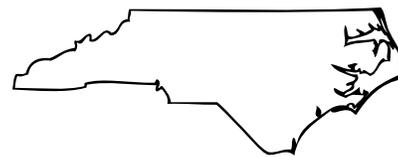


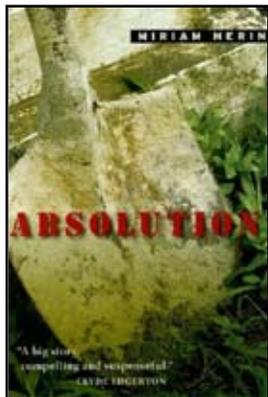
North Carolina Books

Eileen McGrath, compiler



Miriam Herin

■ Absolution



Charlotte: Novello Festival Press, 2007.
318 pp. \$22.95.
ISBN 978-0-9760963-9-9.

In her first novel, *Absolution*, Miriam Herin treats the reader to a rich story filled with three dimensional characters that are dynamic and yet painfully flawed. Although set in the present, a great deal of the story happens in flashbacks, both to combat in Vietnam and to the anti-war movement that bitterly divided the country.

Richard and Maggie Delany were married with one son attending college. Richard was a successful attorney, a former Green Beret Captain, and Vietnam vet. Maggie, a Southern-born woman, was a veteran of the anti-war movement of the late 1960s. Like so many of their generation the couple managed to ignore their deep differences about the Vietnam War and enjoy a life together. In a tragic turn of events Richard is killed after he attempts to intervene during a bungled holdup at a local store. The killer is apparently Anh “Billy” Dung Nguyen, a teenage Vietnamese immigrant. The evidence is so clearly against Anh that the district attorney assures Maggie that the outcome of the prosecution is all but assured. Of course, that is before a high profile defense attorney from New York decides to take Anh’s case. In a plot twist, that defense attorney turns out to be an old friend of Maggie’s from her protest days.

Maggie becomes aware that her dead husband’s time in Vietnam may, in some way, be connected to his death during the robbery. In an attempt to find information about Richard’s experiences as a Green Beret she begins to contact some of his former friends. Some refuse to discuss anything about their Vietnam experience which in turn makes Maggie more curious. Eventually she learns enough to make her question her relationship with her deceased husband. It is during this period that Maggie begins to have flashbacks about her own past and the anti-war movement that was so important to her.

Absolution isn’t a book full of nice thoughts. It is a gripping story that examines the many ghosts that we all carry. It also reminds us that we don’t always know what we think we do. One thing *Absolution* demonstrates to us rather convincingly is that people are complicated, and often good and evil can be intertwined in our lives and often not clearly definable. *Absolution* is recommended for large and medium public libraries or libraries with a strong Vietnam era collection.

Miriam Herin lives in Greensboro with her husband. She has had a varied academic career. She earned a PhD in English from the University of South Carolina and has taught at Limestone College in South Carolina, Essex County College in Newark, New Jersey, Appalachian State University, and Greensboro College. Herin has won awards for her stories and has made her living as a freelance writer working for companies such as the American Institute of Architects, First Union National Bank, the Riddick Corporation, and Bell South.

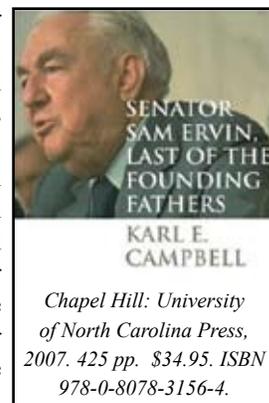
Robert Busko

Haywood County Public Library

Karl E. Campbell

■ Senator Sam Ervin, Last of the Founding Fathers

Perhaps no single individual better reflects the cultural traditions, conflicts, and shifts of twentieth-century North Carolina than former United States Senator Sam J. Ervin, Jr. (1896-1985). Ervin, who represented the state in the Senate for twenty years, is often remembered for the prominent role and media attention he received as chair of the Senate Watergate Committee hearings in 1973. Ervin’s Senate career prior to Watergate was paradoxical: he steadfastly opposed many civil rights reforms while simultaneously serving as a vigorous defender of civil liberties and the United States Constitution.



Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007. 425 pp. \$34.95. ISBN 978-0-8078-3156-4.

Campbell introduces us to his subject through selected episodes from the Watergate hearings that typified Ervin’s country lawyer charm and razor-sharp wit. Chapters one and two then take us back to look at Ervin’s life as a Morganton native and citizen before he went to the Senate in 1954. The next four chapters review Ervin’s record in the Senate up to the election of Richard Nixon as president in 1968. The intensifying Constitutional confrontations between Ervin and the president that eventually resulted in the senator’s appointment as chair of the Watergate Committee in 1973 are reviewed in chapters eight and nine. In the final chapter Campbell analyzes Watergate and Ervin’s staunch allegiance to the Constitution. Interspersed throughout the engaging narrative are archival photographs and cartoons that illustrate key influences on Ervin’s early life and significant events during his Senate career. The expansive section of notes that follows the last chapter amply documents the extensive research that Campbell undertook to write this volume.

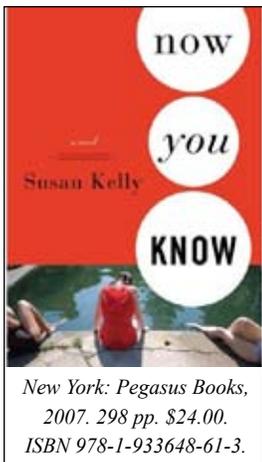
In describing his focus for the book, Campbell observes that “this volume concentrates more on Ervin’s road to Watergate than on his role in the scandal itself.” Rather than writing a full biography or a monograph on just the Watergate period, Campbell decided to pursue a “biographical study on the central theme of the senator’s career—the apparent contradiction between [Ervin’s] opposition to civil rights and his support of civil liberties.”

In this his first published book, Campbell, an associate professor of history at Appalachian State University, has produced a gem of scholarship that masterfully conveys the greatness and humanness that characterized Sam Ervin, Jr. In addition to its value as an excellent biography of one of the state’s most notable politicians, it satisfies those having a broader interest in the history, politics, and culture of twentieth-century North Carolina. Thus, this informative volume is a worthwhile selection for all types of libraries.

David L. DeHart
Appalachian State University

Susan Kelly

■ Now You Know



Free spirited “Yankee” Libba Charles and proper Southern belle Frances Simpson meet as roommates at a women’s college in Virginia in the late 1940s. Seemingly incompatible opposites, they develop an abiding friendship that determines the course of their lives. One woman chooses the independent existence of a novelist, observing life and reporting on it, while never quite fully engaging in her own. The other devotes herself to building the warm and nurturing family life she yearned for as an only child. Inextricably woven into each other’s worlds, they hold secrets which

they have promised to keep until death. Written in flashbacks, the novel draws the reader along through the years, slowly uncovering the sacrifices made and bargains struck in their friendship.

Libba introduces Frances to the man she will marry. Frances and John have three beautiful daughters, named for the characters in Longfellow’s “The Children’s Hour.” The novel is as much about Frances’ children and their struggles to build fulfilling lives as it is about the lifelong ties that Libba and Frances forged. When Frances passes away after a prolonged fight with cancer, the daughters reunite with each other and their mother’s best friend at the family summer cabin in the mountains. The daughters resent Libba believing “it was difficult loving someone who siphoned, by her presence, even by her phone calls, love from a person who was supposed to belong to you.”

Libba’s close relationship to Frances allowed her entry into the minutiae of daily life, and as a novelist she ruthlessly mined the lives of Frances’s family for materials for her books. Frances’s oldest daughter, Alice, even suspects Libba may have hastened their mother’s death. When Libba is diagnosed with cancer, she

refuses all treatments. It falls to Frances’s daughters to care for their mother’s most beloved friend. In these last few months they begin to understand the depths and complexity of these intimate friends, and gain insight into their own personal struggles.

Kelly is the author of the novels *The Last of Something*, *Even Now*, and *How Close We Come*. With its emphasis on female relationships, family dynamics, and the nature of love, *Now You Know* fits seamlessly into Kelly’s body of work. She has a knack for descriptive writing that places the reader in the exact milieu of the scene. Her sketches of life as a couple with small children are written as deftly as her scenes of the summer camp in the mountains of North Carolina. Well-written and thought-provoking, Susan Kelly continues to impress.

Stacey Yusko

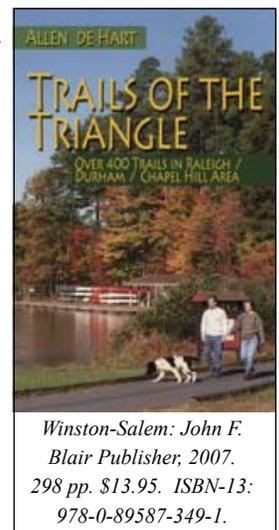
Allen de Hart

■ Trails of the Triangle

It’s spring, and time to grab your hiking boots and the new edition of Allen de Hart’s *Trails of the Triangle* for some serious (or not so serious) outdoor exploring. This second edition offers valuable updates to the original 1997 guide, and it is *the* source for information on parks and trails within 50 miles of the Triangle area (Raleigh/Durham/Chapel Hill).

De Hart has organized over 400 trail descriptions in chapters based on land ownership (U.S. government properties, state parks, municipal parks, etc.). All trails are helpfully rated by length and difficulty, and maps are often included.

Clear directions to trailheads and parking will get you off to a good start, and detailed trail descriptions will help keep you on course.



A highlight of this trail guide is the information on many hidden treasures accessible to those of us in the middle of the state. If the price of gas is getting you down, plan a getaway right down the road on trails at the nearest lake, botanical garden, state park, or greenway system. With a picnic, rain jacket, plant and bird guides, and good water supply in your daypack, you can ramble all day along the cliffs, riverbank, and wooded trails at Raven Rock State Park near Lillington, or trek the hills along the Eno River in Durham. If little folk are walking with you, try a shorter hike along a greenway in Cary, Morrisville, or Chapel Hill. If you’re a fan of Triangle Land Conservancy, follow directions to their open preserves in Chatham, Johnston, Orange, and Wake counties, all truly wild areas with important biological diversity. Read far enough, and you’ll find trails for cyclists, equestrians, and skaters, and trails offering access to the physically impaired. The alphabetical trail index is helpful if looking for a specific trail, otherwise you’ll scan the table of contents to find particular parks, areas, or counties of interest to you.

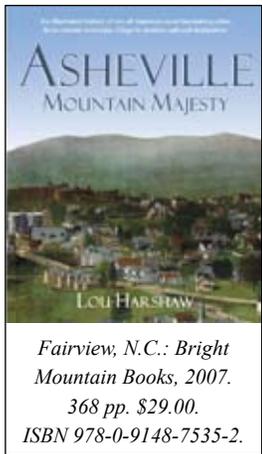
Allen de Hart, who has hiked worldwide and has been North Carolina's hiking guru for many years, also published *Trails of the Triad* (1997) and *North Carolina Hiking Trails* (2005). He's received numerous environmental awards, one for founding the group Friends of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail. Now retired from teaching at Louisburg College, de Hart and his wife have created De Hart Botanical Gardens near Louisburg.

Whether seeking a peaceful Sunday afternoon stroll or a strenuous all-day workout, readers can find plenty of choices and inspiration in de Hart's enthusiastic exploration of the Triangle area. This new trail guide is suitable for all libraries; consider purchasing one copy for the reference collection and one for check-out.

Dianne Ford
Elon University

Lou Harshaw

■ Asheville: Mountain Majesty



Tackling the entire history of any place is a formidable task, but Lou Harshaw attempts just that in her extensively illustrated *Asheville: Mountain Majesty*. A native Ashevillean, local historian, photographer, and former publicity director of the Asheville Chamber of Commerce, Lou Harshaw is well-qualified to create an illustrated history of her hometown. In fact, she has been writing about local history and culture for more than thirty years, including a previous work about Asheville. In the afterword to her current book, Harshaw states, "If one thing can be thought of

as constant in the city, it is change." She certainly demonstrates Asheville's many changes as she concisely covers the city's long history, from the formation of the Appalachian Mountains to the present.

Harshaw begins her endeavor by dividing Asheville's story into three sections—The Village, The Town, and The City—each reflecting a different period in Asheville's development. Within these sections, individual chapters are organized thematically rather than chronologically; each chapter is essentially a self-contained story focused on the people, events, or elements that shaped the city. Among the personalities covered are Zebulon Vance, Edwin Carrier, George Pack, Franklin Coxe, E.W. Grove, Thomas Wolfe, and the Vanderbilts. Harshaw also details the effects of the Civil War, the floods of 1916, World War I, and the Depression, as well as developments such as improvements in education, new modes of transportation, and the establishment of the logging and tourism industries.

An impressive array of black and white images documenting notable people and places accompany the text. Virtually every page has at least one illustration, and the book contains hundreds of historical and modern photographs taken from a variety of sources. Each picture is accompanied by a substantive caption that provides context and a sense of the subject's importance. One

notable deficiency is the shortage of maps. The concept of place is important to Harshaw's storytelling, and she often describes historical buildings or areas in reference to current streets and buildings. While this should not present a problem for local readers, without a map for reference non-local readers may be confused about locations and proximities.

Asheville: Mountain Majesty contains other features readers will appreciate. The first of these is a detailed index, which includes references to text and images and contains parenthetical information to clarify the identity of lesser-known names. The book also has a timeline of the town's history, which includes the construction of important buildings, notable population markers, the establishment of individual schools and churches, infrastructure developments, cultural events, and tidbits of Asheville trivia. Finally, for readers interested in learning more about Asheville's history, the book includes a bibliography of more than three dozen additional sources of information.

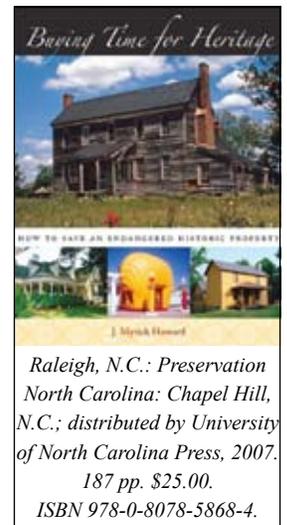
This book could serve as a good introduction to, or reference source about, the city of Asheville. It should be useful in any collection on Appalachian or North Carolina history, whether in a school, public, or academic library.

Jennifer McElroy
University of North Carolina Chapel Hill

J. Myrick Howard

■ Buying Time for Heritage: How to Save an Endangered Historic Property

Since 1978, J. Myrick Howard has been the executive director for Preservation North Carolina (PNC), the state's award-winning private nonprofit historic preservation organization. Under Howard's stewardship, PNC has saved and directed the preservation of over 500 endangered historic properties. The organization's impressive portfolio includes Loray Mill and its entire surrounding mill village (site of the bloody 1929 Gastonia strikes), the unique scallop-shaped Shell Gas Station in Winston-Salem, modernist structures in Raleigh, rural farmhouses, abandoned churches, schools, and other properties. Howard drew on his experiences in these PNC projects to create his first full-length book, *Buying Time for Heritage: How to Save an Endangered Historic Property*. This well-crafted book will be a welcome resource for America's preservation enthusiasts and students of history alike.



In *Buying Time for Heritage*, Howard has two major aims. Primarily, he presents many of the general issues and challenges inherent in historic preservation work. Secondarily, he seeks to instruct other preservation organizations as they navigate preservation issues. He does this chiefly through anecdotes that show how PNC worked through the challenges presented by these

issues. Although the book often reads more like a “how-we-did-it” rather than the “how-to” that is suggested by the subtitle, the PNC success stories have been so well described by Howard that the reader could infer much of the mechanics of each project. Those who need more precise instruction can pursue other more step-by-step resources on the subject. The strength of *Buying Time for Heritage* is its discussion of the broader issues in preservation work.

The book begins with the story of the reorganization of the struggling Antiquities Society of North Carolina into Preservation North Carolina in the early 1970s and the establishment of PNC’s revolving fund. In succeeding chapters there is analysis of the thought process that guides which properties to purchase, which properties to save through savvy real estate deals rather than purchase, and which properties should be considered too far gone to be saved. Perhaps one of the greatest surprises of the book is the frankness with which Howard explores this idea that “not every fight is the good fight.” The book also includes useful chapters on the social capital in preservation, including the need for a passionate and knowledgeable staff; the development of partnerships with other organizations; and the strength of a community that rallies around an endangered property. A robust appendix that includes boilerplate real estate forms and contracts will give the reader further introduction into the nuanced tactics of historic preservation.

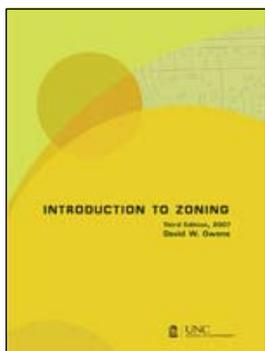
This book would be suitable for a public or academic library and should be on the reference shelf of any preservation-minded organization in the United States, whether library, museum, environmental group, or architectural firm.

Biff Hollingsworth

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

David W. Owens

■ Introduction to Zoning



Chapel Hill: UNC School of Government, 2007.
198 pp. \$21.00.
ISBN 978-1-56011-562-5.

Many Americans know that most urban, and many rural, places in the United States are subject to zoning laws, but that is as far as their knowledge goes until someone wants to build a controversial building near those citizens’ home or workplace. Then, suddenly, they want to learn about their rights and the processes through which zoning is established, changed, or appealed. David W. Owens, Gladys H. Coates Distinguished Professor at the UNC School of Government, has written a concise, readable guide that will provide interested readers with a basic understanding of the zoning process, the ideas behind zoning, and the construction of zoning ordinances. A reader who spends two or three evenings with this book will become well-informed about zoning.

Owens starts with the rationale and legality of zoning and then presents the typical types of zones, permitted uses and conditional

uses, variances, grandfathered uses, and the limits on zoning. He explains why sometimes witnesses are sworn in and why sometimes people can just speak their mind. The roles of local elected officials, appointed boards, and local government staff are explained. His examples are North Carolina examples, and he generally writes from a North Carolina perspective, but he still captures the essence of zoning across the United States. He adds three appendices, including a useful bibliography, and a very helpful glossary.

Though it is not a legal treatise, this book will satisfy the desires of most citizens who want to know more about zoning. Owens covers it all, and covers it well enough that *Introduction to Zoning* could be used by citizens appointed to a board of adjustment or other local board that deals with land use. He explains things well enough and briefly enough that citizens who wants to know what is behind one of those “Rezoning Notice” signs in their neighborhood will not feel burdened reading the book. This book should be in every library in North Carolina. Public libraries will find it answers the questions of concerned citizens; community college libraries will find that students studying real estate or planning to start a business will want it; and students using college and university libraries will consult it while writing papers or when they become involved in local politics. Owens and the School of Government have done a great job of explaining an important and common government function to ordinary citizens.

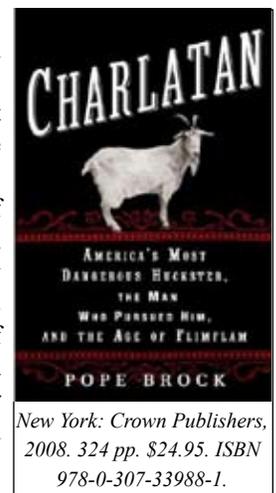
Thomas K. Tiemann

Elon University

Pope Brock

■ Charlatan: America’s Most Dangerous Huckster, the Man Who Pursued Him, and the Age of Flimflam

Quacks have always been around, but *Charlatan* proves they have been especially prolific in the United States. Pride, vanity, and the endless pursuit of youth are human qualities that have helped quackery flourish. *Charlatan* is the story of the greatest con man of early twentieth-century America, John R. Brinkley, who exploited male vanity to build a multi-million dollar business empire. Pope Brock is the author of *Indiana Gothic*; he has also written a variety of articles for *Esquire* and other periodicals in the United States and Great Britain.



New York: Crown Publishers, 2008. 324 pp. \$24.95. ISBN 978-0-307-33988-1.

Charlatan is about a doctor, but it is also the story of an unregulated era in America—an environment that allowed John R. Brinkley to build his empire on the implantation of goat testicles to “restore” male virility. Brinkley started his life on a farm in the Jackson County, North Carolina community of Beta. After an early career selling patent medicines and other medical scams, he purchased a medical license in Kansas that allowed him to practice in eight states. In the fall of 1917, Brinkley performed his

famous operation for the first time. Demand for the operation and financial success allowed him to open a clinic in Milford, Kansas. Radio Station KFKB began marketing Brinkley's operation and patent medicines to the nation in 1924. Preferring an unregulated broadcasting environment, Brinkley moved his radio station to Mexico in 1931, where it was renamed XER. By 1932 it boasted a million-watt signal and was the most powerful radio station in the world. During the mid-1930s, Brinkley's annual income was twelve million dollars.

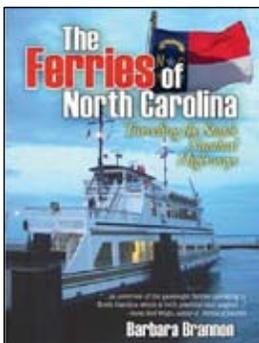
Every force has an opposing force: for Brinkley it was Morris Fishbein, editor of the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (JAMA). Fishbein and Brinkley shared many qualities: sharp intelligence, a flair for self-promotion, and relentless energy. In 1930, Fishbein's influence led Kansas medical authorities to revoke Brinkley's medical license. Brinkley's response was to run for Governor of Kansas, nearly winning the race. Throughout the 1930s, Fishbein used his position to pursue Brinkley and to expose other quacks. In 1939, Fishbein and the American Medical Association were able to win a medical malpractice suit against Brinkley in Texas. Former patients started lining up to sue Brinkley, and in 1941 he was charged with federal mail fraud and forced to declare bankruptcy. Brinkley's health declined and he died on May 26, 1942 in San Antonio, Texas.

Charlatan is a fascinating read, and this reviewer is surprised no one has made a movie of Brinkley's life. John R. Brinkley was the ultimate quack, and his is a unique American story. *Charlatan* includes an excellent index and comprehensive footnotes. The bibliography includes two doctoral dissertations on Brinkley. *Charlatan* is recommended for public library collections, and college and university libraries with a strong collection emphasis in medical and allied health subject areas.

Michael A. Rose
Rockingham Community College

Barbara Brannon

■ The Ferries of North Carolina: Traveling the State's Nautical Highways



Wilmington: Winoca Press,
2007. 192 pp. \$16.95.
ISBN 978-0-9755910-2-4.

Whether you are new to the North Carolina ferry system or have been riding them for years, Barbara Brannon's book *The Ferries of North Carolina: Traveling the State's Nautical Highways* is a wonderful guide to the ferries of the Tar Heel State. It includes the history of the ferry system, how ferries operate, and travel information for various ports. Brannon offers timetables, costs, driving directions to the terminals, and suggestions on how to get the best cruising experience while riding the ferry.

The book opens with the history of North Carolina ferries which the author learned from the North Carolina Ferry Division staff, ferry crews, passengers, and the private contractors. For those readers who are curious about how ferries operate, Brannon has included

a section which describes how the vessels are built, duties of the crew who operate and maintain the ferries, and what navigation equipment is onboard.

At one time ferries were used as the main method of transportation due to the lack of reliable roadways. The ferries still in operation today are used primarily to shuttle people, automobiles, mail, and supplies across waterways. Ferries are most often used for leisure travel to remote destinations. To help readers imagine the different types of ferries used over time the author offers illustrations and photographs of cable drawn, wooden, and motorized ferries, and also military craft modified for civilian ferry use.

North Carolina ferries were privately run on rivers and in coastal areas until 1947 when the state purchased its first ferry service which ran from Manns Harbor to Manteo, launching the North Carolina ferry system. The Ferry Division of the State Department of Transportation, created in 1970, is the second largest in the country and currently oversees seven routes in the eastern part of the state.

Brannon, who became fascinated by ferry travel as a child, was born in Georgia, where she graduated from Georgia College and was the recipient of the Flannery O'Connor Scholarship for emerging writers. She holds graduate degrees from the University of South Carolina. Her career in book publishing has taken her from the Carolinas to Texas, where she now serves on the staff of Texas Tech University Press. She is the author of numerous chapbooks and artists' books and is also the publisher at Wilmington-based Winoca Press.

The author first fell in love with ferries while riding with her grandparents on the Southport ferry. According to Brannon "I've ridden ferries throughout the U.S. and in several foreign countries, but it'll always be our workhorse North Carolina ferries that define the experience for me." This book is recommended for public, academic, and secondary school libraries and especially for travelers who want to take time to enjoy North Carolina's ferry routes.

Lisa Williams
University of North Carolina Wilmington

Nancy Smith Thomas

■ Moravian Christmas in the South



Winston-Salem, N.C.:
Old Salem Museums &
Gardens; Chapel Hill, N.C.:
distributed for Old Salem
by the University of North
Carolina Press, 2007.
167 pp. \$29.95.
ISBN 978-0-8078-3181-6.

Who knew? The first Christmas trees in America were decorated by the Moravians, a Protestant denomination responsible for settling the area around present-day Winston-Salem in the 1700s. The many-pointed Moravian star, so familiar to North Carolinians at Christmas, most likely got its start as a geometry exercise in a German boys' school around 1850. Early lovefeast meals, far from consisting only of coffee or tea and a bun, at times included sangria and even venison, although perhaps not simultaneously. And, most important, Christmas as we know it in America today is a relatively modern holiday with roots in controversy—many Christian denominations, regarding its trappings as secular, did not observe Christmas in the early nineteenth century. So the customs and practices of the Moravians were viewed with suspicion in some quarters. In 1834, a Moravian minister in Bethania recorded that “the Methodists declared openly, ‘The Moravians will burn in hellfire for having lovefeasts on Sundays.’”

Fortunately for all who love the Christmas holiday today, many non-Moravian neighbors admired and adapted Moravian modes of celebration. A young nation, looking to create wholesome, family-centered traditions as a counterbalance to less savory holiday observances (e.g., cock fights, races, and general carousing), found much to emulate in the Moravian manner of “keeping Christmas.” In *Moravian Christmas in the South*, Nancy Smith Thomas documents the evolution of Christmas observances within the Moravian Church, particularly the Southern Province of the American church based in Winston-Salem, through chapters on decorations, gifts and gift-giving, food and drink, and the use of music. Along the way she chronicles the evolution of the American holiday.

The author is a Winston-Salem native who has worked at Old Salem Museums & Gardens for eighteen years. Over this period Thomas's interest in the social history of the Moravians, particularly their Christmas traditions, grew. Thomas originally planned to focus this book—her first—on Moravian children at Christmas, but broadened her scope. Although elements of the topic have been covered elsewhere in more depth, this is the first published work focusing on southern Moravians and their observance of Christmas. Given the impact of Moravian customs on the holiday season, this book should have broad appeal. (Another “who knew?”: In 1951, before National Historic Landmark status might have forbidden it, a new exit was constructed at the Single Brothers' House in order to accommodate the thousands of annual visitors to the Candle Tea.)

Moravian Christmas in the South is lavishly illustrated with 128 color and black-and-white photographs of historical artifacts and modern-day scenes in Old Salem. The wide-ranging narrative is

well documented with endnotes, an extensive bibliography, and an index. While the illustrations may interest children and the text is highly readable, the focus of the book is scholarly. It is well suited for any public or academic library collection, as well as for high school and church libraries. It would also grace the seasonal offerings of the finest coffee tables.

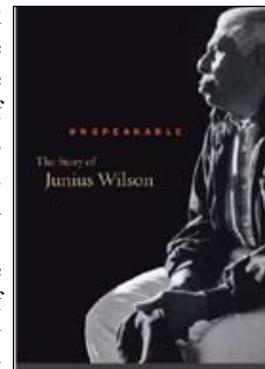
Margaretta Yarborough

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Susan Burch and Hannah Joyner

■ Unspeakable: The Story of Junius Wilson

Unspeakable is a landmark work uncovering the tragic life of an invisible figure in American history. Beyond the heartbreaking individual experiences of Junius Wilson, *Unspeakable* provides insight into the complexities of race, family, disability, and institutionalization over the course of the twentieth century. The complexities of Junius Wilson's life can be a difficult story to hear, but if we are to move forward in our society towards a more nuanced understanding of difference, it is a story we must hear.



Chapel Hill: University of
North Carolina Press, 2007.
304 pp. \$27.50. ISBN
978-0-8078-3155-7.

Born in Wilmington, North Carolina, in the early twentieth century, Junius Wilson was beset with a coupling of obstacles: he was an African American born deaf. After receiving limited special education, a false accusation landed him in Cherry Hospital, the North Carolina State Hospital for the Colored Insane; it was to be his home for the next seven decades. Found criminally insane based on racist assessments and misunderstandings of deaf culture, Wilson was confined to a ward ill-equipped to attend to his special needs and disinclined to question the justice of the sentence. Wilson was castrated as part of the hospital's eugenics program, exemplifying the serious consequences of racism and oppression. Wilson's situation vacillated between relative imprisonment and relative freedom throughout his confinement at Cherry Hospital. Over time, changes in the nation's social climate affected both the hospital staff and the inmates. By the 1960s hospital staff and administrators acknowledged that Wilson most likely did not belong there, but forty years would pass as his situation was entangled in a maze of misunderstanding, good intentions, and institutional, family, social, and cultural constraints.

Burch and Joyner liberally include contextual information in order to provide the larger sociocultural forces that contributed to Wilson's fate. They interweave significant historical events, allowing readers to successfully navigate Wilson's years at Cherry Hospital. In addition, they recount his story in a neutral tone, avoiding charged rhetoric that could afflict an account of this kind. Burch and Joyner do not seek to place blame; rather, they aim to understand the variety of circumstances that made this tragedy possible.

The authors faced challenges in telling this story. The existing written record of Wilson's time at Cherry Hospital is limited, particularly in the early years of his incarceration. His own voice is non-existent. Despite these challenges, Burch and Joyner carefully document their story and resist the temptation to put words in Wilson's mouth. They are consistent in their attributions of supposition rather than claiming fact, while at the same time their conclusions are grounded in concrete details.

By the time of Wilson's death in 2001 his story had moved beyond his own personal boundaries to be discussed in state and national arenas, but a work like this will bring additional necessary attention. His life story needs to be considered on the larger plane of race, disability, and difference. This book is recommended for the wide range of libraries interested in North Carolina history and issues of race and disability.

Katherine M. Wisser

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Richard M. Reid

**Freedom for Themselves:
North Carolina's Black Soldiers in the
Civil War Era**



By the end of the Civil War, over 179,000 black soldiers and 9,500 sailors were serving in uniform. Many historians have chosen to focus on the predominantly black units that performed their duties most admirably, ignoring the experiences of ordinary soldiers whose time in the military mirrored that of most of their white counterparts—long and sometimes boring days of travel, training, and menial labor, punctuated by bursts of action and adrenaline when engaging the enemy. In his work *Freedom for Themselves: North Carolina's Black Soldiers in the Civil War Era*, Richard M. Reid focuses on the experiences of the black soldiers who made up the four

regiments raised in North Carolina. Reid contends that these units, the First, Second, and Third North Carolina Colored Volunteers and the First North Carolina Colored Heavy Artillery, illustrate the breadth of black soldiers' experiences in the Civil War as a whole.

Reid discusses each of the units in turn, including details on the raising of the units, their training, deployments, and eventual decommissioning. The success of the units was mixed. The First performed with distinction at the Union siege of Charleston and later in Florida. The Second, though they received less training than their predecessors, served competently as a support unit in Virginia. The Third, which also served in Virginia, had little material support and training. It was largely used to supply laborers to white commanders who considered the unit to be unreliable and not fit for a combat role. The heavy artillery unit saw no action; its members spent most of their time doing menial labor and never even left the state. According to Reid, the unit's

experience explains why it has largely gone unnoticed by historians until now.

In addition to this fairly complete analysis of the histories of these four units, Reid includes information on their service in the post-war south and their difficulties in the face of white society. That society was more interested in the "redemption" of the south than in expanding the rights of freedmen and rewarding black soldiers for their service. In addition, he examines the experiences of the families of the black volunteers, who were left to an uncertain fate and whose experiences were as varied as those of their soldiers. Reid, an associate professor of history at the University of Guelph in Ontario, has produced a solidly researched work drawn from a wide variety of primary sources. Though the narrative sometimes plods due to the depth at which he analyzes the experiences of these soldiers, it will serve as a valuable resource for scholars and enthusiasts of the Civil War both inside and outside the state.

This work is suitable for advanced readers and is recommended for both public and academic libraries.

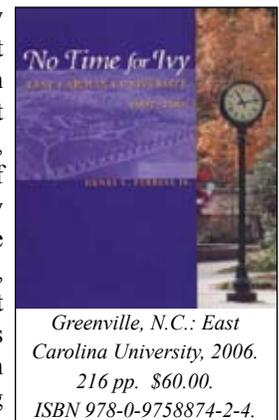
Matthew Reynolds

East Carolina University

Henry C. Ferrell, Jr.

**No Time for Ivy:
East Carolina University, 1907-2007**

No Time for Ivy is a pictorial history honoring the first century of East Carolina University. Starting with the initial establishment of East Carolina Teacher Training School, the book presents the development of the institution into a major university with a successful medical school. The author deftly highlights key influences, administrators, and faculty without forgetting to present the experiences of students and staff. Nicely bound in East Carolina purple with a matching fabric slip case and glossy dust jacket, the volume makes a lovely addition to a bookshelf or coffee table. The images and text complement one another and are engaging and informative.



Written by University Historian Henry C. Ferrell, Jr., the book was commissioned by the university in preparation for the centennial celebrations of 2007. Ferrell joined the East Carolina faculty in 1961 as a history professor and during his tenure has served as director of university planning, chair of the faculty senate, and chair of the University of North Carolina faculty assembly. He also edited a topical history in honor of the centennial, *Promises Kept: East Carolina University, 1980-2007*, which is an update to the university's earlier history by Mary Jo Bratton, *East Carolina University: The Formative Years, 1907-1982*.

Ferrell does an admirable job addressing many aspects of the university's history while keeping the narrative fairly concise. This is much more than a picture book, and the narrative is strong

enough to stand on its own. The author covers campus politics, intra-university competition for resources, and administrative actions without sacrificing the overall flow with excessive details. The references to student life and shifting trends in student interests are woven in throughout in an appealing way. Organized chronologically, each of the ten chapters roughly correlates to a decade. A ten page index includes both name and subject references for text and images and is an essential resource if one seeks information on a specific element in the university's history.

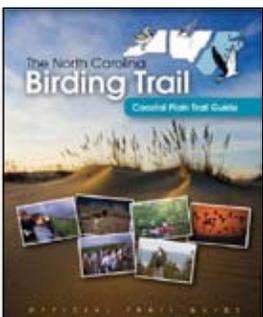
The comprehensiveness of the images is a strength of the volume. The images, along with their captions, provide a thorough history for those less inclined to read the text. The images show a good mix of college administrators, faculty, staff, and students, as well as buildings and campus events. Each new chapter opens with an illustration of how the campus and surrounding community has developed. Growing student populations, evolving fashions, and cultural shifts are ably conveyed to show how East Carolina has changed over the course of a century.

Alumni and others with ties to East Carolina University or Greenville will appreciate the opportunity to learn more about their history. Those interested in the history of the University of North Carolina system, changes in higher education in the state, and regional developments will also find this to be an informative resource. Serious scholars will miss footnotes and references but appreciate the detailed archival research evident in the many images and anecdotes.

Gwen Gosney Erickson
Guilford College

North Carolina Birding Trail (compiler)

■ The North Carolina Birding Trail: Coastal Plain Trail Guide



Raleigh: North Carolina Birding Trail, 2007. 170 pp. \$10.00 from the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission; \$18.95 from the University of North Carolina Press. ISBN 978-0-9794468-0-1.

Where would you go to find a Mississippi kite in North Carolina? A clapper rail? A northern shoveler? If you can recognize these names, then you or someone you love must be a birdwatcher. No North Carolina birdwatcher's bookshelf will be complete without the newest guide to the state's birding sites, *The North Carolina Birding Trail: Coastal Plain Trail Guide*.

The North Carolina Birding Trail (NCBT), a partnership of six agencies and organizations, began in 2003. Its mission is "to conserve and enhance North Carolina's bird habitat by promoting sustainable bird watching activities, economic opportunities and conservation education." The NCBT plans to issue three volumes, covering the Coastal Plain, Piedmont, and Mountain regions. The *Coastal Plain Trail Guide* describes 102 places east of Interstate 95 where interesting birds can be seen. Nine of these sites are paddle trails, suitable for canoes and kayaks.

The *Coastal Plain Trail Guide* is well organized. It divides the region into 16 groupings. The section for each group begins with a map of the whole area. Every individual location has a detailed map, a brief description which includes potential bird species, and a sidebar summarizing species, habitats, directions, parking, and any unusual issues. The "special concerns" section is valuable because it mentions possible hunting in the area, as well as other factors such as the potential for flooded roads and dangerous wildlife. Coordinates for GPS are included for each site, as well as the page reference for the map of the area in DeLorme's *North Carolina Atlas & Gazetteer*. Contact information is given, including a website if available. At the top of each page, icons represent important features like restrooms, handicapped access, or a visitor center. The paddle trail sites include directions to access and descriptions of water conditions and landmarks. Of special interest is the "While You're In The Area" list at the end of each section, which suggests nearby activities which appeal to birders and non-birders alike.

The introductory material contains excellent information for both new and experienced birders. The volume is delightfully illustrated with color photographs. Each site description includes at least one photo of either the location or a bird that can be seen there. The site index allows the reader to cross-reference sites, and there are 31 unique sites and six unique paddle trails in the guide. Eight tear-out "calling cards" that can be given to local businesses to demonstrate the Birding Trail's impact are included at the end of the volume.

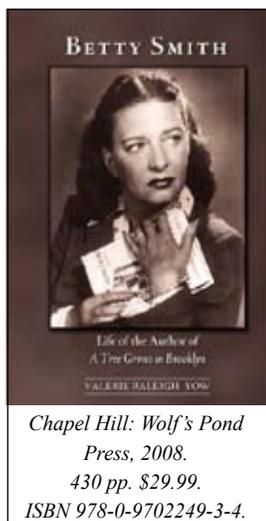
I have only minor criticisms. Three sites where hunting is allowed did not feature the icon at the top of the page. The text is somewhat redundant; for example, the three descriptions of the Roanoke River Paddle Trail use identical sentences.

There are other bird guides for North Carolina (several of which are listed in a bibliography in the introduction), but this book is a must-have for any public library in North Carolina and highly recommended for academic libraries and school libraries. Birdwatchers and others interested in nature will enjoy using it. I eagerly await the publication of the next two volumes.

Shannon Tennant
Elon University

Valerie Raleigh Yow

■ Betty Smith: Life of the Author of *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*



Betty Smith: Life of the Author of A Tree Grows in Brooklyn is a well-written, solidly researched biography of one of North Carolina's most celebrated twentieth-century novelists. As in her earlier biography of Tar Heel writer Bernice Kelly Harris, Valerie Raleigh Yow employs her skill as a historian and a psychologist not only to tell the story of Betty Smith's life, but also to illuminate the writer's complex family relationships. Yow demonstrates how these relationships shaped Smith's career as a writer. Although Yow sometimes forsakes biography for educated guesses about the motivations of Smith and members of her family,

most readers will appreciate these thoughtful insights. In truth, they add considerable appeal to the book.

Born in a Brooklyn slum in 1896, Smith grew up in a poor family dominated by her hard-working mother and alcoholic father, Catherine and Johnny Wehner. Elizabeth "Lizzie" Wehner grew to love her father, but she always struggled with her feelings about her mother, whom she thought of as harsh and unloving. Catherine Wehner made Lizzie quit school at fourteen so she could help support the family. Nevertheless, Lizzie took every opportunity to visit the nearby public library and became a voracious reader. Later, she frequented the theater and acted in plays at a local YMCA.

Elizabeth, who came to call herself Betty, followed her settlement house debate coach, George Smith, to Ann Arbor, Michigan, where they were married in 1919. There Betty attended classes at the University of Michigan and gave birth to two daughters. George became a successful lawyer, and Betty wrote plays that were well received locally. This happy interlude in Betty's life was shattered when George had an extramarital affair. When Betty received an invitation to study drama at Yale University, she and George moved to New Haven. They decided to separate, however, and Betty then struggled to balance drama studies at Yale and motherhood.

During the Great Depression, Betty's work with the Federal Theater Project led her to Chapel Hill, where she found work at the University of North Carolina. Chapel Hill became her home, and it is this portion of her life that may be of most interest to North Carolinians. Yow describes Smith's relationships with Frederick Koch, head of the Carolina Playmakers, and with Paul Green, both of whom fostered her career as a playwright.

Through divorce, a stormy relationship with writer and actor Robert Finch, and tough financial circumstances, Betty persevered as a writer. She was driven by a nagging desire to write a novel, and her first novel, *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, was published by Harper and Row in 1943. Its astounding success propelled Smith forward

as a novelist; three more books followed in the succeeding twenty years. It is in her description of Smith's work that Yow's approach shines. She clearly demonstrates how Smith's background, life experiences, and relationships provided the inspiration for her novels, and why the novels were so appealing to readers, many of whom identified with the characters and plot lines.

Based on careful use of Smith's papers, oral histories, and numerous secondary sources, Yow's book includes a useful bibliography, endnotes, and an index. It deserves a place in high school, public, and academic libraries.

Maurice C. York
East Carolina University

Looking for more help with collection development?

If you want to expand your library's collection of novels set in North Carolina, you should visit the Read North Carolina Novels blog hosted by the North Carolina Collection at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (<http://www.lib.unc.edu/blogs/ncnovels/>).

If your interest in North Caroliniana is more general, both the North Carolina Collection at East Carolina University and the North Carolina Collection at UNC-Chapel Hill regularly post lists of new additions to their collections. The addresses for those sites are:

<http://www.ecu.edu/cs-lib/ncc/profs.cfm>
<http://www.lib.unc.edu/blogs/ncm/index.php/whats-new-in-the-north-carolina-collection/>