

PITT COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SPRING 2021 NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the New Year and the beginning of our celebration, pandemic notwithstanding, of the 260th anniversary of the Pitt County's history. Some might have thought that we missed the occasion in 2020 since most literature dates the county from 1760. Surely the Pitt County logo gives that impression.

While it's true that the legislation creating the county out of what had once been Beaufort and Edgecombe Counties was passed in 1760, it only went into effect on January 1, 1761, making this year, 2021, the 260th of the county's actual existence as a county. To mark this achievement in history in a modest way, PCHS will sponsor a lecture by ECU professor of British history, Dr. Tim Jenks, on the county's namesake, William Pitt the Elder, Earl of Chatham and renowned prime minister of England.

More will follow on Dr. Jenk's lecture, which will be presented virtually and perhaps with an actual dimension as well, depending on public health guidelines in April when the lecture is scheduled. For now, we recognize our beginnings above, in the illustration at the top of the page, with a detail from the Mosely Map of what is today eastern North Carolina, including the areas in and around the county subsequently created from it.

As we greet 2021, a brief review of activities in the fall of 2020--limited by the pandemic--is in order. First, our thanks to Zoom technology and board member Emma Hodson for providing a platform and graciously hosting Zoom meetings of the board. Without Zoom, things would have been very different.

In August, President Deb Higgins coordinated the election of officers for 2020-22 and the transfer of leadership bringing in as president, John A. Tucker, as vice president, Calvin Mercer, as treasurer, Mary Kracson, and as recording secretary, Henry Doskey.

Respecting public health guidelines PCHS offered, in October, a walking tour of historic Greenville led by local historian Roger Kammerer. On election eve, we organized a lecture panel on women's suffrage featuring a talk by ECU professor of history Karin Zipf. On December 3, we presented a webinar on historic preservation work in Greenville and Farmville featuring Claire Edwards. A multifaceted slate of events is planned for the spring 2021. Please see our website and Facebook page for updates on details and scheduling.

Fall 2020 Events



Roger Kammerer's Historic Greenville Walking Tour



Women's Suffrage Centennial lecture on Election Eve



Claire Edwards on historic preservation in Greenville & Farmville

Honoring Bill and Mary Kittrell

Upon the retirement of longtime members of the Pitt County Historical Society



Upon the retirement of longtime PCHS members, Bill and Mary Kittrell, the society voted to honor their contributions with a letter of appreciation and a commemorative bench on the grounds of the Red Banks Property, a site brimming with good times shared there. PCHS treasurer Mary Kraczon coordinated the effort, securing and installing the bench and plaque recognizing the Kittrells' contributions to the society.

Kittrell's monumental *Cemetery Survey of Pitt County, North Carolina* (two volumes) published by the Pitt County Historical Society in 2007, is an invaluable landmark study for researchers on genealogy, historic preservation, and local history. The work documents remains at 820 cemetery sites in the county.

Much of Kittrell's work has been posted online, including his listing of African American cemeteries in Pitt County, at <http://www.usgwarchives.net/nc/pitt/pittcemeteries.htm>. Kittrell's findings, as sponsored by Cemetery Census, is at <http://cemeterycensus.com/nc/pitt/about.htm>. Kittrell has also contributed to the *Pitt County Genealogical Quarterly*.

Bill Kittrell did not work alone: his wife Mary was dedicated to the completion of the survey, generously giving her time, encouragement, and support to see it finished.

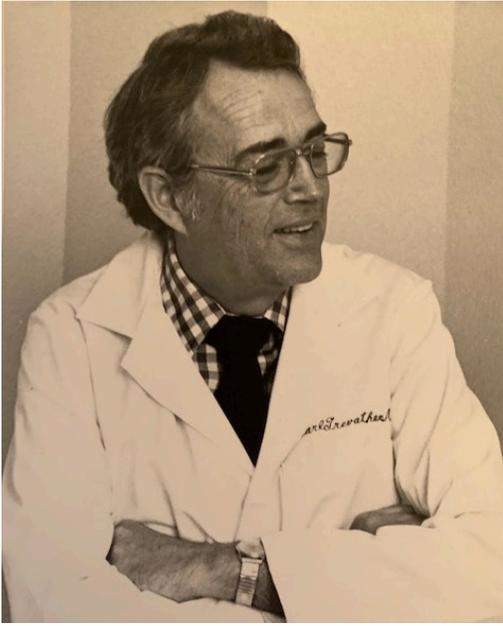
Kittrell also led walking tours of Greenville's historic cemetery sites including the Cherry Hill Cemetery, the site of Sycamore Hill Baptist Church, the Evans family cemetery, the Col. John Hardee Cemetery, Brown Hill Cemetery and others, pioneering an important dimension of public history.

For those interested in more about Kittrell's work, his papers, the William B. Kittrell Collection, ca. 1913-2009, are in the ECU Manuscript Collection, #771.

"The Earl Stories"

A Memoir by Dr. Earl Trevathan

Edited by Dr. Calvin Mercer, PCHS vice president



PCHS vice president Calvin Mercer who also serves as a professor of religious studies at ECU, has had the pleasure of establishing a close personal relationship with Dr. Earl Trevathan, retired pediatrician and former member of the Greenville City Council. While not a professional historian, Dr. Trevathan is a good storyteller, and his stories depict a slice of Pitt County history as seen through his eyes.

Recognizing Calvin's fascination for local history and in particular his own role in it, Dr. Trevathan provided him with a collection of personal recollections, now known as "The Earl Stories," recounting his memories of growing up in eastern North Carolina.

Calvin has circulated most these stories through his newsletter, to the delight of thousands of readers. Since joining the PCHS board in the fall of 2020, Calvin has offered digital versions of "The Earl Stories" for inclusion on our website. They can be found under the "More" tab at: <https://pittcountyhistoricalsociety.com/dr-earl-trevathan-stories-1>

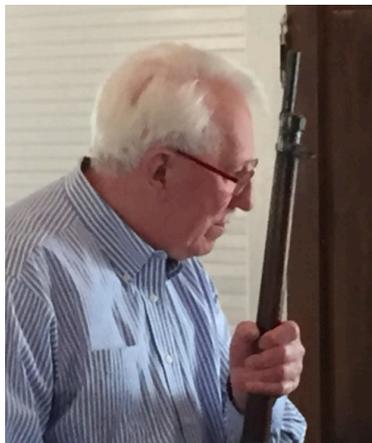
In addition to his civic service on the Greenville City Council, Dr. Trevathan was one of the leaders in the desegregation of Pitt County Memorial Hospital in the early 1960s, and then among the local physicians who worked with Dr. Leo Jenkins, president of East Carolina College (now ECU), in securing a medical school for the East.

For those interested in more about Dr. Trevathan, his papers, 1969-209, are in the ECU Laupus Library Manuscript Collection, LL02.73.



15th Annual Show & Tell --- Canceled

Hope to see you in February 2022!



Henry Doskey at a recent Show & Tell



Jack Taft and Dapper Dan Roberson

A note about the PCHS "Show and Tell" from Henry Doskey, PCHS Recording Secretary:

"In February 2021, we would have held the 15th annual Pitt County Historical Society 'Show and Tell.' Unhappily we are unable to offer this event this year due to Covid restrictions and protocols.

It never occurred to me when we put together the first one, in 2007, that it would develop into one of the Society's most popular and well-attended events. Thanks for your support and participation over the years.

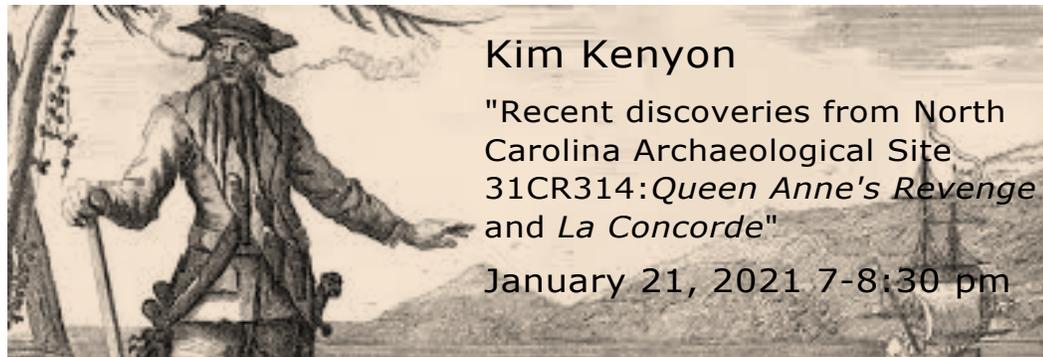
From that first afternoon, when I was joined on the panel by Carlyle Windley and Danny Gaskins, through the successive evolutions of the panel, made up most recently of 'Dapper Dan' Roberson, Jack Taft, and me, we have 'seen it all' – but there is always more to see.

Our hope is that next year we will return to looking at your antiques, treasures, and unusual (and always fascinating) objects. We'll see you in February 2022!"



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE SPRING?

RESPECTING PUBLIC HEALTH GUIDELINES, PCHS IS SCHEDULING A SERIES OF ZOOM WEBINARS CELEBRATING PITT COUNTY HISTORY IN ITS 260TH YEAR



Kim Kenyon

"Recent discoveries from North Carolina Archaeological Site 31CR314: *Queen Anne's Revenge* and *La Concorde*"

January 21, 2021 7-8:30 pm

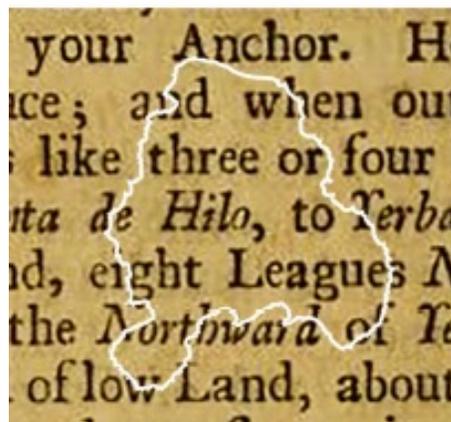
On January 21, Kim Kenyon, senior conservator and co-principal investigator for the Queen Anne's Revenge Project, will give a virtual presentation entitled, "Recent discoveries from North Carolina Archaeological Site 31CR314: *Queen Anne's Revenge* and *La Concorde*."

Originally from Texas, Kenyon moved to North Carolina to join the *Queen Anne's Revenge* (QAR) Project team in 2013. She is a graduate of the Nautical Archaeology Program at Texas A&M University, where she completed her MA in anthropology and earned a certificate in conservation.

Kenyon has worked as a field conservator on projects in Texas, North Carolina, Costa Rica, and Puerto Rico. She has served as interim head conservator for the Institute of Nautical Archaeology in Bodrum, Turkey, and continues to serve that institute as a research associate.

Kenyon also teaches a graduate-level introduction to conservation course at East Carolina University and currently holds a seat on the Monitor National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council.

Five years ago, Kenyon and QAR conservators discovered small fragments of paper lodged in the chamber of a breach-loading cannon, which they later identified as scraps from an early-eighteenth-century work, Captain Edward Cooke's *A Voyage to the South Sea and Round the World*. The find rocked the archaeological world in part because paper rarely survives in water sites, but also because it provided historians with the title of at least one book on board with Blackbeard and crew in their last days.



Above: a photo of the scrap of paper found in the chamber of a *Queen Anne's Revenge* cannon.

Below: the scrap superimposed on a page in Capt. Cooke's book, from which it likely came.

The Rev. Dr. Kenneth R. Hammond

"Reflections on Black History Month"

February 16, 2021



On February 16, the Rev. Dr. Kenneth R. Hammond, a native of Pitt County and graduate of W. H. Robinson High School, East Carolina University, and the Divinity School at Shaw University in Raleigh, will be the keynote speaker for the 2021 PCHS celebration of Black History Month.

In the late 1960s, Hammond enrolled at East Carolina alongside a growing number of African American students as the school advanced its efforts toward desegregation. At ECU, Hammond was a member of S.O.U.L.S. (Society of United Liberal Students), served as the secretary of Minority Affairs, and was a charter member of Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity, the first black Greek organization on campus. He also participated in the Phi Alpha Theta National History Honor Society and graduated with a bachelor's degree in history and political science in 1973. Hammond's prominence as an undergraduate earned him recognition in *Who's Who Among Students in America's Colleges and Universities*.

In 1991, Hammond left East Carolina to become the senior pastor of Union Baptist Church in Durham, fulfilling his long-held dream of serving full-time as a lead clergy. A modest-sized church of about 1,000 members and 150 regular attendees when Rev. Hammond arrived, Union Baptist soon experienced unprecedented, explosive growth. By 2008, the church's membership stood at 4,500, an increase of more than 3,000 members under his leadership. During Rev. Hammond's tenure as senior pastor, Union Baptist partnered with UNC-Chapel Hill's Kenan-Flagler Business School to start the Global Scholars Academy, a K-8 school dedicated to providing excellent education for at-risk youth in Durham.

Rev. Hammond has been recognized on several occasions for his outstanding work. In 2008, he was named an ECU Outstanding Alumni and in 2016, ECU awarded him with the Dr. Andrew Best Trailblazer Award. Hammond has served as a pastor mentor at Duke Divinity School and has taught as an adjunct professor for United Christian Bible Institute. Rev. Hammond's legacy of activism, service, and compassion for others continues through his consistent investment in the mission of East Carolina University and in the countless lives touched by his faithfulness to his community.

Randy Daniel, Ph.D.

"Native Artifacts of Eastern North Carolina"

March 2021



Dr. Randy Daniel completed his Ph.D. in 1994 at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. His research is focused on the archaeology of prehistoric hunter-gatherers in the Southeastern U. S., particularly hunter-gatherer adaptations at the end of the last Ice Age.

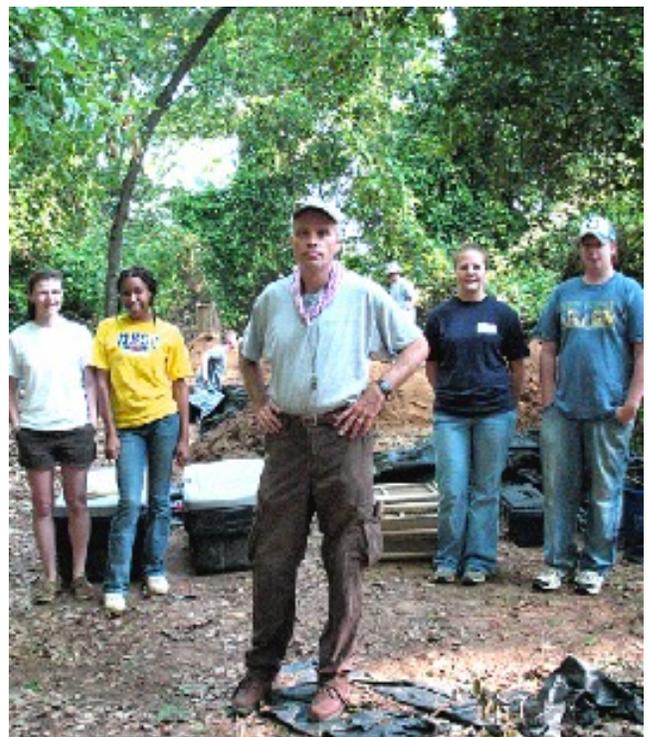
Daniel has taught at ECU since 1996 and now serves as chair of the Anthropology Department. While at ECU, he has conducted archaeological research exploring prehistoric settlements along the Tar River in eastern North Carolina. Along the way, Daniel has documented the occurrence of fluted spear points, exceptionally rare artifacts that mark the first widespread evidence of humans in North Carolina.

In 1999, the Lower Mississippi Survey and Peabody Museum at Harvard University presented Dr. Daniel with the C. B. Moore Award for Excellence in Archaeology by a Young Scholar in Southeastern Studies.

Daniel's presentation on native artifacts in eastern North Carolina offers a deep dive into Pitt County's multifaceted past as apparent in ancient, prehistoric times.



Daniel's webinar will be chaired by Dr. Charlie Ewen, a professor of anthropology at ECU. Serving as discussants will be two Pitt County natives who have collected substantial artifacts from early indigenous peoples of eastern North Carolina.



Timothy Jenks, Ph.D.

"On William Pitt the Elder, First Earl of Chatham and Namesake of Pitt County"
April 2021



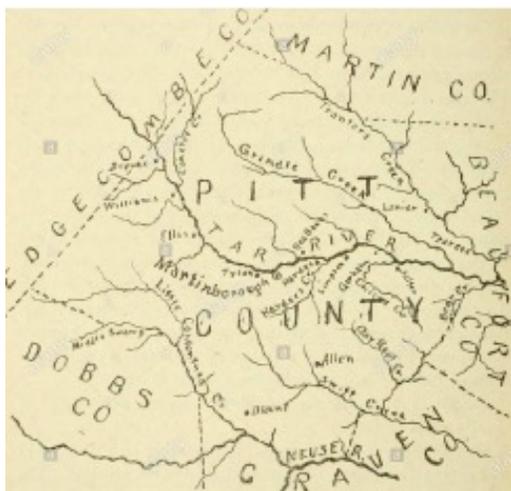
*Commemorating the 260th
Anniversary of the de facto founding
of Pitt County, January 1, 1761.*

Dr. Timothy Jenks is a historian of eighteenth-century Britain specializing in the study of political culture and national identity. He is the author of *Naval Engagements: Patriotism, Cultural Politics, and the Royal Navy, 1793-1815* (Oxford University Press, 2006), which examines the place occupied by images of the navy in British political culture.

Prior to coming to East Carolina in 2002, he taught at the University of Toronto, York University, and the University of California at Berkeley. He is currently working on a study of illumination festivity in Georgian Britain, and a biography of the radical reformer, Major John Cartwright.



Portrait of the British statesman William Pitt, First Earl of Chatham (1708–1778), by William Hoare, completed ca. 1754. Part of the permanent collection of the North Carolina Museum of Art.



Trista Reis Porter, Ph.D., Executive Director

"Remembering 60 Years at the Flanagan House:

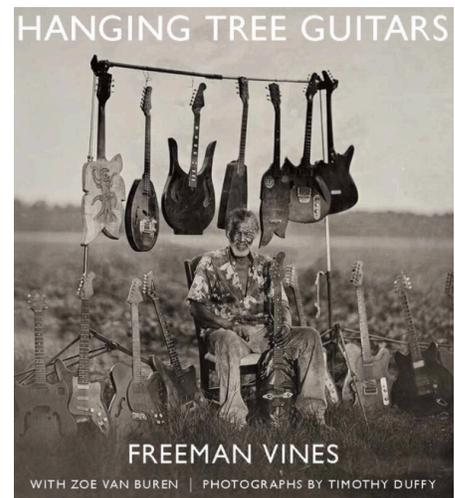
The Greenville Museum of Art Looks Back"

May 2021



Dr. Trista Reis Porter, executive director of the Greenville Museum of Art, will build on one of the last, pre-COVID exhibits staged at the GMOA, "Greenville Then and Now," by remembering the history of the museum itself from its earliest stages as a Depression era Works Project Administration (WPA) undertaking based in Sheppard Memorial Library, to its move in May 1960 to its current location, the Flanagan House, where it has since thrived as the anchor of art and culture in Greenville, Pitt County, and eastern North Carolina.

Since completing her doctorate at UNC-Chapel Hill in 2018, Porter has helped guide the GMOA into its seventh decade with provocative, socially relevant exhibits such as "Hanging Tree Guitars," focused on Freeman Vines and his poignant approach to political commentary through carving guitars from wood once used in lynchings. PCHS historian Roger Kammerer will introduce the webinar, and GMOA communicators and events director, Sim Asher, will moderate discussion.



Fall 2020 Flashbacks:

Roger Kammerer "Walking Tour of Historic Greenville"

November 1, 2020



Roger E. Kammerer, Jr., is a freelance artist and local historian living in Greenville, N.C. His walking tours of historic downtown Greenville have also made him something of a local celebrity known for his unparalleled knowledge of the city's past.

On Nov. 1, while complying with public health regulations, Kammerer once more opened his expertise on local history to the public with a pandemic rendition of his walking tour.

Kammerer is the current president and a charter member of the Pitt County Family Researchers, Inc., a local genealogical group. He also edits the group's quarterly journal, the *Pitt County Genealogical Quarterly*, which in 2004 was named the best genealogical publication of the year by the North Carolina Genealogical Society. Since 1985 Kammerer has also written columns on local history for the *Greenville Times*. He is a lifetime member of the Pitt County Historical Society, and in recent years has served on the board of the Eastern Carolina Village and Farm Museum. He also serves as the historian of the Pitt County Historical Society



Karin Zipf, Ph.D.

"The Most Radical Women in the U.S., 1848."

Election Eve Webinar Commemorating the Centennial of the Nineteenth Amendment
November 3, 2020

In celebration of the centennial of the Nineteenth Amendment and women's suffrage in the U. S., ECU professor of American history Karin Zipf gave the keynote presentation as part of a virtual lecture/panel. Known for her passionate engagement of historical issues, Zipf brought to life the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848 and the momentous events that followed leading to the unfolding of the Women's Suffrage Movement in the U. S.

Dr. Zipf was joined by Kristen Myers, ECU chair of Sociology, Kirstin Squint, Whichard Distinguished Professor in the Humanities, and professor of English, Donna Kaine. The event was sponsored by the Pitt County Historical Society and co-sponsored by Academic Library Services at ECU, the ECU History Department, and the ECU Gender Studies Program. University archivist, Alston Cobourn, helped coordinate the Cisco WebEx broadcast.

A recording of Dr. Zipf's presentation and the panel discussion that followed is available on our website, pittcountyhistoricalsociety.com, under the Events tab.



J. Claire Edwards

"Caring About Our Past Improves the Future"

Historic Preservation Projects in Greenville and Farmville

December 3, 2020

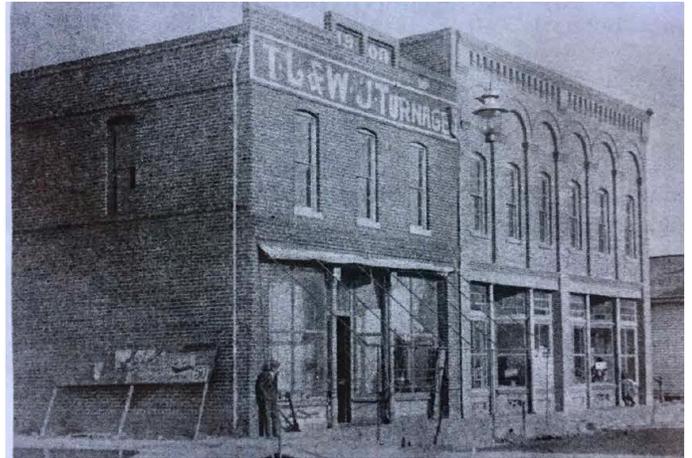


On December 3, Claire Edwards, historic preservationist with Uptown Properties, gave a presentation on her work toward rejuvenating several historic structures built by the Turnage family in downtown Farmville. In the early twentieth century, these buildings were the impressive cornerstones of the then burgeoning Farmville business district.

Thanks to Edwards' efforts, the buildings once again shine on North Main Street housing an innovative energy initiative, Power Resource Group/Carolina Poultry Power Project; a Hispanic ice cream shop, Paleteria Deya; and a vintage boutique, My Sister's Place, supporting the Center for Family Violence Prevention.

Edwards' talk also addressed her family's contributions to saving the Jones-Lee House in Greenville, as well as her recent acquisition of a historic home in the Farmville historic district as her residence. Edwards' main theme was building healthy communities through historic preservation.

For a video recording of Edwards' talk, see our website, pittcountyhistoricalsociety.com, under the Events tab.



T. L. and W. J. Turnage Co., ca. 1915



Farmville Hardware Store, ca. 2015



Beautifully restored contributions to Farmville