

OCTOBER 2021

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the magazine

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has melded with God, community

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by SUSAN SHINN TURNER

*On the cover: The older and newer times of First Presbyterian Church are reflected by the iconic Bell Tower in the foreground and the church's present-day steeple beyond it.
(Sean Meyers photo)*

*On this page: Dave Johnson delivers feed to his various farm animals.
(Jon C. Lakey photo)*



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Continuing the 'surgery' toward justice for all

This past summer, my library choices were weighty to say the least. I sandwiched my re-reading of Pat Conroy's *The Prince of Tides*, which can be quite depressing and disturbing, with books about two racially charged, horrendous events in Wilmington, North Carolina.

Wilmington's Lies by David Zucchino is the Pulitzer Prize-winning account of the 1898 coup in Wilmington, the state's largest city at the time, during which dozens, maybe hundreds of Black residents died and were driven from their homes and businesses. To understand the roots of the Jim Crow era, the reassertion of white power after Reconstruction, the terrible role newspapers played and the context of politics of that time — and now — grab this book.

I came to live in the South in the late 1970s, but I hate to say I paid only cursory attention to the Wilmington 10. In a book by the same name, Kenneth Robert Janken recounts how dissatisfaction with school desegregation led to a Black student boycott in 1971, four days of violence and, a year later, the convictions of 10 Black people.

They received a total of 282 years in prison, and the Wilmington 10's story sparked an international movement working for their freedom, which happened in 1980 when the convictions were overturned.

At that time, a federal appeals court found the state and trial judge had suppressed evidence that would have helped the defense, while the state's main witnesses also perjured themselves, making up their testimony. But only in the last days of her term in 2012, did then Gov. Beverly Perdue give official pardons to the Wilmington 10.

"At a distance of four decades," Janken writes, "an official of North Carolina could finally see clearly what had plainly been evident: the state's conduct had been outrageous and was a 'misappropriation of justice.'"

I tell you about my summer reading because, during this same season, a marker describing the history of lynchings in America (on one side) and in Rowan County (the other side) was installed outside the Freedman's Cemetery at the corner of West Liberty and North Church streets.

On Aug. 6, Actions in Faith & Justice, held a "service of remembrance and dedication" at Soldiers Memorial AME Zion Church — within shouting distance of the marker. The "Truth Be Told" service noted the installation, which also came on the 115th anniversary of the lynchings of Jack Dillingham, Nease Gillespie and John Gillespie — Black men (John was a teen) who were dragged from jail and hanged in Salisbury by a white mob of more than 2,000 people.

The evening wasn't so much about looking back at our history,



which like Wilmington is rife with injustice and looking the other way, as it was with taking stock today and continuing the hard work toward equity and justice for all.

As N.C. Poet Laureate Jaki Shelton Green said, "Sometimes the injury is more bearable than the surgery to heal it. Racism is in that category."

The new marker purposely includes one reminder that we should take seriously: "On January 15, 2019, Salisbury City Council formally adopted a Resolution of Reconciliation, committing the city to enacting policies and practices to guarantee equity and justice as well as the publication of an annual report on the city's efforts to eliminate inequity."

That's a tall order, but one that should not take decades to fulfill.

Something Green said about the trees used in lynchings has stayed with me. The imagery is haunting.

"I wanted to ask the trees, 'Do you remember? Did you shudder? Did you refuse to hold his weight?'"

Questions for us all.

Mark Wineka,
Editor, *Salisbury the Magazine*

THROUGH THE LENS by David Correll

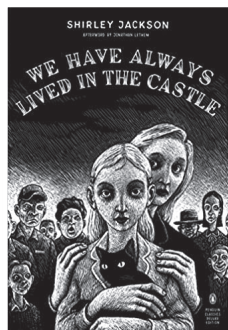


David Correll of Correll Farms took this photo of a burn barrel making the wood coals for Back Creek Presbyterian's annual barbecue in support of its mission teams.

Delightfully twisted, Jackson was on par with Poe, King

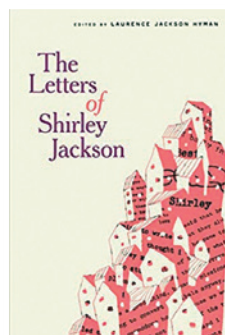
One of my dirtiest little secrets: I rarely remember the content of any book a few hours after reading it. There are only a handful of books I recall reading in my adolescence, period, but one of the few that I do distinctly remember devouring in the 10th grade was *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* by Shirley Jackson.

In quite possibly the most delightfully disturbing novel ever written, Jackson describes an extremely isolated family on the verge of collapse as outside forces converge on their homestead and stir up questions while digging through scandalous laundry. Mary Katherine “Merricat” Blackwood — among the most memorable narrators in 20th-century fiction — lives with her only sister, Constance, once accused of fatally poisoning her own family, and her Uncle Julian, confined to a wheelchair and obsessed with completing his memoirs.



I was never so shocked at such a twisted ending as I was at the completion of this tale, and I constantly recommend this book in the bookstore to older teens and adults looking for a truly great thriller.

Also the author of *The Haunting of Hill House*, along with short stories collected in *The Lottery and Other Stories* and *Dark Tales*, Shirley Jackson is a vital link in a chain of the great horror writers from Edgar Allan Poe to



Stephen King.

If you already know Jackson’s work and appreciate her depiction of the humors and horrors of the female experience, check out Ottessa Moshfegh or Lisa Taddeo for a modern-day refresh — or stop by South Main Book Company and grab a copy of the recently released *The Letters of Shirley Jackson* (pp. 623, Random House).

Jackson passed away suddenly at the early age of 48 having never completed an autobiography; this collection of over 30 years of her correspondence is as close as we will ever come to understand her interior writing life — which she juggled with raising a large family, serving as their primary breadwinner, all the while supporting her husband’s literary career through such feats as serving as the President of the Faculty Wives Club.

Jackson succinctly described finding this balance in 1950s America when she wrote, “I am having a fine time doing my novel with my left hand and a long story — with as many levels as Grand Central Station — with my right hand, stirring chocolate pudding with a spoon held in my teeth, and tuning the television with both feet.”

I find her voice and her perspective so illuminating as I continue to struggle and stumble through motherhood myself, and I truly appreciate the fact her son lovingly compiled her letters into this collection. An extraordinary compilation of personal correspondence, this has all the hallmarks of Jackson’s beloved fiction: flashes of the uncanny in the domestic, sparks of horror in the quotidian, and the veins of humor that run through good times and bad. **S**

▶ The titles mentioned above are available at Salisbury’s independent bookstore, South Main Book Company, located at 110 S. Main St. Call 704-630-9788 or email southmainbookcompany@gmail.com to confirm store hours and events. Alissa Redmond is the owner of this store.

W

here might you find Shane Manier?

Well, try the places where creative coaches, artists, live-event painters, TEDx speakers, trauma informed care instructors and National Spoken Word Poets hang out.

Locally, you can find her as the artist-in-residence for the Center for Faith and the Arts in Salisbury and as an art teacher at Henderson Independent High School and Rowan Helping Ministries.

She also is a spoken word and arts instructor for the Harvey B. Gantt Center in Charlotte and Playing for Others.

There's more. Manier is the founder of Guerilla Poets, a nonprofit art collective with branches in the United States and United Kingdom, according to her website.

In 2011, she was the youngest poet to ever be inducted into the Poetry Council of North Carolina. She has been recognized as a National Poet, performing with Respect Da Mic Slam Team from 2017-2020.

"Shane is an amazing young woman," says Barbara Jo Corriher, a member of the Center for Faith and the Arts board. "... There are many layers to Shane. She is unique, a creative soul and definitely has her own style."

Although born in Columbus, Georgia, Manier says she grew up on the road. Her father built glass factories for a company called Southern Industrial, so there was a lot of traveling from job site to job site. Early on, when the family members weren't traveling, they stayed at their farm in Chuckey, Tennessee.

Manier, now 37, eventually attended A.L. Brown High in Kannapolis, where she lives today. Salisbury the Magazine recently caught up with Manier for this quick Q&A:

You wear so many hats — creative coach, poet, spoken word performer, artist, mentor. Do you see yourself as one of these more than any other and, if so, which one?

I don't know if I would say I am one more than the other, as they all feed into each other — which is really what you want as a multipotentialite. I tend to be all at once at times when I am in a community and that's when things feel really magical.

How would you define a Guerilla Poet?

Someone who cares about their fellow humans and wants to contribute to providing access to spaces where healing can happen.



Shane Manier is artist-in-residence for Center for Faith and the Arts in Salisbury and also teaches art at Henderson Independent High. (Photo by Elaine Hill)

| Q & A |

Caring through the arts

Multi-layered Shane Manier provides access to spaces where healing begins

WRITTEN BY MARK WINEKA

Why do you think you have been a good fit with Center for Faith and the Arts as its artist-in-residence?

I really love the people who are behind CFA and their work in the community. I think my values, passion and how I turn that into action really aligns with what CFA stands for when it comes to healing through the arts. There's so many beautiful people doing beautiful things in Salisbury and I get to be a part of that while honoring them through my own artform.

A question in the same vein: What has made teaching art at Henderson Independent High School a rewarding experience?

Seeing the transformation take place in the students is definitely one of the most rewarding things. From the smallest of moments to the largest of acts. There is always a moment in a classroom where something beautiful is taking place, you just have to pay attention.

You did a terrific TED Talk once titled, "There's No Such Thing As A Bad Kid." Why do you believe that more than ever?

I think especially with everything that's happened the past few years that there needs to be space for grace and understanding. It is such a stressful time for these students on top of whatever crisis they are already living through in their personal lives.

What have you found is the best way to reach a kid labeled as "a bad teen," a label applied to you at one time?

Empathy through validation has been a great key to unlocking possibility in teens who have been slapped with that label. I remember desperately wanting someone to just "see me" and acknowledge what I was going through was real even if they couldn't "fix" it. I see that same need in the eyes of a lot of my students who are so exhausted from people trying to argue with them what their reality is and how they should feel about it.

You had an especially challenging childhood and as a 16-year-old, I think, even attempted suicide. Looking back, was there a particular episode or moment afterward when you recognized that despair had been replaced by hope?

That's the funny thing about healing, I hon-

estly can't say there was a specific time. For me, I think it was more of a gradual process sprinkled with some empowering moments as well as some "rend the garments, crying in the dark on the bathroom floor" ones, too. Just taking it one step at a time.

What overriding theme or subject have you noticed in the artwork of clients at Rowan Helping Ministries on the occasions you led classes there?

There's been several themes I've noticed, but if I had to pick two (one on the side of struggle and one on the side of hope), it would be hyperactivity in thought — meaning a lot of the clients have struggles with their thoughts turning against them or spiraling out of control. They say the art works better than talking to a therapist! I believe it's because it stills their mind because they are having to focus on the paper and use their hands as a guide.

On the side of hope, nature and dreams of travel — a lot of clients want to go somewhere like the beach, mountains or visit a particular person who seems out of reach, and that gives them something to aim towards.

Poetry and the spoken word are things often overlooked as powerful tools in the art world. How can they be inspirational and life-changing?

Poetry acts as a way to process what's going on with us. When we write we define who we are, and who we are not. What we stand for and how we feel. Through it, we find forgiveness, solutions and freedom through getting it off our chest. I also believe that you can spark conversations through poetry that you can't necessarily do in regular conversation because of the use of metaphor. In that way we allow for change and possibility to take root. And when we share our story, it in turn impacts a person's life. It can connect us and has the power to change the hearts and minds of people.

Your students at Henderson Independent have been chosen (out of 32 submissions) to do some of the five Paint the Pavement crosswalks in the Railwalk Arts District. How thrilled are you about that, and can you describe what the kids will be painting?

I am so excited! I was really amazed that we got in, and not just one submission accepted but

two of them! Everyone is so excited about it on our paint team. We will be painting a beautiful tree that symbolizes change and a harvest that symbolizes the wonderful work that groups are doing in Salisbury to cultivate culture and provide food resources to the community.

I've been told you are creating something called "This Is Salisbury." What do you have in mind?

Yes! This is my next art exhibit that will be held at Center for Faith and the Arts. The opening night is Sept. 12, 6-8 p.m. It's open to the public, and it will be a series of art pieces honoring some of the wonderful people in Salisbury who are working hard in their community for change and betterment.

Who has been a mentor or big influence in your own life?

I definitely have to say my mom and dad (Carolyn Davis Manier and Walter Jim "Tex" Manier). They gave me grit and really supported my artistic skillset not to mention a wonderful (even if wild and rough) life on the road. And, of course, Bob Ross.

You have to love Bob Ross.

What's the most used app on your phone?

There's an app called Easy Rise Alarm, and it has really helped my morning anxiety. It wakes you up through guided meditation. I highly recommend!

What's your favorite food and/or sandwich?

Oof, this is hard. I would say steak, crablegs and sushi.


If you had only one song you could listen to for the rest of your life, what would it be?

Simple Minds' "Alive and Kicking."

What's the best advice you've ever received or the best advice you've given yourself?

John Love, an artist from Charlotte, once said something along the lines of "as an artist it is my job to create, that's it. I show up and I do my job and I give it to the world. What the world does with it is none of my damn business." It really kicks imposter syndrome in the butt.

Describe the rest of your life in five words ...

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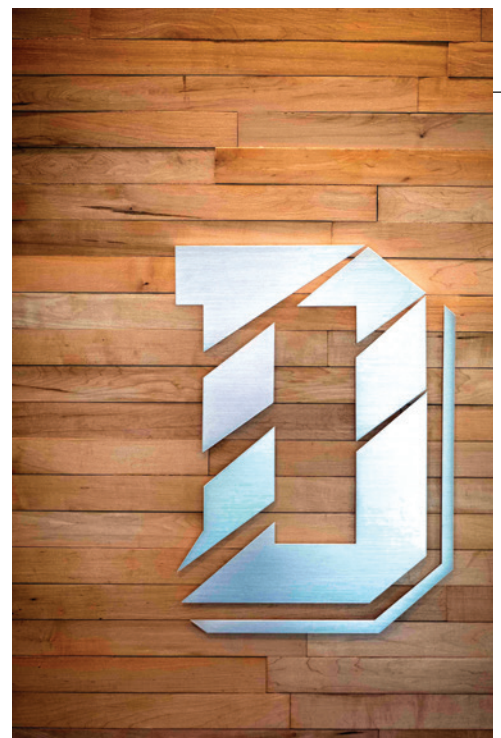
Bob McKillop, longtime head coach of the Davidson College men's basketball team.



A king and his court

Coach Bob McKillop keeps polishing a hall of fame career at Davidson

WRITTEN BY DAVID FREEZE | PHOTOGRAPHY BY JON C. LAKEY



Bob McKillop still gets up every morning, excited about Davidson basketball — and about life in general. With over 600 wins at Davidson College, he heads an exemplary program, the nearest Division I basketball program to Rowan County.

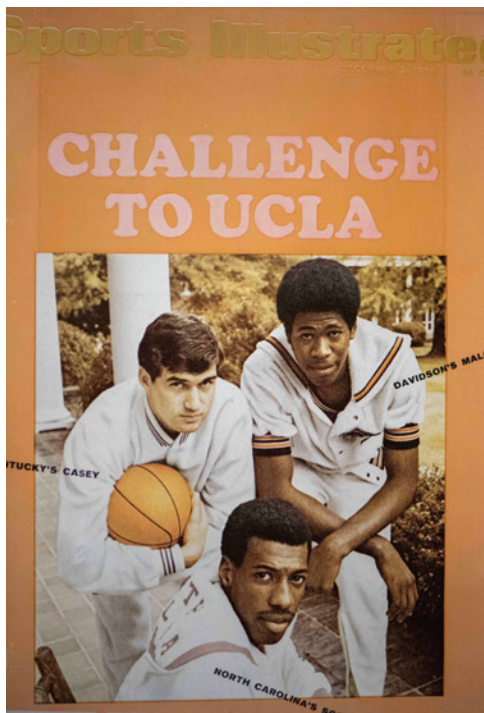
“I go out the door on my one-block walk to the office and think about how we can get better today,” McKillop says. “It’s a constant process. Yesterday’s glory or failure has passed. This challenge never ends. At 71 years of age, I’m still being

educated every day. It’s enriching and inspiring. There are no dull days!”

McKillop doesn’t spend much time looking backward and has few regrets, though he says, “Our early teams struggled, but they were appreciated, and I wish I had made a better experience for them, for all the players and coaches.”

His first three teams were a combined 25 wins and 60 losses.

There is another instance when McKillop allows himself



A 1968 Sports Illustrated cover, which included Davidson's star player, Mike Maloy, top right.



to look backward. When asked if he should be considered the face of Davidson basketball as he goes into his 33rd season as head coach, McKillop defers to Lefty Driesell. As a former history major and teacher, McKillop still dreams that his Wildcats can capture the same successes that Driesell did at little Davidson College in the 1960s.

“Coach Driesell was Davidson basketball, its greatest story,” McKillop says. “He took a 1,000-men student body school, in what was then a rural town, and propelled his team to national prominence.”

Charles G. “Lefty” Driesell, often regarded as the best program builder in NCAA history, served as the head coach at Davidson from 1960 to 1969. His teams won three Southern Conference tournaments and five regular season championships, earning him the Southern Conference Sportswriters Association Coach of the Year award four years running, from 1963 to 1966.

In the early years, Driesell slept in his car and ate fast food on recruiting trips because his budget wasn't big enough to provide for overnight accommodations. He recruited Dick Snyder and Fred Hetzel, both subsequent Na-



McKillop holds a Louisville Slugger bat near a Yankee Stadium print, which he cherishes. He is a New York native.

tional Basketball Association stars, and possibly the best of them all, the super athletic Mike Maloy. His teams were 176-65 and finished in the NCAA Elite 8 twice, the Sweet Sixteen once and enjoyed a preseason NCAA No. 1 ranking

in 1964. A Sports Illustrated from December 1968 has a cover picturing North Carolina's Charlie Scott, Kentucky's Mike Casey and Davidson's Maloy, under a headline that read, “Challengers to UCLA.” At the time, UCLA



'I go out the door on my one-block walk to the office and think about how we can get better today,' McKillop says.

was the dominant powerhouse of college basketball.

McKillop believes Davidson can reach those heights again. Highly regarded by his coaching peers, McKillop proudly points to his copy of that Sports Illustrated and knows it happened once, why not again?

Davidson College basketball has a significant following in the Salisbury-Rowan County area.

Karen Leonard met the McKillop family around 1991 through activities of their children.

"They are a wonderful family," Leonard says, "and I remain in touch with them regularly and follow the team religiously."

Dr. Ozzie Reynolds of Salisbury attends games with John Henderlite. Chris Dunn, a 1997 Davidson graduate, says, "The impact Coach McKillop has had on Davidson College extends well beyond wins and losses. His players exhibit effort both on and off the court."

Greg and Elizabeth Kaufman's three daughters all attended Davidson, and Rowan Drs. William Webb and Randy Lassiter join them in following the Wildcat fortunes closely. Rowan



McKillop holds a copy of the New York Daily News with the back cover photo of Stephen Curry.

has plenty of other Davidson basketball fans. Born in Queens, New York, McKillop grew up

there and on Long Island and played for Cham-inade High School in Mineola. McKillop went

on to play college ball for East Carolina University before transferring to Hofstra University. At Hofstra he was named team MVP. After graduating in 1972 with a degree in history, he was briefly signed as a free agent by the Philadelphia 76ers, but was cut. McKillop later laughed, recognizing he was cut by the worst team in the NBA.

One particular event while playing his last game for East Carolina stuck with McKillop. That last game was played against Lefty Driesell and Davidson. McKillop was a sophomore guard playing in front of a packed house in the Charlotte Coliseum. Davidson won easily, and McKillop remembers how vocal and involved the fans were in support of their team. Once the game ended, someone drove a white Thunderbird onto the floor as a gift to Driesell from the Boosters Club. Later, when at a coaching crossroads, McKillop remembered the fan support and chose Davidson.

After college graduation, McKillop accepted a job teaching history and coaching basketball back on Long Island at Holy Trinity Diocesan High School in Hicksville. At Holy Trinity, McKillop achieved an 86–25 record. In 1978 he became an assistant coach at Davidson for a year before returning to high school ball at Long Island Lutheran Middle and High School in Brookville. There, McKillop compiled a record of 182–51, winning five New York State Championships.

In 1989, McKillop returned to Davidson as head coach. He is Davidson's all-time leader in wins, years coached and games coached. His 230 Southern Conference wins are more than any coach in league history. He has been the SoCon Coach of the Year seven times, has won 13 conference division titles, seven tournament championships and taken his team to seven NCAA tournaments and four postseason NITs. All this winning hasn't come at any academic sacrifice, as 95% of his Davidson lettermen have

A photo in McKillop's office shows the huge crowd attending Davidson's close 2008 NCAA playoff game against No. 1 Kansas in the Elite Eight.



graduated.

At this writing, McKillop has 607 wins against 372 losses, a .620 percentage. He won both the National Association of Basketball Coaches and Clair Bee NCAA Division 1 Coach of the Year awards in 2008. The Clair Bee winner best reflects the character and professional qualities of a Hall of Fame coach who many consider to be the best technical basketball coach in history, and a man who cared deeply about his players' well-being.

Davidson's 2008 team, led by guard Stephen Curry, lost to eventual national champion Kan-

sas in the Elite 8, but the Wildcats had the last shot for a chance to win.

In February 2014, Davidson named the playing surface at its on-campus arena, John Belk Arena, as McKillop Court. The Harry L. Vance Center was completed in 2015, upgrading the practice courts, sports office facilities and fan experience for Davidson basketball and other sports. McKillop's office overlooks the tennis competition area and surrounding woods. He loves the view.

Since 2014, the Wildcats have competed in the Atlantic 10 Conference. Citing the high lev-



***Above:** During a timeout, McKillop gives instructions to his Wildcats in a non-conference game against Nevada at Belk Arena on Nov. 19, 2019. (Photo by Tim Cowie/DavidsonPhotos.com) **Right:** In 2014, the court at the John M. Belk Arena was named 'McKillop Court' in his honor.*

el of competition, McKillop says, “You might play Rhode Island on Tuesday, then VCU on Friday, Richmond early the next week and followed by St. Louis on the weekend. Every night you have to play at your best. There are no easy games in this league.”

That graduation rate, much higher than other top-rated basketball programs, is something that makes McKillop smile, but he doesn't take credit for it. He still considers himself a teacher.

“The academic rigors here are challenging,” he says, “and the faculty and parents take the lead on holding our players accountable. A specific assignment for class is just as important as the position where I want them to be on the basketball court.”

One tool that McKillop uses to stay competitive and still



meet the academic standards at Davidson is international recruiting. He often travels overseas to clinics and competitions and has extensive contacts that help the right player eventually wear the Wildcat's Red and Black.

"Our first international player was Detlef Musch from Germany in 1989," McKillop says. "Recruiting internationally allows for an expanded pool of candidates who will be successful both culturally and academically. Great lessons are learned by all of our players in this environment."

McKillop remembers that Musch came to Davidson from a divided Germany and returned home to a unified country.

The 2020-2021 Davidson Wildcats' roster included players from South Korea, New Zealand, Denmark, England and Austria — five international players who joined seven homegrown Americans.

All these players join the Davidson family, a phrase that McKillop uses often. He rates family as an intimate part of the Wildcat experience and smiles again when he acknowledges that many of his players stay in touch long after their college experience is over. He readily mentions what one player or another said about a past experience, either on or off the court.

Mention of McKillop's immediate family brings the widest smiles yet. All three of Bob and Cathy McKillop's children graduated from

Davidson and married former Wildcat athletes. Kerrin is a 2002 graduate of Davidson, while Matt followed in 2006 and Brendan in 2011. Both Matt and Brendan played for their father and earned four varsity letters.

After assisting former Wildcat player and assistant coach Jason Zimmerman at Emory University in Atlanta, Matt has been named as the



associate head coach to his father at Davidson College. Kerrin married Henry Heil, Matt married Kelsey Linville, and Brendan married Keena Classen. The McKillops have five grandchildren: Maggie, Claire and Jack Heil, and Hazel and Rosie McKillop.

Cathy McKillop is a huge fan and attends the games while helping shepherd the grandchildren in attendance.

"Both Matt and Brendan played point guard," McKillop says. "The fans allowed Cathy to be

mom, never hearing an insult, and we'll always remember the gracious way they opened their arms to us. I am just a part of that. My greatest joy! Our granddaughters wear their cheerleading outfits and know all the cheers. Jack wears his Steph Curry or Davidson jersey. They love it here."

Bob McKillop's faith matters to him as a practicing Catholic. "It's the indispensable foundation of my life," he says. "Live your faith every day. It lifts and inspires."

A final question, often asked of one of the greatest basketball coaches in the game is, how long will he continue?

McKillop, fit and trim, smiles and says, "I do get asked that a lot. My doctor just did my physical and says I'm good for another year. As long as I can do the job the right way for the players and coaches, I'm not thinking of leaving. But even when I do, I will never retire from Davidson basketball, it will be a part of my being forever."

And with that, McKillop notes, "Practice for this season started yesterday. ... We have so many good pieces, an energized roster. There is still a hunger every day!" **S**

David Freeze writes a weekly running column for the Salisbury Post and also has written several books detailing his long cycling rides across the country.



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AT HOME



Above: The 'Rock House' at 225 S. Fulton St. dates to 1913. Below left: The granite construction has held up well over the years. Below right: An Arts & Crafts light fixture hangs in the main foyer.





Michael and Katie Jones sit in the sunroom. Their home will be a stop on this year's October Tour.

'Rock house'

Couple find a treasure dressed in granite

WRITTEN BY MARK WINEKA | PHOTOGRAPHY BY SEAN MEYERS

His previous Salisbury homes had been in Country Club Hills and the Crescent, but Dr. Mike Jones kept thinking he wanted an older house, one with more character and closer to the downtown.

He and his wife, Katie Donahue Jones, looked at several offerings in the West Square Historic District before Mike received a Zillow alert on the house at 225 S. Fulton St.

The alert came on a Thursday, and by Friday morning a Realtor was opening the front door to a whole new world for the couple.

"As soon as we walked in the house, we knew we would be putting in an offer," Mike says. "... It really kind of blew us away."

Before them was a house that ticked almost all the boxes. Dark, original woodwork. Pocket doors. Six fireplaces downstairs. Finished floors. A handsome, switchback staircase. A brightly lit sun porch with granite walls. Large rooms, including a master bedroom on the first floor.



Numerous pocket doors are located throughout the home.



The family room offers many windows and another beautiful fireplace.



The plumbing, heating and air-conditioning seemed to be up to date, even though this house dated back to 1913.

The foyer includes artwork depicting the house.

“It didn’t need any work,” Katie says. “Other houses were projects.”

Outside, the front porch with its arched entrance of stone stood as a statement piece for the house along busy South Fulton Street. The porch was centered under a three-window dormer, hinting at the sizable upstairs, and the short driveway led to a carriage house garage, similarly designed and also of granite construction.

If anything was a negative, the kitchen was smaller than the Joneses would have preferred, but it was cute, modern and functional.

While the floor plan wasn’t the “open” concept so many couples seem to push for in home-improvement television shows, Mike thought things flowed nicely from room to room.

The couple bought the house in 2018, and for this year’s 46th edition of Historic Salisbury Foundation’s OctoberTour it will be one of the stops for the third time in its history.

Often in older Salisbury neighborhoods, the corners hold the staliier houses, and that’s the case on three of the corners at South Fulton and West Bank streets.

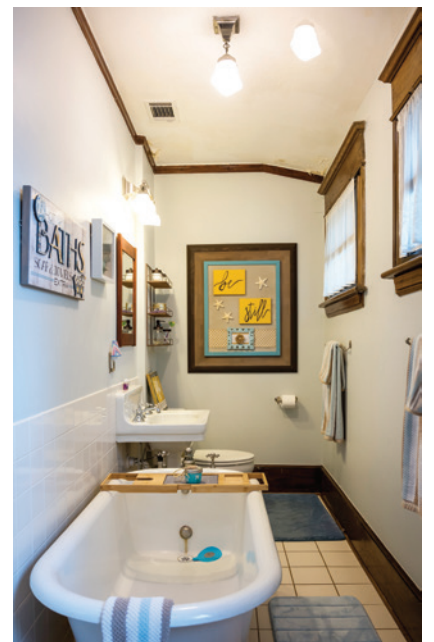
But don’t sell the Joneses’ Craftsman-styled bungalow on the remaining corner short, even though it might look a little smaller in comparison. This is more house than you might think, covering 3,105 square feet inside.

And just the home’s nickname alone — the “Rock House” — should offer clues to how solid the dwelling is.

L.S. Bradshaw Construction built the Rock House in 1913, near the end of the Arts and Crafts era in architecture. The granite for the house and its matching garage no doubt came from local quarries. It’s known that W.B. Taylor was one of its first owners.



Clockwise from top left: An old telephone hangs near the kitchen; Arches punctuate the front porch; An upstairs sink; The upstairs bathroom includes a clawfoot tub; The stairs double back on themselves; Family art fills part of a hallway.





Above: The front door has a mechanical doorbell that still rings. *Left:* The carriage house/garage is just off the back side of the home.



Above: The family room's fireplace. *Above right:* The dining room table is set for guests. *Right:* The beauty of old plumbing fixtures.





Above: The foyer provides an attractive entrance to the Rock House.



Left: The sunroom on the main floor is a great place to relax.



A three-window dormer allows light to flood into this upstairs bedroom.

Rumor says it was once a speakeasy during Prohibition, and during World War II, this house served as headquarters for the Salisbury chapter of the American Red Cross.

The Red Cross moved to a North Main Street office in 1949. In more modern times, the Rock House became home for the Bousers — Steve Bouser was Salisbury Post editor at the time — and more recently, city of Salisbury Planning Director Janet Gapen and her husband, Keith.

The Joneses, married for four years, have a blended family that includes five teenaged children. Katie divides her time between the Rock House in Salisbury and North Myrtle Beach, where her children call home.

When in North Myrtle Beach, where she met Mike, she resides in what used to be his beach house.

Meanwhile, Mike lives in the Rock House where his children, daughter Madison and son Trip, have upstairs rooms. Madison has headed off for college this fall, and Trip is a junior at Salisbury High. Mike, an anesthesiologist, came to Salisbury in 2006 after completing his residency.

The interior size of the Rock House always surprises people, given its squat bungalow styling, but there are six rooms on the first floor

and four on the second, plus full bathrooms up and down.

“It was so much more spacious than we thought,” Katie says.

Mike acknowledges he always had a standard answer when people first asked what attracted him to the Rock House.

“‘Character’ is the word I used,” he says.

The Joneses made some minor cosmetic changes with their interior painting and decorating, but otherwise, they moved right in. As

for that undersized kitchen, Katie says it’s “perfectly fine,” given that they eat out a lot, “but you can only have about two people in there.”

In furnishings, Katie added a few period pieces in choosing items such as a dining room table, buffet, office furniture, dresser and old trunk, used as a table in the family room. They retained the older, interesting light fixtures that fit in with the house’s era of construction.

Similarly, Katie loves the transoms over the doors of many of the rooms, and the couple retained an antique telephone on the hallway wall between the living room and kitchen.

Katie converted a front parlor into an office and art workspace. Besides the kids’ bedrooms, the upstairs has a beach-themed guest room.

“It’s such a cool house,” Mike says.

“As soon as we walked in the house, we knew we would be putting in an offer. ... It really kind of blew us away.”

The darkness of the woodwork adds to the home's warmth inside, maybe a counterpoint to all the stone outside. Katie learned the woodwork hadn't always been this rich, deep color.

Janet Gapen says previous owners once told her they hired a contractor to strip all of the painted oak trim throughout the house. To accomplish the massive task, the contractor developed an intricate coding system to mark each piece as it was removed, so it could be stained and put back in the right spot.

"However," Gapen told Katie in an email, "the contractor used a grease pencil and the markings were removed in the stripping process. It was like putting a giant jigsaw puzzle back together to get all the woodwork reinstalled!"

The Joneses have found they like living in the West Square Historic District. They can walk to downtown restaurants, take their dogs with them on neighborhood strolls and are roughly only two blocks away from the new Bell Tower Green.

They spend considerable time watching the world go by from the front porch, which includes a two-person swing, cushy furniture and attractive planters.

"It's hard not to fall in love with this porch," Mike says.

What: Historic Salisbury Foundation's 46th annual tour

When: Oct. 9-10

Tour hours: 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Oct. 9 and noon-5:30 p.m. Oct. 10.

Tour sites:

- Leo Wallace Sr. House, 301 W. Fisher St.
- Fulton-Mock-Blackmer House, 112 S. Fulton St.
- Walter McCanless House, 204 Confederate Ave.
- The Rock House, 225 S. Fulton St.
- Napoleon Bonaparte McCanless House, 619 S. Main St.
- Josephus W. Hall House, 226 S. Jackson St.
- Peacock-Fowler House, 316 S. Fulton St. (virtual viewing only).
- T.W. Borland House, 529 Lake Drive (virtual only).
- Moses Corriher House, 1475 Corriher Springs Road (virtual only).

Other tour-related activities: Bank Street Festival, (200 and 300 blocks of West Bank Street), tour hours, open to the public; Silent Auction, Salisbury Station, tour hours; Restoration and Design Expo, Salisbury Station, tour hours; Patrons Party, Oct. 8, home of Shari and Bill Graham, 6:30-11 p.m.; Ghost Guild Inc. presentation, Meroney Theater; Tweed Ride, downtown Salisbury, 11 a.m. Oct. 10; Patrons' Porch (private offering for sponsors and patrons of OctoberTour only), 220 S. Fulton St., hours of the tour.

For tickets and information on all the events: Go to octobertour.com



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AT HOME

Keith Gapen did a commendable job with the landscaping, and Mike says he has tried to maintain what Keith already had in place. A lawn service helps in that process.

The driveway allows room for off-street parking, which is sometimes at a premium in this part of town, and the rock carriage house — a nice architectural feature on its own — is just wide enough to hold Mike's sports car.

The idea of the Joneses opening up their house to OctoberTour guests probably first surfaced when the couple attended a welcome party given by their neighbors Susan and Bill Kluttz.

Katie laughs, thinking back to that evening. She thought it was going to be a small, casual gathering, but "it seemed like everybody from the town was there."

Still, the notion of having their historic home on the tour sounded good then — and does so even now, as the date approaches.

"It will be fun," Katie says.

There is rock-like certainty in her voice. **S**

An exquisite fireplace cover and tile work are in the dining room.



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Dave Johnson has soft spot
for people, animals, nature
— but not litter

WRITTEN BY CARL BLANKENSHIP
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JON C. LAKEY



Dave Johnson talks with Citadel resident Marisue Callahan, who also enjoys visiting with Dave's 4-month-old miniature horse Summer.



Building birdhouses is one of Johnson's many projects.



Johnson tends to a chore.



D

ave Johnson says he has had an interesting and fulfilling life, lucky enough to enjoy everything he has done from his military career to his volunteerism.

Johnson joined the U.S. Air Force right out of high school in 1967. The Waterbury, Connecticut, native served in Vietnam in 1970 and spent more than 20 years in the service, retiring in 1988 as a master sergeant.

His main job in the branch was casualty services. He helped figure out who it was that had been injured, killed or captured and notified families stateside about what had happened to their loved ones. He also spent three years as a drill sergeant.

He says reenlisting was a financial decision at the time because the service was offering some good, tax-free money and he did not want to work construction with his dad. Looking back on it, he adds, the military gave



*Johnson leads
his horses
to the barn.*



Feeding time.



*Dave Johnson has a simple work-
shop to build his birdhouses and
raised garden bed frames.*



Johnson works on a frame for a raised garden bed.



Miniature horses Angie and her foal, Ulysses.



Johnson's 1956 Ford farm truck is a familiar sight around Salisbury. He uses it when picking up litter along the roads, and it also carries the signs he puts out to discourage litterers.

him opportunity: education, experience — and he adjusted to civilian life well.

Ironically, he started his own construction business after he left the service.

Johnson ended up in Salisbury because years ago he was traveling through the area and he liked it. He had lived in Florida “before and after Disney,” and had no plans to go back to the state he remembered for its orange groves and cattle.

Johnson had already started his construction business while he was in the Air Force. He eventually quit construction and transitioned into landscaping, finding he enjoyed designing yard-scapes and flower beds.

Johnson’s latest passion is running his miniature horse and dwarf Nigerian goat farm.

“I think God kind of steered that,” Johnson says. “It’s nothing that I intended to do. The first miniature horse I got was a rescue and in horrible condition. I brought it back to health, then here comes another one.”

Johnson has a soft spot for nature and animals. The small ones agree with him best.

“I’ve had dozens of surgeries on joints, among others,” Johnson says. “Little horses can hurt you, but not as bad.”

The farm has about 20 animals at the moment, including a 21-year-old cow.

Johnson says the manure shoveling and hay gathering are selfish chores for him. The reward is seeing how the animals make people feel.

Two miniature horses he sold last year are serving as therapy animals for children with autism, and that made him happy. A foal he sold recently is training to be a therapy animal in Charlotte.

When he takes animals to visit nursing homes, the residents smile.

“I just love to see that,” Johnson says.

You actually may know Johnson more for his efforts to clean up local intersections. His trash pickup efforts are completely his own, and he cleans the intersection of Jake Alexander Boulevard and South Main Street every week.

He is easy to spot, showing up in his classic red Ford truck equipped with bird feeders in the



After Vietnam and 20 years in the Air Force, Johnson found his niche in the construction business, landscaping and, more recently, looking after his farm.



Johnson and his young miniature horse Summer arrive at a nursing home on one of their visits to residents.

back. He says cleaning Jake and Main was terrible initially, as he was pulling out five to six bags of garbage from the area each week.

Then, he decided to apply some psychological pressure. He planted a snarky sign calling out litterers, and people seem to throw less trash there now. His signs at the intersection change regularly.

The cleanup efforts do not feel futile, Johnson says, and he thinks it is important to educate children about taking care of natural spaces.

Johnson's volunteerism goes beyond trash pickup and visits to nursing homes. He has also served as a guardian ad litem and delivered food for Meals on Wheels.

He recently became involved with Happy Roots, a local gardening nonprofit. Johnson started by donating garden beds he made himself.

Happy Roots Executive Director Ashley Honbarrier says they have stayed in touch, and she knows it is hard for Johnson to take a break while recovering from a recent surgery.

But don't worry, Johnson already plans on being part of upcoming litter sweeps, national and world cleanup days, and working with Happy Roots on the West End Community Garden. **S**



Johnson's workbench usually is covered by a layer of sawdust.



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*A shoeless director of music,
John Stafford, leads the choir
during a Sunday morning
service at First
Presbyterian Church.*



Bicentennial
TAPESTRY

200-year-old First Presbyterian Church
is woven into its members' lives

WRITTEN BY SUSAN SHINN TURNER
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SEAN MEYERS



*A well-worn Bible sits within
arm's reach of a congregation
member.*

W

hen I was assigned this story about the 200th anniversary of First Presbyterian Church, a snippet of a Sunday School song kept running through my mind:

*The church is not a building, the church is not a steeple,
The church is not a resting place, the church is a people!*

Since 1821, with a dozen members strong, the people of First Presbyterian Church in downtown Salisbury have made the 700-member congregation what it is today.

Here are some reflections from members of First Presbyterian, some lifelong members, some newer members, all bound together with the purpose of the 200th anniversary celebration statement: "Deeply Rooted, Branching Out."

Chris Bradshaw is a third-generation member of First Presbyterian Church. He remembers sitting with his grandmother, Etta Bradshaw, in the old church, of which the Bell Tower remains. He is a fourth-generation member of C.S. Bradshaw Construction Co., which built the education building in 1952 and the porte cochere and parking lot in 1995. Bradshaw also oversaw the construction of Lewis Hall a decade ago.

*Josh and Lara
Musser Gritter
are co-pastors and
are seen here with
their daughter,
Joanna.*





Ozzie Reynolds, center, speaks with members of the Every Man's Bible Class.



Above: Campbell Aron, 10, passes the collection plates during a recent Sunday morning service. Right: Robert Church and his daughter, Ada Grace, stroll around the sanctuary.





Above: Pastor Lara Musser Gritter leads a service. Right: Mike Drinkard works the control room equipment in the main sanctuary. Below: Anne Saunders, right, cherishes being part of the choir.





*Pastor Lara Musser Gritter
converses with Karl Hales
after a Sunday morning
service.*

Bradshaw has been a member of the Everyman's Bible Class for 25 years.

"The associations you have with our Sunday School and different classes have carried a lot of us a long way," he says. "Our class has built and sponsored a Habitat House. We support different nonprofits. Our class raises a pretty good amount of money around Christmas and we divide it out."

Anne Saunders is another lifelong church member. She has a special connection in that her father, John Erwin Ramsay, designed the sanctuary that's been in use since 1968. She and her husband, Frank, were one of the first couples to be married there the next year.

"It was fun to watch the sanctuary being built," Anne says. "Dad took us to church when it was almost complete."

The problem was that the construction crew couldn't figure out how to hang the canopy above the pulpit, so it was up to Anne and her three brothers, George, John and K.C.

"We four children helped hoist it up, and John hooked it," Anne remembers. "So far, it's stayed there more than 50 years."

Anne is also a longtime member of the senior choir, which she describes as one of her passions.

Stephen Bullock became a part of the congregation in 1991 when his father, Malcolm, served as associate pastor.

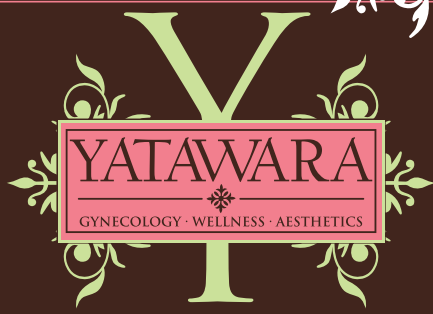
"I was a recent college graduate," he says. "I lived in the manse and mooched off my parents for a couple of years."

A Sunday School class for young adults started in the 1990s, Bullock says. "That became the center of our social life. Our children became playmates, and we participated in Wednesday night programs where young families are active."

Bullock says of he and his wife, Andrea, "Our whole life is woven into First Pres because of those relationships."



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Bonnie Link hugs a fellow church member.



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Pastor Lara Musser Gritter greets a member leaving church on a Sunday.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN ANNIVERSARY EVENTS AT A GLANCE

- **Sept. 26** — John Stafford, director of music, presents a piano concert on Sept. 26 entitled “200 Years of Music.” Beginning in 1821 with Beethoven’s 31st Piano Sonata and proceeding in roughly 50-year increments, Stafford plays pieces by Mussorgksy, Gershwin, and Hawes, concluding with “Variations on Ode to Joy,” which he wrote.
 - **Oct. 17** — Stafford was also commissioned to write “His Mercy Endureth Forever,” an anthem which will premiere at the unified service and main celebration on Oct. 17. A catered lunch will follow the service at Bell Tower Green. The Bell Tower is part of a previous church structure, so the park is especially meaningful to the congregation. “We are hoping this celebration is a big kickoff to better things to come,” Stafford says.
 - Other upcoming events in the life of the congregation include:
 - **Nov. 6** — Day of Service, Rowan Helping Ministries. Opportunities to serve lunch and dinner, pack meals, and do laundry.
 - **Nov. 14** — 200 Years of Church History through an Equity Lens, hosted by the church’s Race Task Force.
 - **December** — Commemorative Christmas ornament available for purchase.
 - **Jan. 9, 2022** — Rededication Unified Service, during which the congregation will bury a time capsule.
- You can also check the church’s Facebook page for a more detailed listing of events.

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— Tamara Sheffield

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Dr. Ozzie Reynolds came to First Presbyterian in 1977 with his late wife, Patsy.

“We fell in love with the pastor,” he says.

Their two sons were involved in youth programs at other congregations, but then Dottie Metropol came to First Presbyterian in 1989 as director of Christian education and founded Teens With a Mission.

Between 1994 and 1998, Patsy Reynolds went to Mexico on mission trips six times, and Reynolds went five.

“That’s the best thing our church has done, and still does,” Reynolds says of mission outreach. “Teens With a Mission is the most gratifying thing I’ve ever done. You’re a peer. You observe these children, and they want to do something to help. With the people we meet, we find their spiritual wealth is greater than ours. Spiritual wealth is something you can’t buy. For high school and college students, this is a turning point.”

Gwynne Shoaf has been a member of First Presbyterian for 36 of her 40 years.

“I was not baptized here, but my sister was,” she says. “My parents wanted more opportunities for our family. When we joined, it was a great time to be a young person at First Pres.”

She was part of the Love Squad, and remembers eating Goldfish crackers and drinking juice.

“We had lots of fun, intergenerational events that helped me get to know others,” Shoaf says.

In particular there was an Ugly Knee contest, won by Bob Lewis and Harold Mesimer.

“I have memories of fun times growing up,” Shoaf says, “and those connections have continued.”

As a youth, she never got to go on mission trips because of schedule conflicts, but she was able to go to Belize as an adult.



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Pastor Lara Musser Gritter and Associate Pastor Dr. Randy Kirby walk down the aisle at First Presbyterian Church.

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She and her husband, Jeff, and their son Barrett, 5, live near China Grove. Shoaf says that Barrett is Dr. Randy Kirby's biggest fan.

"We have to drive," she says, "but it's home. There was a connection there I didn't want to lose."

In 1990, Dianne Scott came to Salisbury to be director of Rowan Helping Ministries.

"First Pres was most supportive from a financial aspect," she says. "I had volunteers from First Pres on every one of my programs and the board. I knew what church I wanted to be a part of."

She joined about three years later.

"Every week, I am reminded that we leave the church to be the church," she says. "We are very focused on what we can do as a church."

Since her retirement, she says she loves not being in charge. "I volunteer with whatever they need me to do."

Reynolds has also served as an elder on the



Nancy Eason, left, and Robert Coleman work in the control room for the Sunday morning service.

session, the church's governing body.

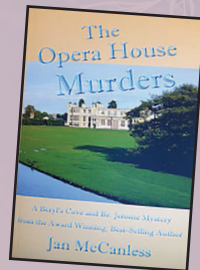
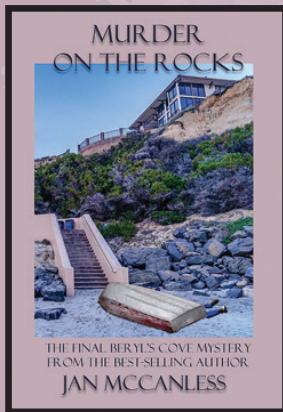
"There are diverse options and feelings," he says. "But you take a vote and that's settled. You have a vote, but it comes with a consensus. We have good pastors, good missions, good benevolence, and we're active in the community. Why leave?"

Saunders agrees.

"I've never felt the need to leave," she says. "My brothers are all in Raleigh and my parents are deceased. It just sort of grounds me." • • •

Susan Shinn Turner is a freelance writer living in Raleigh.

Jan McCanless is an award winning and best selling author. All 17 of her books are best sellers. The last book in the "Beryl's Cove" series, *Murder on the Rocks*, is now available.



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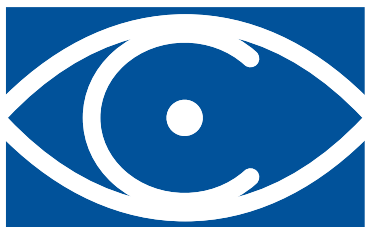
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The attractive grounds of First Presbyterian.

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• • • *United Front*

Modern-era First Presbyterian pastors forge connections with their flock

Dr. Bob Lewis served the longest of any First Presbyterian Church pastor in the modern era: 24 years.

“When I met with the Salisbury search committee, I was inspired and motivated by their excitement, their vision, and their love for the church and its ministry,” says Lewis, now retired and living in Durham with wife Jan. “We connected. I felt God’s presence and God’s call.”

“One of the elders of the church said, ‘Bob, one day you will go to the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York City!’ I didn’t believe him, but I did decide to make First Presbyterian Church of Salisbury my Fifth Avenue. I couldn’t have made a greater decision!”

Lewis continues, “Salisbury became home for our family. We stayed at the church because of the people — their love and care, their devotion and thoughtfulness, their acceptance of me as their leader. They were extraordinary people.”

“The church continued to grow and make tremendous progress. It was a united congregation — people who loved, appreciated, and respected one another. They believed God had called them to reach out and help meet the needs of others, both locally and elsewhere. They were successful in making a profound difference in the lives of countless people throughout the world.”

KIRBY — A CALMING PRESENCE

Dr. Randy Kirby has been associate pastor for pastoral care and counseling for 20 years, nearly half his career in ministry.

Kirby was finishing a doctoral program and looking at prospective positions in a Presbyterian publication. His wife, Barrie, said, “Did you see this one?”

It was an ad for First Presbyterian in Salisbury.



Pastor Lara Musser Gritter delivers a sermon. (Sean Meyers photo)

Within two months, he was preaching for the call committee. He began work on July 1, 2001, with Lewis as senior pastor.

“It has been a good fit,” Kirby says. “There have been a lot of interesting opportunities. With mission outreach, we have Communities in Schools, Meals on Wheels, Rowan Helping Ministries and Community Care Clinic. We see that as central to who we are as a church.”

Kirby has served with four senior pastors.

“I try to be a calming presence,” he says. “I hope I am.”

THE MUSSER GRITTERS — FIRST CO-PASTORS

Several years ago, when Pastors Josh and Lara Musser Gritter were interviewing for congrega-

tions, they didn’t even consider First Presbyterian.

It would be their first full-time call, and they were in their 20s.

“I think the church was courageous in calling us,” Lara says.

“It could have been a risk,” Josh adds, “but it’s more of a risk to call a married couple. Plus we are not from the South. You need to understand how people work to minister to them.”

(For the record, he’s from Michigan; she’s from Illinois.)

“We were so different, but they were ready to try something new,” Lara says.

Stephen Bullock chaired the call committee. The couple’s age did generate a lot of discussion within the committee, he says. “We gave it a lot



A church wall showing former pastors.

of thought and a lot of prayer.”

And has it paid off?

“Absolutely,” Bullock says. “Many times over. We have an excitement about this young, vibrant couple.”

Not only are the Musser Gritters senior co-pastors, Lara is the first female senior pastor the church has ever had.

The couple began their ministry at First Presbyterian in July 2018. About the time they were getting comfortable, COVID-19 hit.

“Our church has been incredibly gracious navigating this,” Lara says. “Josh and I feel really proud of them.”

Josh calls the couple’s daughter, Joanna, born six months ago, “the joy of our lives.”

When the couple arrived, they were treated to an old-fashioned “pounding” to set up their household and later, a drive-through baby shower.

“I’m really excited about Joanna being a kid who has a lot of people in her life,” Josh says.

“We get to be on the receiving end of a church community who cares for us,” Lara adds. **S**

— Susan Shinn Turner



Pastor Josh Musser Gritter speaks to the congregation. (Sean Meyers photo)

YESTERDAY



From left, Jon Michael, Devon Gailey, Kelly McConkey, Nicholas Wendling, Nelson Nauss, Michael Winn and Tracy Bailey pose in the Wallace Annex on East Fisher Street. The Ghost Guild, a paranormal investigative team from Raleigh that specializes in historic structures, partners with Historic Salisbury Foundation to explore stories about old properties.



Videos are used extensively in the guild's investigations.

What was that?

*Raleigh-based Ghost Guild seeks answers in
Salisbury for things going 'bump in the night'*

WRITTEN BY TRACY BAILEY AND KAREN C. LILLY-BOWYER
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SEAN MEYERS



Microphones, recorders and other equipment are used for investigations.

Editor's note: *Historic Salisbury Foundation continues its series of articles for Salisbury the Magazine.*

There are a handful of people who are not only brave in the face of common human fears, but they actively seek them out: arachnologists who will wade into the most spider-infested basements, BASE jumpers who leap with barely a look before stepping off many-stories-tall cliffs, musicians who thrive in front of thousands of people, and teams of adventurous souls who seek out things that go “bump” in the night.

This year, you can meet one of these teams of individuals who seek to understand the experiences that can't easily be explained in and around Rowan County's most entertaining and fascinating places during the Historic Salisbury Foundation's OctoberTour.

Who are these people?

Established in 2017, The Ghost Guild is a registered nonprofit based in Raleigh. This group of individuals has become one of North Carolina's top scientific paranormal investigative teams that specializes in historic structures. They're a crew of professionals with day jobs in various surprising industries who share a passion for history, the unexplained and science.

In addition to the partnership with HSF, The Ghost Guild is the exclusive partner for Raleigh's Theatre in the Park and Mordecai Historic Park, operated by the City of Raleigh Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources Department.

In 2020, the team was featured in the North Carolina Museum of History's "History and Highballs" series, as well as the Museum of Life and Science program "The Science of Fear." The group has been featured in Midtown Magazine, Walter Magazine, Raleigh Life and Soul, as well as on numerous television and radio programs, including WUNC's "The State of



Michael Winn records video of a room in the circa 1854 Andrew Murphy House on West Bank Street.

Things.” In 2021, The Ghost Guild was voted Best Paranormal Team by readers in the Strange Carolina Best of North Carolina Awards.

Among the Ghost Guild team members, you will find professionals in fields such as construction, information technology, project management, health services, aviation quality control, cloud computing, learning technology, photojournalism, environmental protection and archeology. Each individual offers a unique talent to the group and to the organizations they partner with.

Nelson Nauss, The Ghost Guild’s executive director and co-founder, stretches over 6 feet tall and speaks with a slight Canadian accent. It’s hard to picture him in some of the places where he has set up equipment such as in tight attics and under houses in dirt-floored crawl spaces. He is one of the most well-known members of the team, often appearing during TV and radio interviews.

What appeals to him about historical locations?

“I love everything about investigating historical locations: the smell of century-old wood, the way creaky floorboards feel under my feet, the hidden notes I’ve sometimes found in dusty crevices; it really reminds me that the place once teemed with real people, just living their lives,” Nauss says.

But does Nauss ever get afraid while investigating these places in the dark and quiet?

“Fear is pretty normal,” he says, “and it is actually a fairly common thing among adults. When I get startled, I take deep breaths to help my body to get back under control, and when you’re alone in a lightless room, speaking it aloud helps stop the fear from circling around and around your brain.”

Co-founder Kelly McConkey echoes these thoughts about why historic places are interesting to investigate.

“The thing I love most about investigating historic locations is imag-



A monitor is set to capture any unusual movement in the home.





The guild was investigating the circa 1854 Andrew Murphy House on West Bank Street.



ining the lives that were once lived in them,” McConkey says. “All of us have hopes and dreams. We fall in love. We grieve. We celebrate. We mourn. I imagine the people who lived or worked in these places and picture them in their lives, and it makes me feel connected to them. It’s a powerful experience.”

And what about Salisbury?

Curiosity, like fear, is a natural human emotion. Historic Salisbury Foundation receives many questions about the paranormal history of buildings and many people love to share their stories about HSF’s unique properties and folklore about the town in general.

Nelson Nauss sets up a video camera in the hallway of the house.

After careful consideration, in early January 2021, the foundation formed a partnership with The Ghost Guild Inc. to explore these stories, along with the science and history behind them. The Ghost Guild is highly respected, in part, due to its mission to skeptically investigate reports of unexplained activity in historically significant locations and to assist in the preservation of these sites.

To date in Salisbury, the Guild has investigated the Wallace Annex, the Hall House, Salisbury Station, the Napoleon Bonaparte House, the Salisbury Ice House and the Empire Hotel. Most of these locations have been investigated more than once because the Guild believes that multiple investigations are necessary to verify any data collected. Each investigation opens up new chances for exploring the spaces and learning still more about the history of each locale, in addition to possibly capturing some data.

In a recent conversation, we asked Nauss to tell us how and why the Guild chose Salisbury for



Devon Gailey records B-roll video footage of the Andrew Murphy House on West Bank Street.





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extensive investigations.

“Salisbury is rich in history and cool architecture,” Nauss said. “Some of the most famous or infamous characters in North Carolina and the nation’s history have been associated with the area. How could we resist a chance to dig into the town’s strange happenings?”

For a sneak preview of The Ghost Guild’s storytelling about some of the places they’ve been, check out the YouTube videos in the Guild’s series “When History Speaks.”

If you have been more than a little startled by something that does not seem to have a rational explanation, or if you have ever been interested in learning more than what you see on television about paranormal events and investigation, you should plan on visiting The Ghost Guild at this year’s Historic Salisbury Foundation OctoberTour.

Team members will be a part of the Oc-

toberTour Bank Street Festival. They will be happy to chat with you and share some history and some of the famous folklore about Salisbury, plus stories from investigations conducted across North Carolina to help promote paranormal tourism.

In addition to the Bank Street presence, the Guild will also have a more formal presentation of their Salisbury data and experiences called “A Muddle of Mystery and a Chaser of History” at the Saturday night cocktail event with Historic Salisbury Foundation and sponsored by The White Rabbit Cocktail Parlour.

Tickets for a raffle will be on sale during OctoberTour. Both the presentation and the raffle benefit HSE, but the raffle will offer a few prizes, including two cocktail packages and an opportunity for some lucky “truth seeker” to join The Ghost Guild on one of its upcoming investigations. More information about The

Ghost Guild and October Tour can be found at octobertour.com.

For a full introduction to The Ghost Guild members, visit the Guild’s website at TheGhostGuild.com. **S**

Tracy Bailey is a keen observer, a nuanced writer, and experienced in life balancing. She’s a project manager, single-parenting four children, volunteering with The Ghost Guild, and working to develop an app for dyslexic students — all while working from home amidst a pandemic.

Karen C. Lilly-Bowyer is a Salisbury native who is fascinated by the city’s historic past. She has successfully nominated four Salisbury properties and four Rowan County properties for Historic Landmark designation. Karen is also the author of “The Wettest and Wickedest Town, An Illustrated Guide to the Legends and Ghosts of Salisbury, NC.”



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October 2021

1

Day Out with Thomas

Sept. 24-26 and Oct. 1-3: N.C. Transportation Museum, Spencer — Thomas the Tank rolls into town with the Party Train Tour. Hop on board for a 25-minute real train ride with Thomas. Say hello to Sir Topham Hatt, stop in the party corner for lawn games, have a blast in the bubble zone and check out the gift shop for exclusive Thomas swag. Contact the call center at 1-866-468-7630. Hours are 9 a.m.-9 p.m. seven days a week, or email the museum at info@nctransportationmuseum.org.

1

Landis Downtown After 5 Cruise In

Oct. 1: vendors and display cars will be along North Central Avenue, Landis — 5-9 p.m. All classic cars, antiques, hot rods, muscle cars, trucks and bikes are welcome.

2

Autumn Jubilee

Oct. 2-3: Dan Nicholas Park, Bringle Ferry Road — 10 a.m.-5 p.m. This 41st annual festival attracts thousands of visitors from across Rowan County and the state, celebrating the season with live music, food and craft vendors.

2

Bridgerton Garden Party at Paradox Farm

Oct. 2: Paradox Farm, 140 Paradox Lane off U.S. 601, Mocksville — 2:30-5:30 p.m. Inspired by the “Bridgerton” television series, this garden party asks participants to dress in Regency or Victorian-era fashion to enjoy English tea, finger food and period music set in the bucolic setting of the farm. Tickets are limited. Contact Faith Bradshaw at 704-213-7076 for reservations.

8

‘Some Enchanted Evening’

Oct. 8-10 and Oct. 15-17: Meroney Theater, 213 S. Main St., Salisbury — 7:30 p.m. Oct. 8-9, 15-16; 2:30 p.m., Oct. 10 and 17. The songs of Rodgers & Hammerstein have become an integral part of our everyday lives, and this stunning collection of Rodgers & Hammerstein compositions places five performers in a theatrical setting, offering performers an opportunity to explore timeless songs within their own styles and sensibilities, “Some Enchanted Evening” delights its audience with a glorious parade of genuine hits. A Piedmont Players Theatre production. Go to piedmontplayers.com or call 704-633-5471 for tickets and information.

9

OctoberTour

Oct. 9-10: Salisbury and Rowan County — 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Oct. 9 and noon- 5:30 p.m. Oct. 10. Historic Salisbury Foundation’s 46th annual tour of homes with many other associated activities. This year’s event includes the Bank Street Festival of live music, crafts, food, beverages and kid activities during tour hours. Also participate in the Silent Auction of items from the Ice House Architectural Salvage Warehouse and visit the Restoration Design Expo, both being held at Salisbury Station. This first design expo offers products and services specific to renovation and restoration projects. Also visit the Ghost Guild presentation at the Meroney Theater on various Salisbury ghost investigations. For details and OctoberTour ticket information visit octobertour.com or historicsalisbury.org.

9

Southern Soul Music Festival

Oct. 9: East Spencer, in front of Town Hall — noon to 6 p.m. Bring a lawn chair and settle in for the best soul music. A followup to the first Southern Soul Music Festival held in 2019.

9

Granite Quarry Civitan Fiddlers Convention

Oct. 9: East Rowan High School, U.S. 52, south of Granite Quarry — chopped barbecue plates, hamburgers, hot dogs and desserts available starting at 11 a.m. bluegrass band, gospel band and individual competition begins with youth at 4:30 p.m. and adults at 7 p.m. Admission: \$8, adult; children under 12 free. Special performance honoring Steve and Penny Kilby at 8 p.m.

15

‘Frankenstein’

Oct. 15-30: Lee Street theatre, 329 N. Lee St., Salisbury — 7:30 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays only. This production has been described as “a graphic retelling of the Frankenstein story, filled with empathetic characters and a true monster who quotes Milton and the Bible.” Critics also have said it is “a wildly atmospheric, emotionally haunting production. Go to lee.street.org for ticket information.

16

CruisIN the Grove

Oct. 16: Main Street, China Grove — 1-5 p.m. Come to the last CruisIN of the season, grab a bite, shop, listen to music and see great cars. Contact pprice@chinagrovenc.gov for more information.

16

Celebrating Center for the Environment

Oct. 16: Catawba College, 2300 W. Innes St., Salisbury — 6 p.m. Celebrate the 25th anniversary of Catawba College’s Center for the Environment. Cocktails, dinner and dancing. Contact centerforenv@catawba.edu or call 704- 637-4727 for information.

21

N.C. Music Hall of Fame 2021 Induction Ceremony

Oct. 21: Gem Theatre, 111 W. First St., Kannapolis — 6-10 p.m. The 2020 and 2021 inductees will be honored in a live event, which is open to the public. Arrivals to the red carpet will begin at 6 p.m. The evening will include live performances as the inductees are installed into the Hall of Fame. Tickets are available for purchase at NorthCarolinaMusicHallofFame.org. Price: \$65. The 2020 inductees are The Briarhoppers, Jermaine Dupri, Michael Mauldin, Charles Whitfield, Donald Lawrence, and The Squirrel Nut Zippers. The 2020 Lifetime Achievement Award recipients are Tony Brown and Roberta Flack. The 2021 inductees are Tony Rice and Robert Moog.

22

Rowan Chamber of Commerce New Member Reception

Oct. 22: The Gateway Building, 204 E. Innes St., Salisbury — 4-5 p.m. New Rowan County Chamber of Commerce members are invited to attend the reception, held quarterly. The event includes introductions to other new members, an opportunity to pitch a 30-second “commercial” about their businesses and learn about various programs, committees and volunteer opportunities. For more details, contact info@rowan-chamber.com.

29

Halloween in China Grove

Oct. 29: Main Street, China Grove — 4-5 p.m. Join China Grove’s participating merchants for a fun and safe community Halloween for the entire family. Prepare for a hauntingly good time as the scary, the cute, the ugly and the creepy descend on the downtown.

30

Landis Fall Festival/ Trunk or Treat

Oct. 30: downtown Landis — 2-6 p.m. Contact jstamper@townoflandis.com for info on having a booth as an artist, craftsman or vendor or just come enjoy the day.



Jones with his longtime friend, Cindi Graham.



Friends surprised Jones during the last hour of his last day at the children's library, his hangout since 1997.

'Mr. Robert Day'

Friends, family and colleagues surprised children's librarian Robert Jones by gathering at Rowan Public Library on his last day of work before retirement — a date the city officially proclaimed "Mr. Robert Day." Over his 24 years with the library, children came to know Mr. Robert for his one-of-a-kind Christmas shows and otherwise bringing stories to life by breaking normal library etiquette and being loud, singing and donning his wide array of hats.

— Photos by Mark Wineka



Robert Jones shares a laugh with City Councilwoman Tamara Sheffield, who read a proclamation signifying July 30 as 'Mr. Robert Day' in Salisbury.



Jones relives a story with Millie, Sasha and Blane Roberts.



Above: Jones laughs with Lauren Alexander-Persse and Linda Alexander.

Right: Mr. Robert with a young fan, Eleanor Behrooz.



Wendy Alexander-Persse, one of the chief organizers of the surprise, gives Jones a handful of balloons.



The Jones brothers: Lloyd, Robert, Sid and Foard.

Jones spends a moment with nieces Darby Jones and Allison Haymes.





Sharon Baker of Integro Technologies and Rod Spieler of Walser Technology Group



A combination of folks from the N.C. Transportation Museum and Miller Davis Studio include, from left, Marcus Neubacher, Elaine Holden, Kelly Alexander, Megan Hedrick, Joyce Caron-Mercier, Mollie Ruf and Christy Hart.



East Spencer representatives Albert Smith, Michael Douglas and Tony Hillian.



Chamber President Elaine Spalding goes over details with Brad Walser, head of Walser Technology Group and chairman of the Total Resource Campaign.



Stephanie Petrea of Trinity at Home, Linda Agner of Trinity Oaks and Teresa Dakins of Trinity at Home.



Some of the team captains receive their marching orders from campaign chairman Brad Walser, who fittingly is dressed as an engineer.

Chamber's Campaign Kickoff

“Having Fun in ‘21” served as the theme for this year’s Total Resource Campaign of the Rowan County Chamber of Commerce. The campaign kicked off at Salisbury Station during a Business After Hours mixer. Its main goals were to raise money and attract new members while promoting the idea of visiting local, eating local and buying local. Many participants’ attire reflected the fun offered through the county’s tourist attractions, arts and cultural events and recreation.

— Photos by Mark Wineka

Livingstone College’s Pete Teague, Vincia Benjamin Miller, Rosalind Mitchell and Dr. Orlando Lewis



Novant Health’s McKenzie Whalen, Gary Blabon and Desiree Dunston.

THE SCENE



Those who came to hear Archie Tucker included, from right, wife Jody, son Landon, daughter Destiny and Seth Bridgeman.



Mia Mason, left, performs with 'The Dreamcatchers,' who include Ceci Smith, center, and Mia's mom, Dawn Mason.

Sunset Serenades

This summer, Rowan Museum offered "Sunset Serenades" on Sunday nights at the Utzman-Chambers House on South Jackson Street. The hourlong gatherings featured local musicians, including Jonathan C. Wallace, Mia Mason, and the duos of Archie Tucker and John Stafford and Jeff Martinez and Andrew Hodges.

— Photos provided by Randy Lassiter



Cindi Graham and Jenny Hubbard



Archie Tucker and John Stafford perform.



Right: Jonathan C. Wallace sings some Broadway tunes. **Left:** Dr. David and Charlotte Hall



Betty and Bud Mickle found the back of their car provided a good seat for one of the concerts.



Rip and Debbie Collins with Steve and Donna Thomas



Left: Karl and Lynn Hales found a sidewalk seat along South Jackson Street for one of the serenades.



Right: Tim and Jan Smith with their son.



Taylor and Jessie Davis



Bread Riot board members Hollie Hutchens, Steve Puckett, C.J. Peters, Trish Dunn, Andrew Pitner, Dottie Hoy, Kate Halstead and Teri Davies.



Carol Palmer stands with her daughter, Brooke Palmer, a maestro on the ukulele and one of the many musicians who performed at the Bread Riot event.

Riot at the Brewery

New Sarum Brewing on North Lee Street served as host for a day featuring bands, crafts, food, beverages and a silent auction — all benefiting Bread Riot. Bread Riot’s mission is to link farms to tables by supporting small farmers and providing community access to locally produced foods.

— Photos by Mark Wineka



Dave Thomas and Cindy Fink



Left: Officer Jay Basinger with New Sarum’s Daisy Lemke and Andy Maben



Right: Judy Wellmon, Gail Poulton, Cindy Morgan and Ellie Christenbery



Left: Diana and Randy Cummings



Right: Amanda and Kasey Canales



Debbie Adams and Tracy Padgett



‘SALISBURY AUTUMN — FIRST PRESBYTERIAN STEEPLE’

By Barrie Kirby — Acrylic

Artwork of local scenes for Salisbury's the Place may be submitted to mark.wineka@salisburythemagazine.com
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