two lists.

A history of Shiloh Community and its church, *Shilodean Memorabilia*, was written in 1982 by Esther Dunnegan and Delores Scott. The book includes a collection of recipes, old sayings and expressions, birth records, games children used to play, and herbal cures and remedies, and the history of the community, citizens, and church. The few remaining copies of this book are housed at the church and at N.C. Central Library in its rare book section should you like to read further.

In *Shilodean Memorabilia*, Jesse Harris is characterized as more than simply a farmer. The ever enterprising Harris served his community as a blacksmith, a miller, and also operated a syrup cookery. He demonstrated and shared all these skills with his community for the betterment of all.

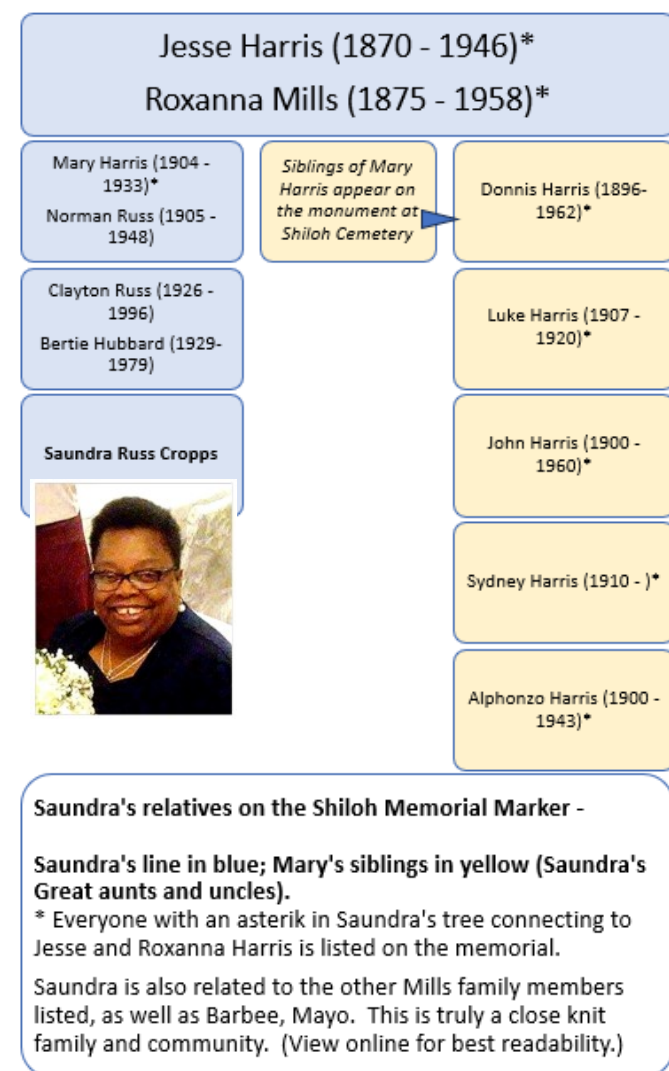


[source](#)

No doubt, the efforts of many residents, including Reverend Dunston and Jesse Harris, have kept

Shiloh Community and Church alive this long when many other Wake County rural freedmen's communities have been lost to time and development. Sandra is very lucky to have such deep ancestral ties to this special community.

Many thanks to Sandra for sharing her family roots with us. I have really enjoyed learning more about the Shiloh Community and Church. My interest was sparked when I was struggling to distinguish between the old and new locations in the Wake Cemetery Project. In researching, I learned just enough about the community to be really excited at the chance to collaborate with Sandra on this article. This information will be added to the Wake Cemetery project entries for both Old and New Shiloh Churches as they only had location information from back in the day. I feel so much better now that we can share a fuller story with future researchers. - CD



Historic and Architectural Resources of Wake County, North Carolina (ca. 1770-1941)

I discovered these fascinating and useful files while working on the Wake County Cemetery Survey Project. I used them many times to help pinpoint an area where a cemetery was reported to be located. I found them so rich with genealogical content that I made it a practice to attach to the notes field as I added location and GPS info to each township spreadsheet. - CD

"HISTORIC AND ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES OF WAKE COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA (ca. 1770-1941) INTRODUCTION The comprehensive survey of Wake County's historic and architectural resources took place between October 1988 and May 1991. During this time 2008 properties were documented individually and in groups in Wake County's rural areas, small communities, and municipalities outside the 1988 Raleigh city limits. The vast majority of properties surveyed were houses and farm complexes dating from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, although a number of earlier houses and farms, churches, schools, lodges, commercial and transportation-related buildings, industrial buildings and structures, and recreational sites and structures were recorded as well. "

You will often find these documents in a Google search if you manage to use the right words. You may be inclined to overlook them since they look like they are more about dwellings and buildings than people. Stop right there. Do not pass go! In addition to details about building sites and locations, these documents are treasure trove of research, details, maps, descriptions, pictures, and biographies including significance to community and historic era. You will find loads of documented sources attached.

The documents were written as proposals to promote different locations as candidates for addition to the National Register of Historic Places. These reports include homes, farm, plantations, mills, schools, local historic districts and any structure deemed historically significant. See [Historic and Architectural Resources of Wake County, North Carolina \(ca. 1770-1941\)](#).

Whether the properties were accepted to the national list or not, the interested researcher will find information and commentary on a variety of pertinent topics - historical context, associated property types, geographical data, a summary of

identification and evaluation methods. The most important, finds for researchers, are the bibliographical references files (aka a gold mine of relevant and expansive source material far exceeding the usual found on a quick google or ancestry search). In addition to details about a particular place, there is vast info and historical context of the people who lived there and their context to the community. You may not always find an indication of whether the property was accepted to the National Historic Register or not, but you will always find lots of help with your research.

Here are a few examples pulled from the earlier linked compiled list which show the wealth of information available.

[Bennett Bunn Plantation \(WA0190\)](#)

[Clarence H. and Nannie S. Chamblee House \(WA2121\)](#) and [the House at 921 Pearces Rd. \(WA8801\)](#) (one report sadly not accepted to the register)

[Apex Union Depot \(WA0222\)](#)

[W. E. B. DuBois School \(WA1657\)](#) a Rosenwald School

Other notable surveys

[Expanded Wake County surveys](#) - Scroll to Wake section.

[Wake County Historic Farm Context Survey](#)

[Find surveys in other parts of NC. and NC Context based Surveys](#). Not online.

[NCDigital Architectural Survey Reports](#)

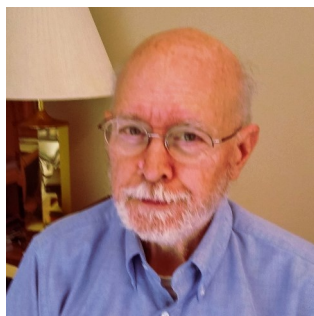
Search nationwide - [National Register of Historic Places through the National Park Service](#)

You just don't know what wonderful rabbit holes you are going down when you read these records. I hope you grow to love them as much as I do. - CD

Jack McGeachy wins NCGS 2023 Publishing Award

On October 28, 2023, John A. (“Jack”) McGeachy esteemed WCGS member and author won a North Carolina Genealogical Society publishing award.

Jack’s recent published transcription, **Warren County, NC, Pleas & Quarter Sessions Court Minutes, May Term, 1848-November Term, 1851** received the **NCGS Award for Excellence in Publishing for a Book, or a Set of Books, of Abstracts or Transcriptions of an Original North Carolina Record.**



how to produce a book of transcriptions. It is visually appealing and lays out all the details for the readers in a very methodical and understandable way in the ‘About the Volume’ section. I’m very impressed with the general index and appreciative of the fact that he included additional types of indexes.”

This is Jack’s third time winning this prize. In 2014, he won for his set of books *New Hanover County, North Carolina Minutes of the Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions*. This set of 23 volumes is a transcription of the minutes from 1809 to 1868. Jack won again in 2018 award for *Wilkes County, North Carolina Minutes of the Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions*. This set of ten books covered 1798 to 1868.

View all Jack’s Public History papers [here](#). If you are researching New Hanover, Wilkes, and Warren Counties or the Cape Fear River region in the early 1800s these records will be of interest to you.

Congratulations to Jack and thank you for all your contributions to NC researchers.

Wilson Library Improvement Project: a three year update

In late October, UNC Chapel Hill Libraries announced that Wilson Library, which houses [DigitalNC](#) and the [Southern Historical Collection](#), will be closed to the public and staff for a few years. A phased closure is expected to begin in August 2024 and last approximately three years.

While this closure affects many records and holdings needed for genealogical research, there will be accommodations made to keep records available. The DigitalNC [blog post](#) about the project states:

“During this time, critical updates will be made to the

building including extending sprinkler coverage, creating emergency egress stairs, and upgrading the fire alarm system. NCDHC staff and the equipment we use will be relocated during much of this time.

We wanted to make sure you know that our services will continue, though we may have to make some adjustments regarding capacity. We’ll be back in touch with updates as plans develop.

If you have questions related to NCDHC operations, feel free to contact us. You can also visit the project’s [official Library page](#) for details and updates.”



WILSON LIBRARY IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Wake County has lost a legend - Irene Olive Kittinger 1925 - 2023

It is my sad task to report the passing of Irene Olive Kittinger. She was so vibrant and committed to Wake County history. She was the driving force behind the original Wake County Cemetery Census (1978-2009), an active participant in the Cary Historical Society, and a founding member of The Friends of the Page-Walker Hotel in Cary. In addition, she was a charter and organizing member of the Asbury Station Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. She won many awards and accolades for her roles as historian and preservationist.

You may read the full obituary here -

<https://www.cityofoakscremation.com/obituaries/article-211/>

She has left such a legacy for all of us. Wake researchers owe her so much. We at the Wake County Genealogy Society are honored to preserve a portion of her legacy and keep it in the forefront of Wake County research.



Raleigh Senior Tech Ed Expands Outreach at Local Senior Living Sites

The following comes from Jen Gunther, RSTE:

Raleigh Senior Tech Ed is expanding their outreach for technical help (includes help with PCs, laptops, Apple devices, Smartphones, etc.) into several Senior Living communities in our area. The latest addition is the Overture at Crabtree starting with Meet & Greet Open Help* on Nov. 16 at 11am.

*Open Help Sessions at Overture/Crabtree have recently been expanded to include genealogy questions.

These Help sessions will focus mainly on tech issues. ANY question & ANY problem -- e.g., "how do I take pictures with my Smartphone?" "I can't get my printer to work with my laptop," "how can I find the file I just saved?", etc.

The sessions have been set up for the convenience

of the residents of Overture, and are currently scheduled for the 1st & 3rd Thursday of the month. The Overture management has graciously permitted the sessions to be open to the public. Besides **Overture @ Crabtree**, we also hold these events at **The Cambridge @ Brier Creek**, **Whispering Pines Adult Community** on Lead Mine & Sawmill Rd, **A.E. Finley YMCA** at Six Forks & Baileywick Rds. (just off of I-540) and **St. James UMC** on New Hope Church Road near Buffalo Road.

<https://www.raleighseniorteched.org/schedule/>

Visit to RSTE website and go to the Schedule page and see where and when the Open Help sessions are held. You don't have to register in advance, but there is a fee of \$5 (with a money back guarantee -- if we can't help, you don't pay). We have experts in Apple products (iPhone, iPad, Macs, etc.) and Android & Windows PCs.

Winter 2024 Events Calendar

WCGS Meetups: Location varies. It's always more fun to meet in person. Follow our webpage for details future in person Meetups. Come bond with your fellow local Genies! [Details](#)

Jan 23

WCGS Meeting: More than Money and Land: The Evolution of Bounty Land, Military Pensions and Alternative Records. Speaker: Debra Dudek. 6:30pm. Online Virtual Meeting. [Details](#)

Feb 27

WCGS Meeting: Roots of Hope: Rediscovering the Legacy of John Hunter. Speaker: Ernest Dollar, Director of the City of Raleigh Museum. 6:30pm. Online Virtual Meeting. [Details](#)

Feb 29 - March 2

RootsTech 2024. Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Free online content. Check website for updates. [Registration and details](#)

March 15-16

NGCS - Virtual Conference. Friday and Saturday. Check website for updates. [Registration and details](#)

Mar 26

WCGS Meeting: Where Your Ancestors Walked: Virtual Heritage Travel. Speaker: Lisa Lisson. 6:30pm. Online Virtual Meeting. [Details](#)

Apr 23

WCGS Meeting: Save the date. Speaker/topic announced soon. 6:30pm. Online Virtual Meeting. [Details](#)

May 16-18

NGS 2024 Virtual Family History Conference. Theme: Expanding Possibilities. Check website for updates. [Registration and details](#)

WCGS Special Interest Groups: Meeting monthly via Zoom. WCGS Members can visit the SIG section of the Member area for information.

Family Tree Maker SIG - *Currently on hiatus. Check Wakecogen.org for updates.

Ongoing Workshops thru SeniorTechEd - Genealogy and Tech classes offered online via Zoom include private Ancestry Coaching, various Genealogy topics, MS Office program instruction to help with organizing and presenting your research - Excel, Power Point, & Word. [Details and fees](#)

Take advantage of free content online:

Family History Library Webinars - [Link to upcoming webinars](#)

Conference Keeper.org - Follow the virtual page for a constantly updated list of online events content. [View page](#)

Genealogy Bargains - Follow Thomas MacEntee's blog for tons more free content. [Blog](#) [Newsletter](#)

Legacy Webinar series - Webinars are free to attend with registration and for viewing on demand for 7 days afterward. [Schedule and Registration](#) (Get the **Legacy Webinars/WCGS Member Discount**. Log in to the WCGS member area for details.)

Family History Fanatics (YouTube channel) - Quick access to information covering basic to intermediate DNA and Genetic Genealogy skills. [Watch videos](#)

DNA help from Diahan Southard: a combination of free and fee based content, but you may find that her teaching style is worth the time and price. [Your DNA Guide](#) [YDG Blog](#)

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Societies and Sources in the surrounding area

North Carolina Genealogical Society: [Details](#)

Johnston County Heritage Center: [Details](#)

Durham-Orange Genealogical Society: [Details](#)

Granville County Genealogical Society: [Details](#)

Tar River Connections Genealogical Society: Details - TRCGS@Brasswell-Library.org

Heritage Society of Franklin County: Details - heritagesocietync@gmail.com

Triangle Jewish Genealogical Society: [Details](#)

Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society: Triangle Region Chapter - see Facebook page for details. [@aahgsnctriangle](#)

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Check our [webpage](#), detail links, and/or [Facebook page](#) for late additions, schedule changes and updates to the WCGS calendar between issues. This Calendar is accurate as of Dec. 8, 2023.



One Last Thing

This issue focuses significantly on writing your findings as family history whether in book, scrapbook, blog post or article form. No matter how you choose to share, *just be sure you do share*. The hardest part is getting started. Ask me how I know.

Write ideas as they come to you even if they are not in order. When you are starting, it is more important to capture than be correct. You can plug them into a timeline after you capture. You can fluff and polish as you progress and put the fine points on your work as you proofread and edit.

Give yourself permission to create a messy (maybe even chaotic) first draft. It is a lot easier to corral those ideas into something cohesive if you have them captured in a draft (or several) from which to work.

As you go about your holiday visits don't forget to gather stories and ideas to turn your research into a history your family can enjoy for generations to come.

Your humble editor -

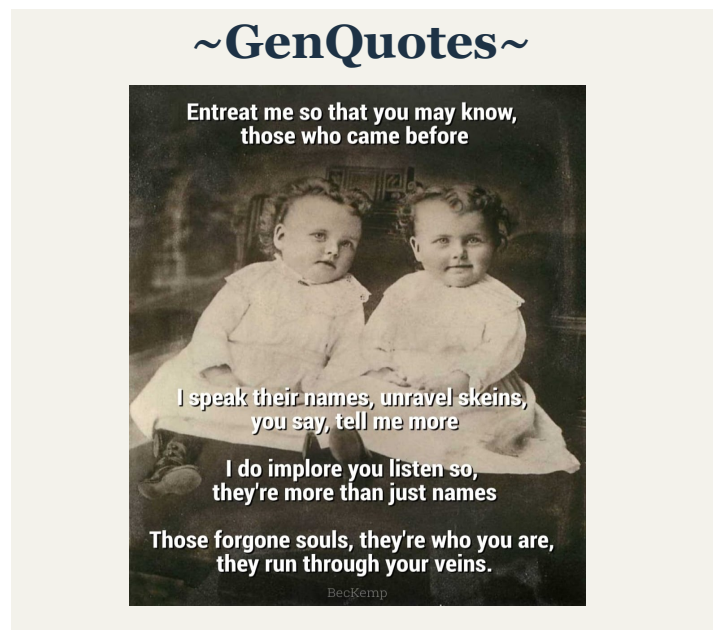
[Cyndi Deal](#)

Deadline for submissions for the Spring 2024 issue is March 15, 2024.

Ideas? Questions? Feedback of any kind? We love to hear from you. [Drop us a line!](#)

Submissions: newsletter@wakecogen.org

Photo Note: When viewing photos from a printed copy, please refer back to the [online edition](#).



Contact WCGS

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Volunteer Co-Ordinator & Queries: [Saundra Cropps](#)

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