



PITT COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY FALL 2022 NEWSLETTER

Happy 2022! The last few months have been a busy and challenging time. While we were all hoping that life would return to normal, unfortunately the pandemic continues on. Even so, the PCHS has actively shared our community's history and hosted both in-person and hybrid events. Zoom remains a vehicle for board meetings and has been a great platform for engaging the public even when health regulations and personal circumstances preclude in-person attendance.

Here are a few highlights from Fall 2021. In September, ECU professor of anthropology Dr. Charlie Ewen gave a talk, "Gone and Nearly Forgotten: Reclaiming African American Heritage in a Rural Southern Cemetery," at the Ayden Community Center, co-sponsored by the Ayden Historical and Arts Society. Ewen focused on recent archaeological work he and his students have done in Ayden to document an abandoned African American cemetery including over 400 graves. His talk was also broadcast as a Zoom event. Attendance in-person and virtually was good.

Also, in September, Dr. Don Ensley, ECU's first African American faculty in the health sciences, shared his personal reflections on his journey from rural Belhaven to his career as a professor and chair of the Department of Community Health. Dr. Ensley's talk, co-sponsored by ECU's Laupus Library where it was held with an in-person audience, was also broadcast via Zoom, with an impressive turnout on both counts.

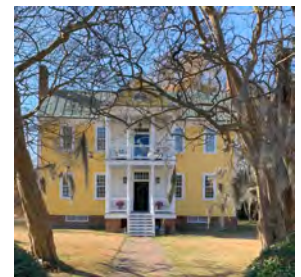
Pitt County has a complicated history regarding the Civil War. Dr. Don Collins, emeritus professor of history at ECU and author of several books and numerous articles, shared his insights during a webinar in October on Civil War history in Pitt County. Dr. Collins' talk was broadcast exclusively as a Zoom event.

In November, Roger Kammerer, PCHS historian and director of the May Museum in Farmville, shared his reflections on the town's 150th anniversary. Kammerer's talk was held at the new Farmville Public Library and broadcast via Zoom.

PCHS members were thrilled to hold, in early December, the first Christmas Tea since 2019. For more on that, see page 4. We also supported selected in-person events including the Myrtle Grove Plantation fundraiser sponsored by the Eastern Carolina Village and Farm Museum. PCHS members were also there to support the Greenville African American Commission as they launched Greenville's African American Cultural Trails in November.

In the months to come, we plan more hybrid events combining in-person and virtual presentations to accommodate those willing to attend in person as well as others preferring the virtual alternative. We hope you'll find these interesting and attend as possible

Scenes from the 2021 Christmas Tea at the Greenwreath Plantation, hosted by Kim and Garreth Kenyon



Upcoming events

Dr. David Dennard

2022 Black History Month Lecture:

"Making the Case for Black History Month in 2022 and Beyond"

February 16, 4:00-5:30 pm

Janice Hardison Faulkner Gallery, ECU Joyner Library



Dr. David Dennard, emeritus professor of history at ECU, will deliver the Second Annual PCHS Black History Month Lecture on Wednesday, February 16. Dr. Dennard's presentation is cosponsored by ECU's Joyner Library and the ECU History Department. It will be held in the Janice Hardison Faulkner Gallery, Joyner Library.

For those preferring to attend virtually, Dr. Dennard's talk will be broadcast as a Zoom webinar. Registration for the latter is required.

Dr. Dennard was responsible for organizing and coordinating the first annual university-wide Martin Luther King commemorative events at ECU. At the state level, he served on the Historic Bath Commission, providing professional historical leadership for the oldest town in the state. He also served as a member of the N.C. Highway Historical Marker Program and as a consultant for the New Bern African American Cultural Trails Project. He is currently serving on the North Carolina Historical Commission.

Dr. Dennard was a key researcher in the "Black Physician Experience in Eastern North Carolina Project" funded by the North Carolina Humanities Council. This initiative documented, with oral interviews, the lifework of a group of outstanding African American physicians including Dr. Andrew Best of Greenville, Dr. Milton Quigless of Tarboro, Dr. Joe Weaver of Ahoskie, and Dr. John Hannibal of Kinston.

Andrea Norris

A Virtual Tour of the Ayden Museum

March TBA

554 Second Street, Ayden, N.C.



Andrea Norris, president of the Ayden Historical and Arts Society, will give a virtual tour of the Ayden Museum housed in the former Dixon Medical Building on Second Street. The Ayden Museum includes displays on local medical history, education, sports, children's toys, tobacco and agriculture, as well as Ayden's contributions to American military history in the twentieth century. A special exhibit on one of Ayden's most recent contributions to local culinary culture, whole hog barbeque, gives the museum and the town's culture unique standing in eastern North Carolina.

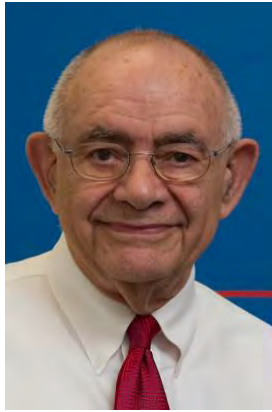
A retired schoolteacher, Mrs. Norris is the premier force in the museum and has provided tours on innumerable occasions to local groups and interested parties seeking a greater understanding of the history of Ayden, Pitt County, and eastern North Carolina. Due to limitations on space and public health concerns, Mrs. Norris' presentation of the Ayden Museum's collection will be broadcast as a Zoom event. For more details, be sure to check our website at pittcountyhistoricalsociety.com and our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/PCHS1927>.

Dr. Walter J. Pories

Holocaust Remembrance Day Lecture: "My Memories of the Holocaust"

April 28, 2022

Laupus Library, 4:30-6:00 pm



Dr. Walter J. Pories, M.D., emeritus professor of surgery and founding chair of the Brody School of Medicine's Department of Surgery, will give a talk on his personal experiences in the Holocaust. Dr. Pories talk will be held in Laupus Library, on Thursday, April 28. That date, according to the U. S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., is the internationally recognized date for Holocaust remembrance events. It corresponds to the 27th day of Nisan in the Hebrew Calendar, and to the anniversary of the 1943 Warsaw Ghetto Uprising against Nazi rule. For those wishing to attend virtually, Dr. Pories' talk will be broadcast as a Zoom webinar.

A native of Munich, Germany, Pories, his mother and siblings were abducted by the Nazis in 1939. Nevertheless, Pories' father, a retired German military officer, was able to use his sway to retrieve his family from impending Nazi horror, and then orchestrate their escape from Germany, across Europe and finally into South America before eventually ending up in the United States. Pories' experiences remind us of the egregious inhumanities of the twentieth century in the hope of building a kinder, healthier global community based on mutual understanding and respect for all.

PCHS Dinner on the Grounds? Red Banks Primitive Baptist Church June 2022 - TBA



Not since June 2019 has the PCHS been able to host a dinner on the grounds event at our Red Banks property on the corner of Fire Tower and Fourteenth Streets. The pandemic, unfortunately, is not over yet, leaving the society uncertain as to whether 2022 will bring a return of this popular occasion. Further complicating matters is the need for repairs on the property, on the handicap ramp on the east side of the church and on the stairway leading to the grounds from the parking lot.

Once upon a time, such repairs might have been easy enough, but with building materials and competent craftsmen still hard to find, it could well be that COVID aside we will be challenged to host a safe gathering on the property. Please don't think, however, that we have given up: if possible, we intend to have the property right for a gathering of members and a return to the kind of hospitality that good history always brings in early June. Stay tuned for updates on our website and Facebook page.

Return of the Christmas Tea
Greenwreath Plantation House
December 5, 2021



The PCHS opened the 2021 holiday season with our traditional Christmas Tea, this year hosted by Kim and Garreth Kenyon at their beautifully restored historic home, the Greenwreath Plantation House (ca. 1780), one of Pitt County's oldest extant homes and listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



Past PCHS president Deb Higgins and treasurer Mary Kraczon at the spread.



Michael Stephenson provided a soulful medley of Christmas tunes.



Kate Tucker and Kim Kenyon relax on the second floor porch.



Charlie Ewen and Jack Taft enjoy the grounds at Greenwreath.