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PUBLISHER-John Carr

john.carr@salisburythemagazine.com

EDITOR-Susan Shinn Turner

susan.turner@salisburythemagazine.com

CREATIVE DIRECTOR-Andy Mooney

andy.mooney@salisburythemagazine.com

EDITORIAL

Mike London

mike.london@salisburythemagazine.com

Elisabeth Strillacci

elisabeth.strillacci@salisburythemagazine.com

Madeline Waggoner

madeline.waggoner@salisburythemagazine.com

ADVERTISING

Garen Casey

garen.casey@salisburythemagazine.com

Dennis Davidson

dennis.davidson@salisburythemagazine.com

Malynda Peeler

malynda.peeler@salisburythemagazine.com

Randy Perdue

randy.perdue@salisburythemagazine.com

Jason Slusser

jason.slusser@salisburythemagazine.com

PRODUCTION

Susan Baker

susan.baker@salisburythemagazine.com

CONTRIBUTORS

Margaret Basinger, Maggie Blackwell,
Wayne Hinshaw, Janet Isenhour,
Sean Meyers, Shirley Price, Ben Stansell,
Ben White, Mark Wineka

On the web:

www.salisburythemagazine.com

On Facebook:

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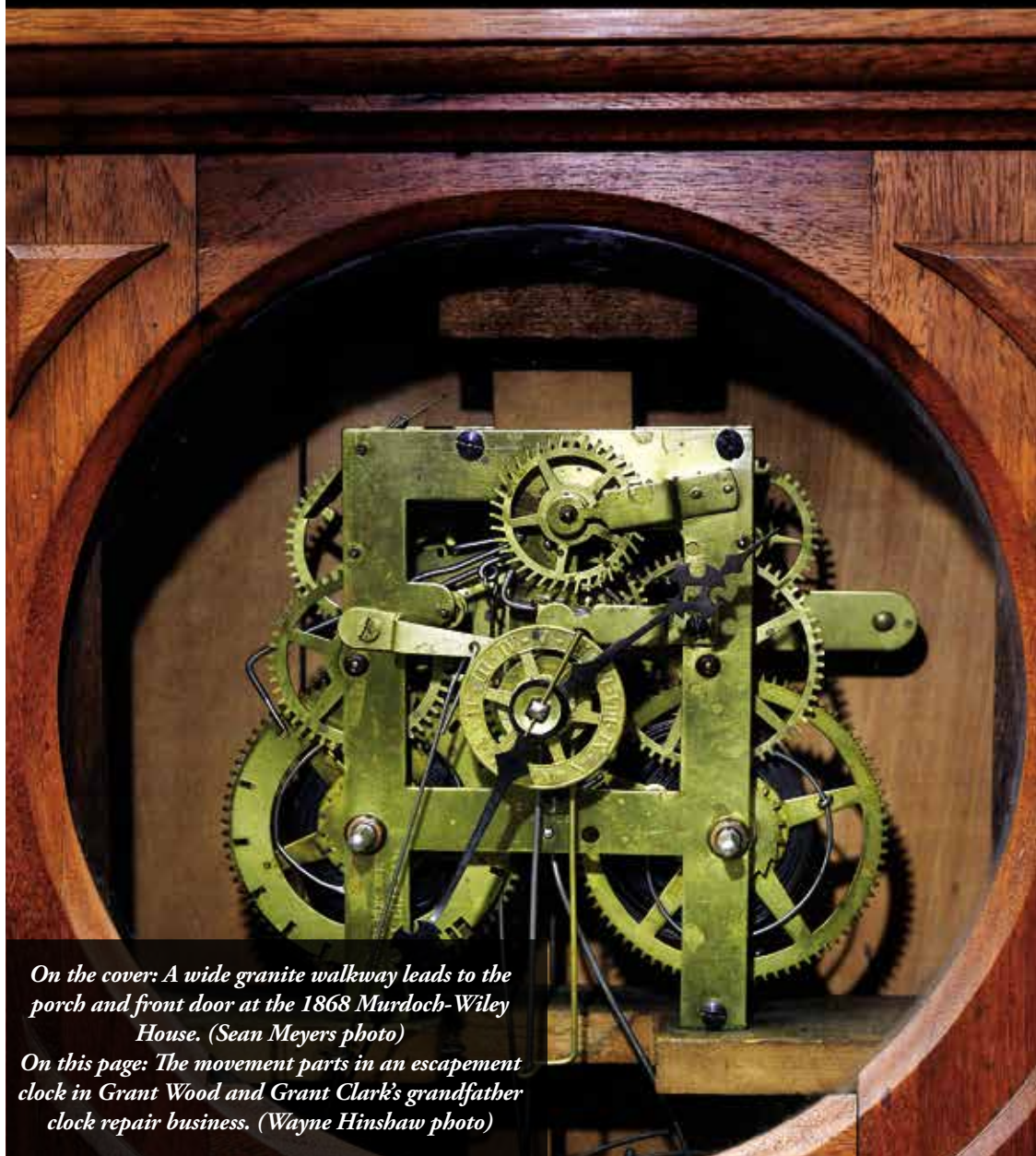
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RIGHT ON TIME

Grandfather, grandson team
up in clock repair business

50 ON A MISSION

Charles Newsome is dedicated
to helping Africa



On the cover: A wide granite walkway leads to the porch and front door at the 1868 Murdoch-Wiley House. (Sean Meyers photo)

On this page: The movement parts in an escapement clock in Grant Wood and Grant Clark's grandfather clock repair business. (Wayne Hinshaw photo)



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OctoberTour is upon us

When I was a little girl, I was obsessed with books. Still am today.

I checked out the book "Rosebud" so many times from the China Grove Library that when it closed, Mother actually bought the book for me.

Author Ed Emberley is best known for his books which teach children how to draw. One of those was an ABC book.

Why am I telling you this?

Because if Emberley were to make a Salisbury-style ABC book, "O" would definitely be for OctoberTour.

The homes! The mums! The Patrons Party! The Porch Party! Basically, a great weekend for a party.

The 47th annual event takes place Oct. 8-9 in Downtown Salisbury. There are eight properties in all: five homes, one hotel, one church, and one business building. What a cool variety! Maggie Blackwell writes about this year's featured home, the William Murdoch House, whose longtime owners have been Franchot and Carol Palmer.

If you get a chance, be sure and introduce yourself to Kimberly Stieg, executive director of Historic Salisbury Foundation — the tour's sponsor — since Jan. 31. She absolutely adores living in Downtown Salisbury with her husband, Scott, and their miniature schnauzer, Mr. Magoo.

Ben Stansell, a former Salisbury Post reporter, left us with a parting gift: a story about Jake Murdoch, who's done extensive metal detecting work at the Hall House. Incidentally, the house is observing its 200th anniversary (after a two-year pandemic delay).

Margaret Basinger is back this month with a review of "One Hundred Years of Lenni and Margot." It's the story of an unlikely friendship, and I can't wait to check it out from



Rowan Original. You'd be hard pressed to find someone more original than the good dentist. Incidentally, he's the only person I know who calls my son "Rew." He and Andrew were seat buddies and great friends in the St. John's Men's Chorus.

Additionally, Maggie has a feature this month on David Whisenant, longtime WBTV Salisbury bureau reporter. David is a devout Christian, and applies that lens to everything he does, whether it be work, family, or teaching Sunday school. Find out how David leans into his faith when reporting on the toughest stories.

Over the years, you may have seen a modest ad for "Grandfather Clock Repair" in the Post. Meet the duo behind the business — Grant Wood, and his grandfather, Grant Clark. It's a joy for them to work together.

Finally, Mark Wineka, former editor for Salisbury the Magazine, traveled recently to Africa.

You read that right. He went to accompany Charles Newsome, who's spent the last 30 years making a difference for the people of Zambia. With Mark's help, Newsome plans to publish a book this fall about his mission work in Mwandi.

So whether you're in Salisbury or a world away, I hope you'll enjoy this latest issue of Salisbury the Magazine. (And don't forget to pack a book, too!)

Happy Reading, and we'll see you next month.

P.S. — A fun fact I discovered while researching Ed Emberley is that he and my mother are the same age. If you want to know, you'll have to look it up. You know how women are about telling their age.

Nah, just kidding. They're both 91.

— Susan Shinn Turner
Editor, Salisbury the Magazine

the library. Yay! No wait list!

Ben White switches gears from his usual NASCAR writing (see what I did there?) to bring us a feature on Dr. Mitch Siegel, this month's



Kimberly and Scott Stieg with miniature schnauzer, Mr. Magoo. Kimberly is the executive director of Historic Salisbury Foundation.

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THROUGH THE LENS by Shirley Price



Shirley Price captured a stunning sunset at High Rock Lake. To submit a photo for Through the Lens, send a high-resolution photo to andy.mooney@salisburythemagazine.com. Photos must be vertical orientation.

‘One Hundred Years’ about living life to the fullest

What do 17-year-old Lenni and 83-year-old Margot have in common? They are both dying. This is not a spoiler. The reader knows from the first pages that these two strong and memorable women will die because the setting is the Glasgow Princess Royal Hospital May Ward for patients who have been given terminal diagnoses.

But “One Hundred Years with Lenni and Margot” by Marianne Cronin is not a book about dying. It is a book about living life to the fullest.

Lenni is a motherless young woman who has an untreatable lung problem. Aware of her diagnosis and having come to terms with it, Lenni asks her father to no longer visit because her impending death is too sad for him.

Although she now has no parental support, she quickly creates her own family on the ward.

There is Arthur the chaplain who is near retirement and always alone when visited. Lenni teases and jokes with him during her visits and brings him out of his shell of quiet solitude. He gets flustered on their first visit when Lenni asks him flat out, “Where is God?”

There is the art teacher who is looking for full-time work but ends up teaching two classes of art on the May Ward. Since most of the people on the ward are old with only a few children with chronic conditions, she creates two classes; one for octogenarians and one for the youngsters.

And then there is Margot, whose only chance of life is a serious heart surgery. She is still feisty and playful. She is, however, fearful of the surgery that would give her a chance of an active life again.

This book goes back and forth telling the stories of these characters.

We first meet Lenni as she is diverting the attention of the nurses, while Margot in her purple pajamas and fluffy bedroom shoes, is scrounging

around in the big garbage can—a big no-no for patients in the special ward for dying patients. Only at the end of the novel will we learn how important that search was.

Lenni is becoming bored with looking at the four walls of her room. Still in relatively good health, she begins to wander the ward’s halls. She discovers the chapel, and Arthur the priest. Father Arthur is not used to parishioners who are as direct as Lenni.

Then she meets the art teacher. Lenni finds the students in her age group boring and asks if she can join the octogenarians.

When the teacher arranges this, lo and behold there is the dumpster diver right beside her in class. Thus begins an instant, heartwarming friendship.

It doesn’t take them long for Lenni and Margot to realize that their combined ages bring 100 years to the art class. They decide that as their art project they will do drawings that represent every year of their lives. They will create 100 drawings. As they do their artwork, they will tell stories showcasing the century they have lived.

Margot does most of the drawing and storytelling because she is a talented artist and she is so much older. Lenni proves to be an adept listener. The Rose Room, as the art room has been named by Lenni and the teacher, evolves from a drab, colorless room to one alive with the drawings that depict the lives of two extraordinary women.

We come to love these two brave women as they weave their stories with their art.

Along the way, Lenni establishes an unconventional relationship with Arthur, who gains



“One Hundred Years of Lenni and Margot”

Marianne Cronin,
352 pages. Harper,
Pub date June 1, 2021

as much support and counseling from Lenni as he gives her. He evolves, as the plot progresses, from a quiet purposeless priest to a proactive man with a plan for his time after retirement.

Margot’s stories describe the rich life that she has lived with its many happy and sad experiences. She has had two husbands; the second one is Humphrey, a kind, intelligent man who loves the stars and Margot. She also is blessed with a lifelong girlfriend.

Although Lenni is very young, she too has known her share of life’s ups and downs.

Even though she knows she is dying, Lenni brings life to the ward with her whimsical, fun-loving personality.

This sounds like a sad book but it is filled with many poignant moments such as the night Margot sneaks into Lenni’s room and draws her outside into the frosty night. Lenni is in the last days of her life, coughing up blood, but she is thrilled to be able to look up at the beautiful, star-filled night. Margot quotes the Sarah Williams poem to Lenni that Humphrey once shared with her: “Though my soul may set in darkness, it will rise in perfect light. I have loved the stars too fondly to be fearful of the night.”

This book does bring tears of sadness but also those of joy. There are no unlikeable characters in “One Hundred Years with Lenni and Margot.” Lenni, Margot, Humphrey, and Arthur offer a beautiful roadmap for aging and dying. **S**

Retired educator Margaret Basinger is the author of “’Tis the Season with Belle and Chuck.” She lives in Rockwell and is at work on a book about Knox Junior High School.



| Q & A |

Following the Golden Rule

Dr. Mitch Siegel faithfully serves through the Community Care Clinic

STORY BY BEN WHITE | PHOTOGRAPHY BY SEAN MEYERS

For many decades, patients of Dr. Mitch Siegel have been blessed by his warm smile and calming demeanor each time they relax in his dental chair. His heartfelt spirit of giving to those in need comes with a hefty dose of positive reinforcement that's a welcome feeling for those needing his incredible talent when it comes to an array of dental procedures. Enjoy this Rowan Original feature about one of Salisbury's most interesting residents.

Why dentistry as a profession?

I was looking for a career. Having spent hours, weeks, months in the dental chair, I was not blessed with good teeth. We had a guided trip to the University of Southern California School of Dentistry. I'm a high school junior and I see a cabinet, in which are the most remarkable wax carvings that anybody could ever imagine. Planes, saxophones, elephants, eagles, swans — it was just unbelievable. I asked the tour guide, "What's this about?" He said, "As one of your graduate projects here at USC, you have to create a wax carving for this display box." I could see myself doing that. I thought, "Maybe medicine." I chose dentistry.

Where did you spend most of your career?

My career is divided into basically three phases. One, after graduation, I became a small-town dentist in western Iowa. Because you're in a small town, you're the village expert or the village idiot. I found myself on both ends sometimes. Then I went back to school for a short time to become a graduate. I studied dentistry and obtained a degree in hospital dentistry and geriatric dentistry. That won me a spot at the V.A. For 22 years, I was at the Salisbury V.A. Medical Center, treating men and women who you just can't help but love. My original degree came from Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska, and I got my graduate degrees from the University of Nebraska Medical Center in Omaha. I grew up in Monterey Park, California. The third degree comes later.

When did you begin working with the Community Care Clinic of Rowan?

I started in 2017 but in 2015, Executive Director Krista Woolly had approached me and said, "You need to be part of our clinic." I said, "Well, I don't have a North Carolina dental license." Working for the V.A., you only need a license from one state and it's not North Carolina. And she said, "Well, it's about time you got one." After the V.A., I started working on my North Carolina dental license. They exempted me from the clinical part of it, but I had to go and take the board written exams.



I was a dentist for 40-plus years but there was no way I could have passed the exam without studying.

What do you enjoy most about working at the Community Care Clinic of Rowan?

I get to follow the golden rule of medicine. Do unto others. I don't have to worry about money. I can take judgment totally out of it and render the care that we are allowed to give.

You've been singing with St. John's Lutheran Church choir since 2002.

How much enjoyment do you receive from singing each Sunday?

I never thought I would ever be the kind of singer people would want to listen to. In 1987, I was asked to be cantor for a small synagogue in Council Bluffs, Iowa. I had to study with a cantor to be able to render that kind of emotion and passion into what people think of as routine songs ... I could never sing, "How Great Though Art" the way the congregation sings "How Great Thou Art" by training as a cantor. A cantor would say: if you're going to sing it by yourself, it's got to have the real meaning of that song.

It has been the most rewarding gift someone

can receive. I'm Jewish and in Judaism, you're asked to do deeds of loving kindness. What is greater than making people happy? And I know St. John's Chancel Choir makes people happy all the time.

Tell us about your love for cars.

I love cars. I was maybe 4 or 5 years old sitting in a barber chair with my grandfather when we were in St. Paul, Minnesota. A Packard drove through, and I said to the barber, "That's a '52 Packard!" The guy said, "How do you know that?" I said, "I just love cars." This country produced the greatest cars in the history of the world. I'm still working on a 1956 Studebaker Golden Hawk and one day that baby is going to grace the streets of Salisbury.

What's your favorite food?

I am a Mexican food aficionado. I love my tacos and everyone else does, too. I love Mexican food. Growing up in California, if you don't, you starve.

What's in your fridge?

(Laughter) Leftovers, dried meats, Irish cream, and beer. And Tillamook (brand) ice cream in the freezer. **S**



Italian style

1868 Murdoch-Wiley home has classic features

WRITTEN BY MAGGIE BLACKWELL

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SEAN MEYERS



The 1868 Murdoch-Wiley House, owned by Carol Palmer and located in the West Square Historic District, will be on this year's October Tour.





A painted wall lines the stairwell into the current basement, which originally was the kitchen and dining room.

The Murdoch-Wiley home at 203 West Bank Street has been on OctoberTour twice before, but it's a perennial favorite — and rightly so. The 1868 Italianate style home was built on a massive scale, with features not found in any other homes in Salisbury.

The porch is a great example. Surrounding the wide-planked porch is a pierced balustrade with a repeated positive/negative fleur-de-lis motif — all perfectly proportioned and consistent, built with no power tools. The porch ceiling features 15 recessed panels. The granite lintel above the front door and sidelights is a massive seven feet long and matches the door sill below. The 80-inch windows also feature granite headers above, as well as functional shutters. Detailed, handmade corbels accent the door and eaves, and copper gutters and downspouts complete the package.

Inside, each floor clocks in at about 2,000 square feet, and each features a wide central hall with only two rooms on each side. Three floors, three halls, twelve rooms — plus the attic.

Initially, the lot extended all the way from West Bank to West Horah, and a frame house built by a Mr. Shaver faced South Church Street. The boxwood garden at the house today is rumored to date back to his property.

William Murdoch bought the property in 1853 and demolished the original house. However, he saved several pieces that are in the home today, including doors, a window and a spandrel in the basement.

He didn't build the house until 1868, after the war. It is solid; all interior

A French poster hangs on the wall in the current kitchen, which was originally the library.





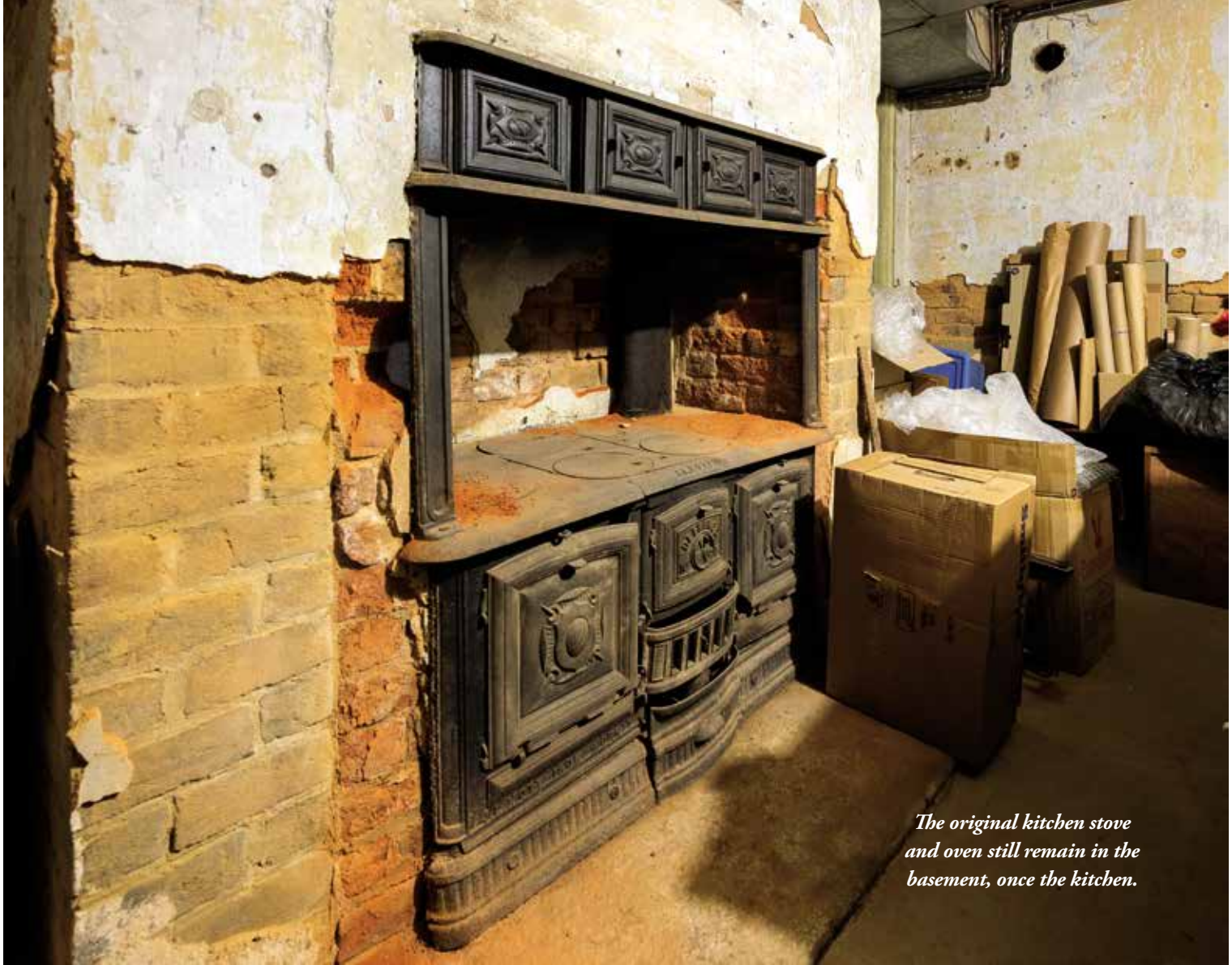
Carol Palmer looks toward Bell Tower Green as she sits in the quaint belvedere above the attic and roof.



Left: A collection of dinnerware rests on an Italian credenza, once owned by the playwright Eugene O'Neill.



Right: Heart pine planks, some as long as 20 feet, run throughout the house.



The original kitchen stove and oven still remain in the basement, once the kitchen.

walls are plaster over brick. There are many indications throughout the house, including this one, indicating Murdoch did not want his home to burn down, despite the twelve fireplaces.

The house is rumored to have been the first with indoor plumbing. Murdoch's daughter married Samuel Wiley, who installed a private water tower near the Horah side of the lot.

In 1969, the house was condemned. There was no Historic Salisbury Foundation yet, and citizens raised a cry for someone to purchase the house and stabilize it. The Johnson Family Foundation stepped in, re-roofing the house, replacing windows, repairing the chimney and installing HVAC.

Don and Carol Sayers bought the house in 1984 and spent a year restoring the interior, hiring a preservation architect from Winston-Salem. They added two restrooms from closets, built in cabinetry, built the kitchen and more.



An ornate front porch balustrade runs across the front of the home.

Franchot and Carol Palmer have owned the home for 32 years. They bought it from the Sayers in 1990, and raised their two daughters,

Deirdre and Brooke, there.

Franchot, of course, owned an antique store, so the Palmers had access to plenty of rare, unusual and precious pieces. Today, the home is filled with antiques, art and artifacts.

With a sly smile, Carol admits, "I still look

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Carol Palmer holds a photo of the Italian credenza once owned by Eugene O'Neill that the Palmers purchased in the '70s.

for things.”

The first floor's four rooms include a living room, dining room, kitchen and study. All the rooms feature gorgeous fireplaces, soaring ceilings, wide-plank floors and novel lighting fixtures. All the doors are detailed and most feature porcelain knobs. A tiny powder room is tucked away in the former dumbwaiter. A back porch overlooks the back yard walled garden.

The stairs empty into the second floor's broad hall. The four rooms are all bedrooms, again with expansive fireplaces and soaring ceilings. A modern bath and laundry room are recently redone.

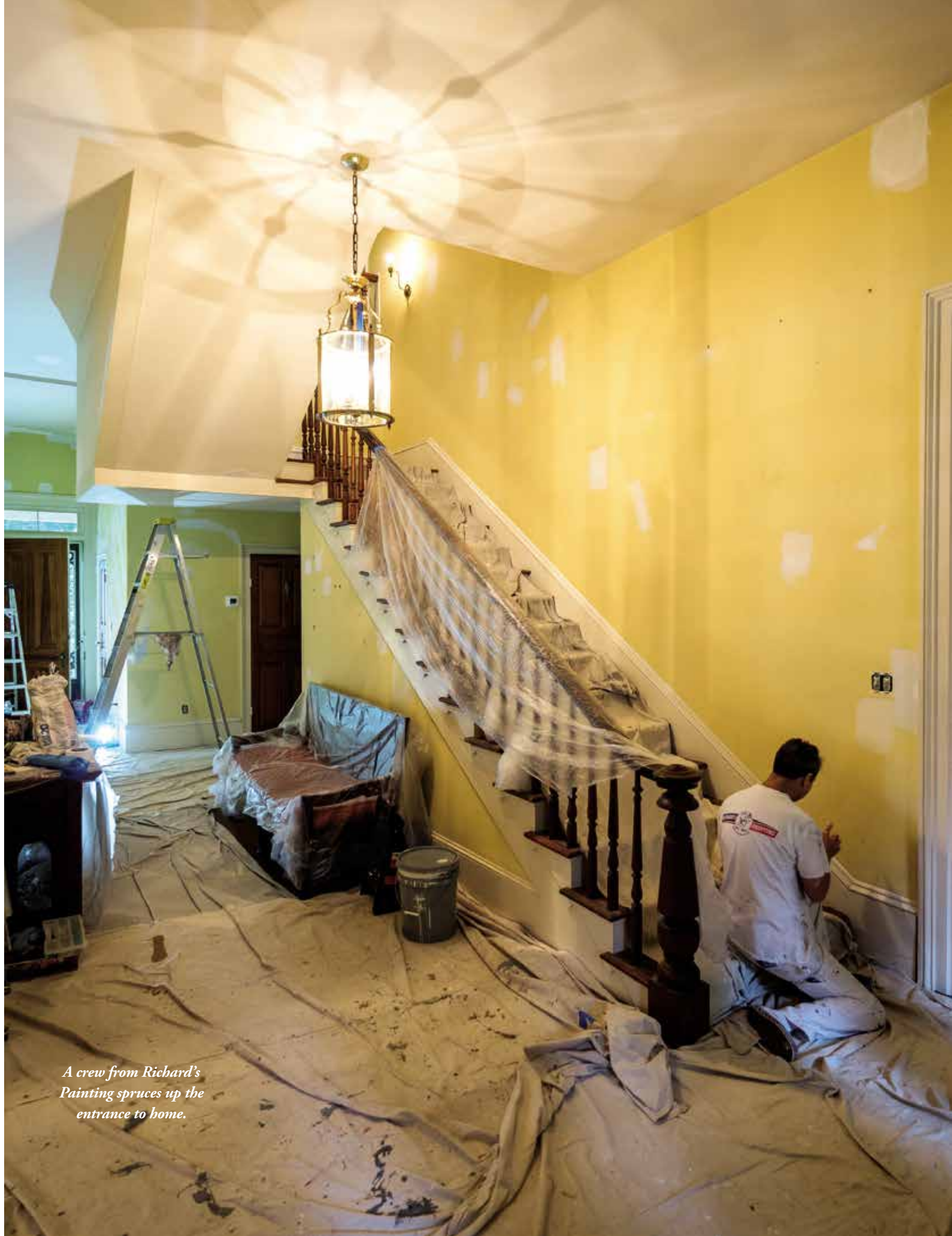
Above the second floor is the attic with access to the belvedere. Although many in Salisbury call it the “cupola house,” Carol maintains that a belvedere has windows, citing the Latin roots that mean, “lovely view.”

The basement houses the original kitchen, replete with a massive iron wood-fired cooking stove. It's built into a niche in a brick wall. Because there are doors to the front, it's referred to as an English basement.

OctoberTour attendees are sure to enjoy the 30-year collections of the Palmers as well as the structure itself. It is surely one of a kind. **S**



An attic window latch shows its age.



*A crew from Richard's
Painting spruces up the
entrance to home.*



Clockwise from top: One of 12 fireplaces in the home, this mantel was salvaged from the original home that stood in the same location; a small powder room, once the original dumb waiter, is adorned with artwork, all related to women in some way; a rusty keyhole and cover still function on one of the original doors salvaged by Murdoch from the first home.



*The Murdoch-Wiley Home
is an October Tour perennial
favorite.*

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At the Hall House grounds, metal detectorist Jake Murdock found a North Carolina Confederate button, above, and a silver Masonic lapel pin, below.



Buried treasure

Jake Murdock uses metal detector to locate keys to the past

WRITTEN BY BEN STANSELL | PHOTOGRAPHY BY SEAN MEYERS

A man wearing a purple shirt, khaki pants, and headphones is using a metal detector on a green lawn. He is walking from left to right, holding the detector's coil over the ground. In the background is a large, two-story house with white siding, green shutters, and a prominent porch with white railings. The house has two tall chimneys on the left side. The scene is set outdoors with trees and a clear sky.

Metal detectorist Jake Murdock scans the ground for historic artifacts at the 1820 Hall House.

Time traveling comes easy to Jake Murdock. He doesn't need a souped-up DeLorean like Marty McFly. And he doesn't have to step into a magical police phone booth like Doctor Who. Whenever Murdock wants to visit the past, he slips into his boots, slides headphones over his ears, and grabs his metal detector.

There is, actually, one other thing he needs: permission. Access to a historic site where he can wave his detector over the ground until the right sounding beeps alert him to the presence of buried treasure — or bottle caps; there tend to be plenty of those.

For several months earlier this year, Murdock's hunting ground was the lawn of the Josephus W. Hall House on South Jackson Street, where he has unearthed dozens of relics hidden just below the surface in the historic soil.

"It's been a dream permission," Murdock said.

Murdock is more than happy to talk about his Hall House hunting now, but he might not be so open if he wasn't confident he's found just about all there is to find.

"I have drained that lawn dry," Murdock said.

Metal detectorists — at least the ones who take it seriously — are notoriously secretive about their "hotspots."

"You don't go online on Facebook and tell everybody



where your honey hole is,” Murdock said.

That’s one lesson Murdock, a relative novice in the metal detecting world, learned quickly.

Murdock has only been detecting for about two years, since his father, Mark, brought a detector to the family’s annual summer beach vacation. The device was meant as a gift for Murdock’s 5-year-old son, but Murdock was the one who instantly gravitated to its revealing powers.

Murdock found a 1903 silver Barber Dime.

“That was all I wanted to do the whole week we were there,” Murdock said.

Murdock, a history buff, fell in love with his newfound ability to make the things he’s read about and researched tangible items he can hold.

“If you’re into history and you can start metal detecting and finding old things, it takes it to a whole ’nother level with how much you appreciate it,” Murdock said. “It’s like time traveling. If you’re on a Civil War battlefield or something like that, whenever you find a button or a dropped bullet or anything like that, you’re the first person to touch that since 1864 or whenever it was when it was dropped. It’s a neat little thought to think about.”

After the beach trip, Murdock invested in his own metal detector. Like most rookies, he started by inspecting the dirt in his own property, traipsing around the confines of his Concord home’s backyard. He quickly upgraded his metal detecting device — several times — and moved on to more momentous soils. As he puts it, he went “full bore.”

“It’s an addictive hobby for sure,” Murdock said.

Murdock’s first major discovery was fired bullets and an artillery shot he found on the same hill near Petersburg, Virginia, where his fourth great-grandfather was killed during the Civil War. He keeps those items in a special display case, apart from the others.

While Murdock says there is good money to be made in metal detecting, he isn’t one to list his findings for sale on eBay. He enjoys the process of discovering an item and delving into its history through research.

“Whenever I find something I’m not sure of, I go into a deep dive on Google and I’ll verse myself as much as I can on what it is,” Murdock said. “That way, if I find one later I know exactly what it is. I always knew there were Civil War bullets, but I didn’t know there were so many types.”

Historic sites in and around Petersburg have yielded all sorts of relics, but Murdock does plenty of local hunting, too. Having grown up in the area and being well-versed its past, Murdock is aware of many potential searching spots. He had a hunch that the yard of the Hall House — built in 1820 and purchased by namesake Dr. Josephus Hall in 1859 — would be brimming with antique artifacts.

Unlike some of his counterparts, Mudock always asks for permission before searching a piece of land. He reached out to Historic Salisbury Foundation, which now owns and operates the home as a museum, by sending a direct message on Instagram. It was a Hail Mary.

“I shot my shot,” Murdock said.

But it turned out the foundation was receptive to his idea.

“People had (searched) before without permission, so we were impressed by the fact that he asked, as well as his honest demeanor and positive reputation,” said Steve Cobb, president of the Historic Salisbury Foundation Board of Trustees. “So we said ‘yes,’ with the caveat that he document what he found and give it to HSF, and that we couldn’t guarantee that there would be much there after all these years and previous unauthorized searches.”





Clockwise from top: Murdock created a display case for artifacts unearthed from the grounds of the 1820 Hall House. The case will remain at the Hall House; tools of the trade; Murdock holds an unfired cannon friction primer pin from the Civil War.

Opposite: Murdock holds an early 20th Century bullet he had just uncovered on the 1820 Hall House grounds.



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Murdock found a Ground Observer Corps pin.

Once he got his boots on the ground, it didn't take long for Murdock to discover there was still plenty to uncover.

"Whenever I found a 1903 silver Barber Dime within the first five minutes, I knew I was on a good site," Murdock said.

Murdock returned to the Hall House on free afternoons and weekends. He covered a bit more of the yard each time following an exhaustive grid-like pattern. He doesn't need a pattern anymore. Relying on a map in his head, Murdock can point out exactly where in the yard he found a spent bullet or a Civil War button.

Metal detecting is therapeutic for Murdock, a way to escape while focusing on the constant beeps coming from his machine. To be a good metal detectorist, you have to be a good translator; someone who can decipher noises that sound like R2-D2 going haywire.

"It can sound like gibberish if you don't know what it's telling you," Murdock said.

There was plenty of the right kind of beeping on the Hall House yard. And with a small dagger, Murdock unearthed treasures buried just a few inches under soil. He sealed them in a framed glass display case with the newer items at the top. "New" in this case is a relative term. The latest findings refer to items from the 1950s like a World War II-era insignia.

A little further down is a military button from World War I, some early 1900s jewelry and little lead toy soldiers, along with a bunch of Indian Head cents. The coin, featuring a man in a headdress, was in circulation from 1859 to 1909.

Near the bottom is the "older stuff." That's what excites Murdock most.

In the middle of the display is a North Carolina Confederate Sunburst button. Named for the rays of sun expanding from the no-longer-visible "NC" in the middle, the buttons adorned coats worn by soldiers.

Murdock found many cannon friction primers, some of which were likely used during reenactments held on the Hall House lawn. Others were

probably fired with deadly intentions during the Civil War, perhaps when Stoneman and his federal cavalry seized Salisbury in 1865 near the end of the war.

"The ones in the case are Civil War era. They're way older," Murdock said. "You can tell a difference in the patina."

Murdock presented his Hall House findings during the Historic Salisbury Foundation's Annual Meeting in April.

"There were lots of war-related items — musket balls, cannon primers, buttons, and so forth — as you would expect," Cobb said. "But there were also items that probably belonged to the members of the Hall family or their guests and friends."

That included a silver thimble engraved with the initial "W," which could have stood for "Wells" — Dr. Hall's middle name. If so, it may have belonged to Dr. Hall's mother, or one of the other women, Cobb said.

The display case featuring the Hall House lawn findings is now on display inside the home, available for viewing by anyone who tours the house.

With one Rowan County lawn drained of its secrets, Murdock has trained his time traveling device on other historic sites in the area. You can ask him where they are, but he might not give them away. **S**

Ben Stansell is a former Salisbury Post reporter.

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*WBTV news reporter
and Salisbury resident
David Whisenant.*



on the AIR

WBTV's David Whisenant
is a Salisbury institution

WRITTEN BY MAGGIE BLACKWELL
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SEAN MEYERS



Whisenant shoots footage at East Rowan High School for the first day of classes.

David Whisenant started work in broadcasting at 15 and never looked back. WSTP had made a call on the air for announcers, and his mom drove him to the cattle call. Each applicant was handed a packet of papers with ads, news, and sports. On a signal, each read aloud. He got the job.

Initially, he had to learn to like country music. But, oh, he enjoyed the days he could announce on the AM station! The music was Top 40, now referred to as Classic Rock.

“The first time I played a Beatles song, I had arrived,” he

says with a smile. “The song was, ‘Get Back.’”

David, 61, grew up a few blocks from his present home in Salisbury and attended Overton Elementary School, Knox Junior High, and Salisbury High before heading to Appalachian State.

David majored in political science and English. Broadcasting students had to study things like stage lighting, which he didn’t think he needed. He feels his studies have served him well. After college he returned to the radio station to work.

In 1992, some well-dressed men came to visit the station owner. Turned out, they were from WBTV, looking to rent space at the radio station and create a Salisbury satellite office.

The owner suggested they look at the Plaza building down-



Whisenant's Emmy Award sits on a desk.

town; it had just been completed and was a fine location. They followed his advice.

David took the initiative to write them a letter, saying he would love to be their eyes and ears. They suggested he could be a stringer, and he added this to his radio work. When he drove to Charlotte and told the news director he'd like to be a reporter, he smirked at David, saying, "We don't hire people like you." WBTV at that time was the 27th-largest station in the country and didn't hire inexperienced reporters.

"I was determined to prove him wrong. I decided to show him how capable I was. I believed God had given me the skills I saw there," he says.

He got busy — really busy. In addition to working at the

radio station, he hustled for local news. If there was a fire, David would shoot it, edit it, write and cut a package and send it to the engineer, asking him to send it to somebody.

He laughs as he tells the story.

"Finally, they called," he says. "'OK,' they said, 'Enough. Let's do it.'" That was in 1994. Since then, he's covered thousands of stories: some topical, some happy, some horribly sad.

The toughest stories he's covered, he says, are the 2008 deaths of local firefighters Justin Monroe and Victor Isley, and the death of Erica Parsons.

"The firefighters story happened in an afternoon and played out over a few years," he says. "Erica Parsons has been a 10-year journey. I wish it could go away. As it went on, it



Whisenant works on editing a story for the daily news in the downtown newsroom.

got worse and worse. Every revelation — everything that came out was horrible. I have a binder full of all my notes, and it's the only story I've done that for. No other story in 30 years has affected me like that.

“The thing that got me was, the next-door neighbor said they'd been there three or four years and they didn't know she existed. At that moment I knew it was bad. She'd been dead a year and a half.”

At this point wife Jtan speaks up. “He's a sensitive person — very tender hearted.”

David agrees. “I'm much too thin-skinned for the job I have.”

Shortly after he covered Donald Trump's visit to Concord in 2016, the news manager called him. They'd had two calls about the story: one saying David was obviously a big Trump supporter and another say-

The now unused broadcast area of Whisenant's office in the Plaza.





ing he was clearly against Trump. David's pretty happy with these results as he works hard to provide balanced, fair news coverage.

He says his faith carries him when work gets too tough. He's an active member of First Baptist Church in Salisbury and has taught Sunday school there for 33 years.

He runs three or four times a week. His route is 5.2 miles and it takes just under an hour.

"It's the only time I feel untouchable," he says. "The station can't get me — I'm totally alone. If I see someone, I just throw up a hand and keep running."

His headphones stream psychedelic rock, Beatles, music from the '60s, '70s and '80s.

He recalls his happiest memory. Ten-year-old David nervously responded to an intercom call to the school office, where he was surprised to see his dad. He'd taken the afternoon off and was springing David from school. They went to the time trials at Charlotte Motor Speedway.

"It was a total surprise," he says. "Here was Richard Petty, my hero, and I'm yelling and screaming, instead of being in school. It was the greatest thing anyone could do for their son."

Many of David's friends and followers are aware of his dad's suicide and David's fervor on the topic.

The day was Feb. 17, 1987, with freezing rain and sleet. His mom called him at the radio station saying she needed him to come home; something had happened to

Media badges adorn the wall of Whisenant's office.





Whisenant shoots the Rowan ABC's event at The Smoke Pit.

his dad. At her home, David called his dad's furniture store and an employee answered, saying, "David, your dad's dead. I don't know anything else to say."

David often went downtown to visit advertisers, and usually he'd stop by the store and have a Cheerwine with his dad. That day he had not made the trip because of the weather, and he regrets it even now. His dad kept a .22 handgun in the drawer in case of robbery; that day was the only time he used it.

"I've always thought, if only I had gone in there, it would have cheered him up," he says.

Since then, he's passionately spoken out against suicide. He has messages on his personal and professional pages. His message: DON'T DO IT. Think of your family and the pain they will suffer. He is sure if his dad had thought of the pain his own family would endure, he would not have done it.

"I have that unique vantage point and a unique platform to spread the word," he says.

He gets a great deal of feedback on it. Some feedback is harsh;

Whisenant shoots video of Deputy Tommie Cato directing traffic during the first day of school at East Rowan High School.





Whisenant speaks with Salisbury Police Sergeant Russ DeSantis during a daily press briefing.

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some is positive.

Some feel he is dishonoring his dad's memory, but others — many, many others — appreciate his message. Dozens have said he saved their lives. Thousands have reached out following the suicide of a loved one: When will I feel better? What do I do now?

Talking about it frequently doesn't make it any easier for him. He has to "gear up" for it, and it is always painful. Yet, he says he feels God would be disappointed if he didn't talk about it.

So he runs. He relies on his faith. He leans in to his family. And he meets with his prayer warriors, who have been together for 34 years: Brian Farmer, Rory Collins, Charlie Fry. They meet weekly at Checkered Flag for breakfast. They eat, talk, pray.

Former Salisbury police chief Rory Collins



Memorabilia adorns Whisenant's video gear bag.

calls David his best friend. They first met when David made his daily visits to the police department to get the beat report. They hit it off, Collins says, because of their strong faith and

their "comedic personalities."

"David is the same man Monday through Saturday that people see on Sundays," Collins says. "He's a man of great integrity, and he believes wholeheartedly in doing what is right, even when he knows it isn't going to be the popular thing to do."

David has also asked others to pray for him. "It's weird," he says. "You never hear people say, pray for the media." He asks people to pray for him to do it right, to be sensitive.

He acknowledges he's consulted a Christian counselor to talk things through, and says he found it helpful. He says the station is sensitive, too, and intersperses lighter assignments among the heavier ones.

David says he's proudest of his family: wife Jtan, son Kyle, daughter-in-law Anna and his two granddaughters, Ava and Maisie. At this

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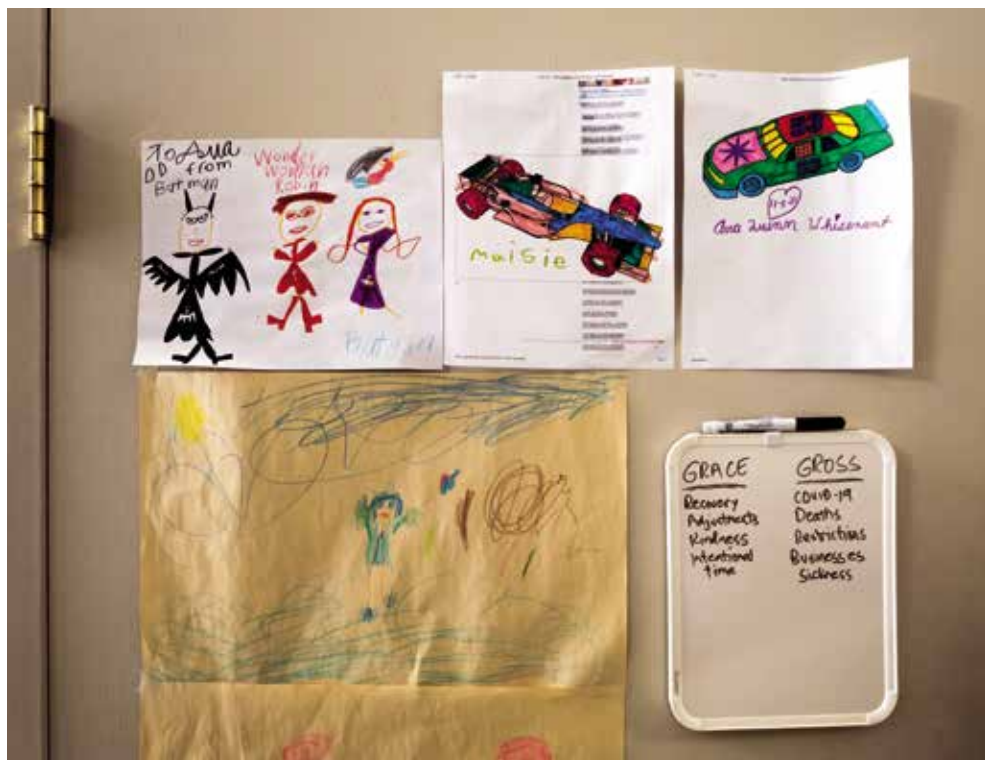
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point, Jtan reminds him he was awarded an Emmy — a, huge, actual gold Emmy award. The statue is at his work, but a tiny duplicate sits on the mantle of their home. He's quick to say he didn't nominate himself. He didn't even attend the news Emmy ceremony in Nashville. His station manager called late that night to tell him he had won.

Whisenant keeps his grandchildren's artwork on an office door.

The station sends rookies to Salisbury to learn from David. He's super-efficient with time, a rare quality in his field, and they want new people to learn how he manages.

As to the future, David says he'll retire sometime in the next 30 years or so, but he's not thinking about that now. He plans to continue just as he has, consistently serving news for his community, teaching Sunday school, running, and sharing his unique message on his unique platform. 



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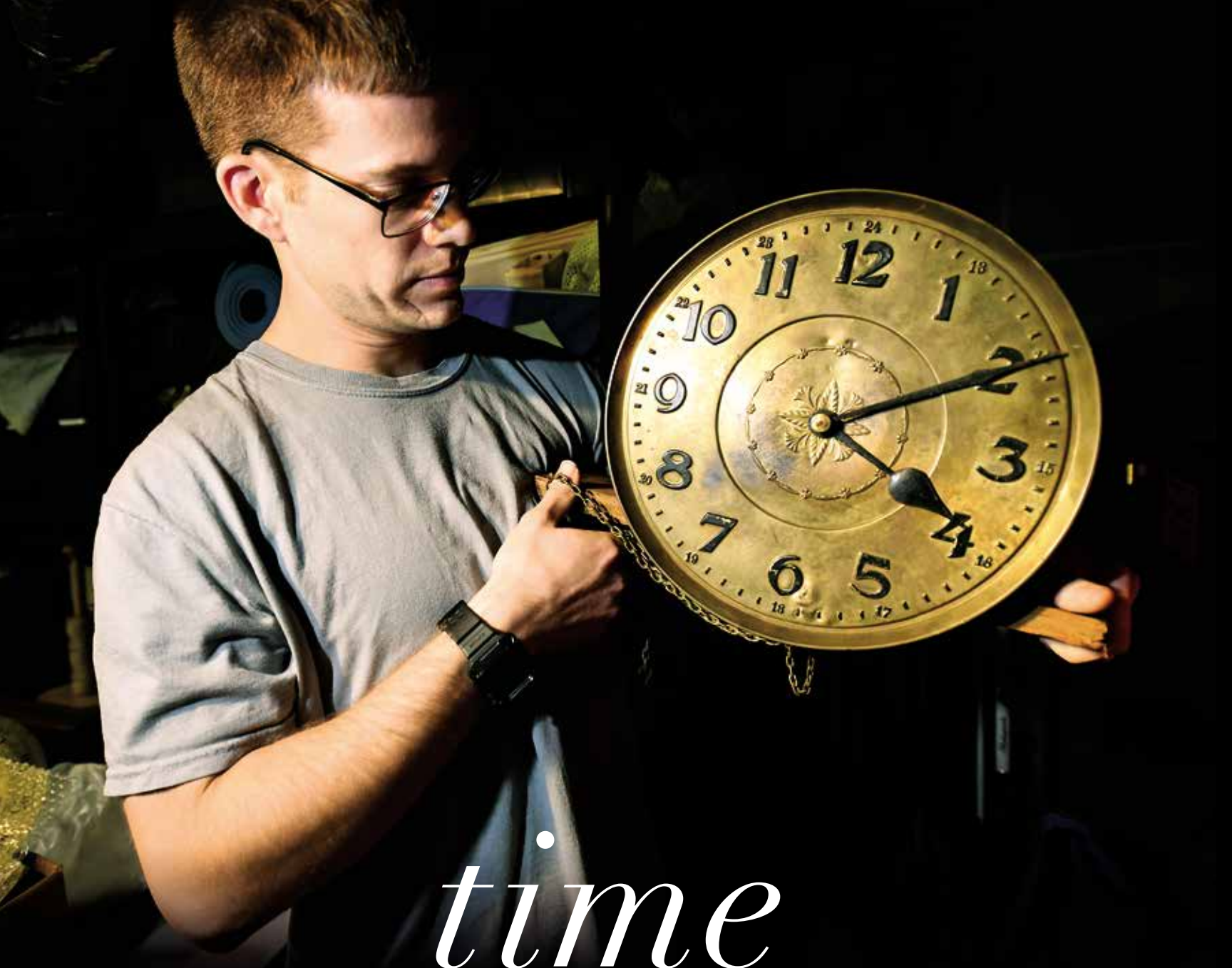
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time
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Grandfather and grandson own
clock repair business

WRITTEN BY SUSAN SHINN TURNER | PHOTOGRAPHY BY WAYNE HINSHAW



Above: An assortment of clocks. The clock in the center is called a kitchen clock or a rooster head clock because of the fancy wood around the top of the clock. They were made in New Haven, Connecticut, between 1860 and the 1930s. They sold new for about \$3.

Grant Wood sets a clock, below right, and oils the works movement from a 'Bim Bam Clock,' below left.

Opposite: Grant Wood holds a clock face from a 'coffin clock.' It was called that because the body of the big clock was shaped like a coffin and looked like a coffin.





*Grant Wood, left,
and his grandfather,
Grant Clark.*



As you'd expect, a clock repair shop is a somewhat noisy environment. There's the ever-present tick-tock, tick-tock of all sorts of clocks. Then there's the cacophony of noise when all the clocks strike the hour — not quite at the same time but almost.

But Grant Wood hears none of this. He's that intent on his work. He does acknowledge however, "Twelve o'clock in this place is something."

You may have seen a modest ad that's run in the Post over the years, a business with a simple title "Grandfather Clock Repair."

That business was originally owned by Grant Clark, now 79, but his grandson, 26, has recently joined him in business.

It's a joy for both.

"We have joined forces for the betterment of humankind," says Wood with a grin.

The duo serves clients within a 60-mile radius of Rowan County: Concord, Albemarle, Lake Norman, Winston-Salem, and Greensboro.

Grandfather clocks are serviced in-house, while Wood brings smaller clocks to his basement workshop.

"Grandfather clocks don't travel well," Wood notes.

When the duo visits, they say, you're not just getting service, you're getting an education.

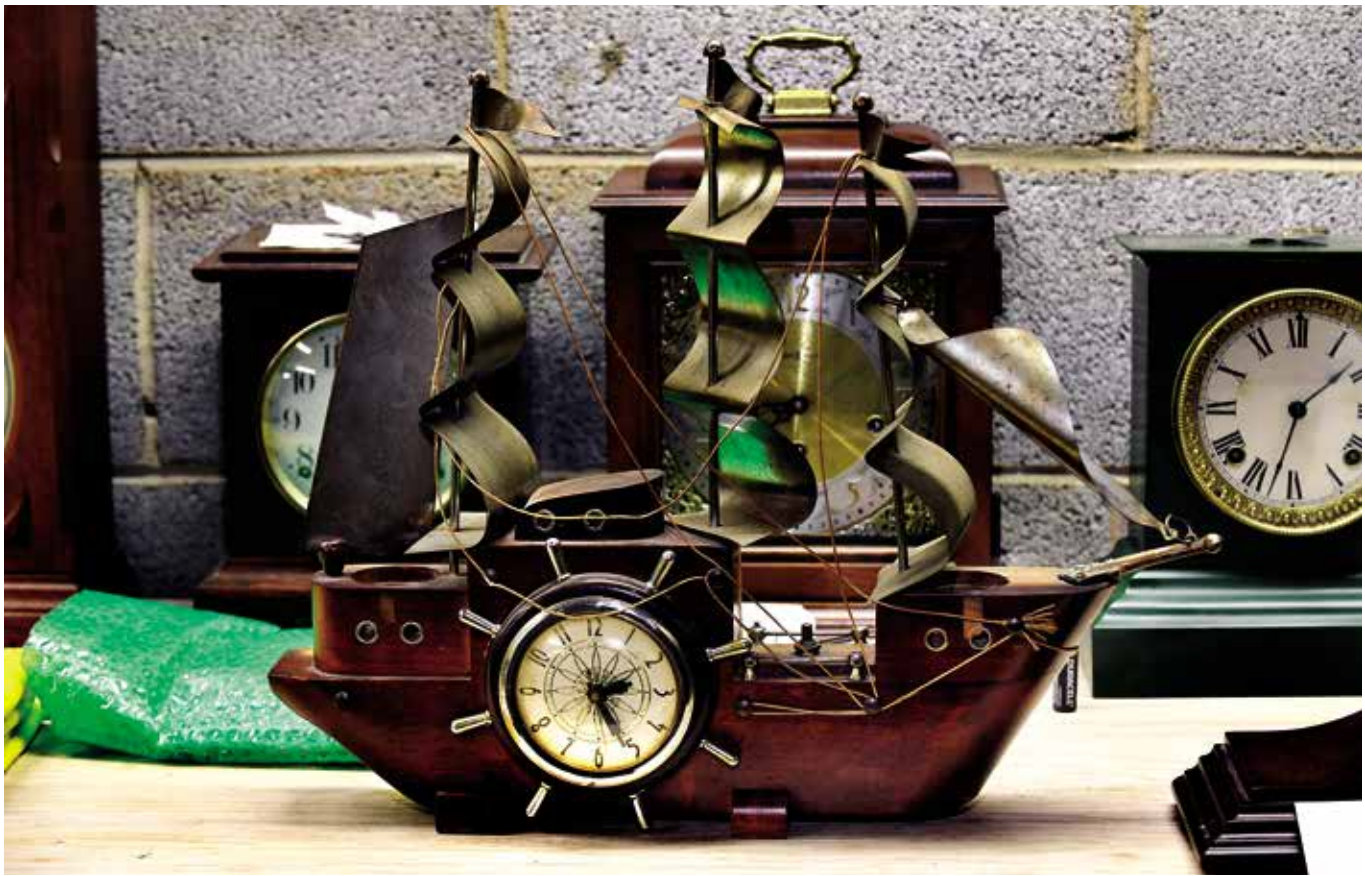
"If you own a clock, you know somebody else who does," Wood notes. "Word-of-mouth referrals work great for us."

"To the best of our knowledge," his grandfather adds, "the places we go don't have another clock repairman in the area."

Wood says that men are predominately members of this trade.

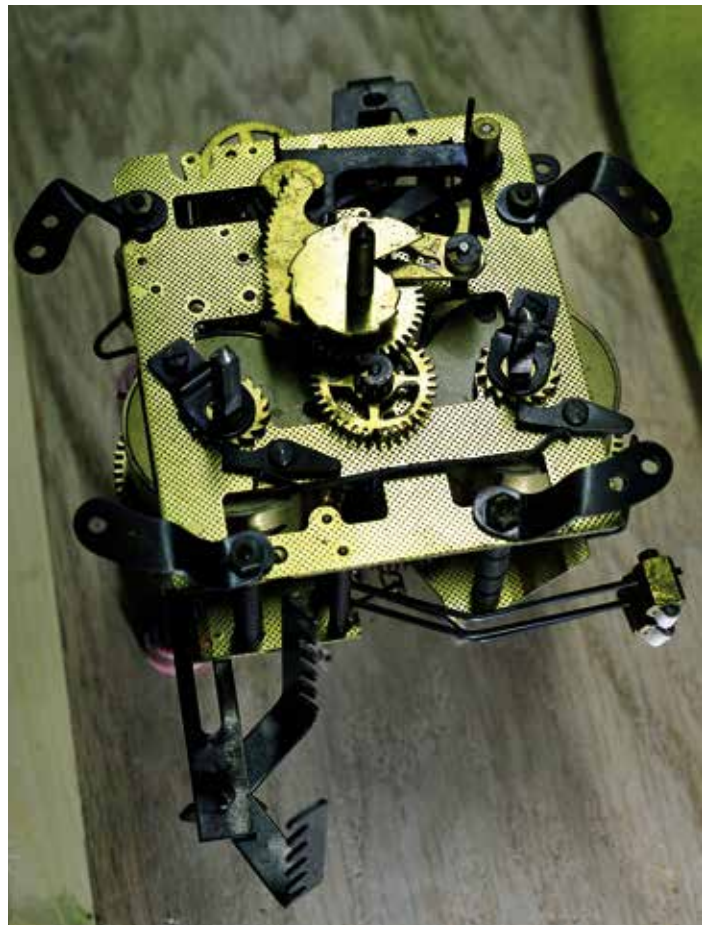
When Clark was about 6 years old, he found a box full of old watches, and got one going.

That got him hooked.



Above: This is called a ship's clock. This one happens to be electric.

Below: Grant Wood oils the 'works movement' from a 'Bim Bam Clock.'

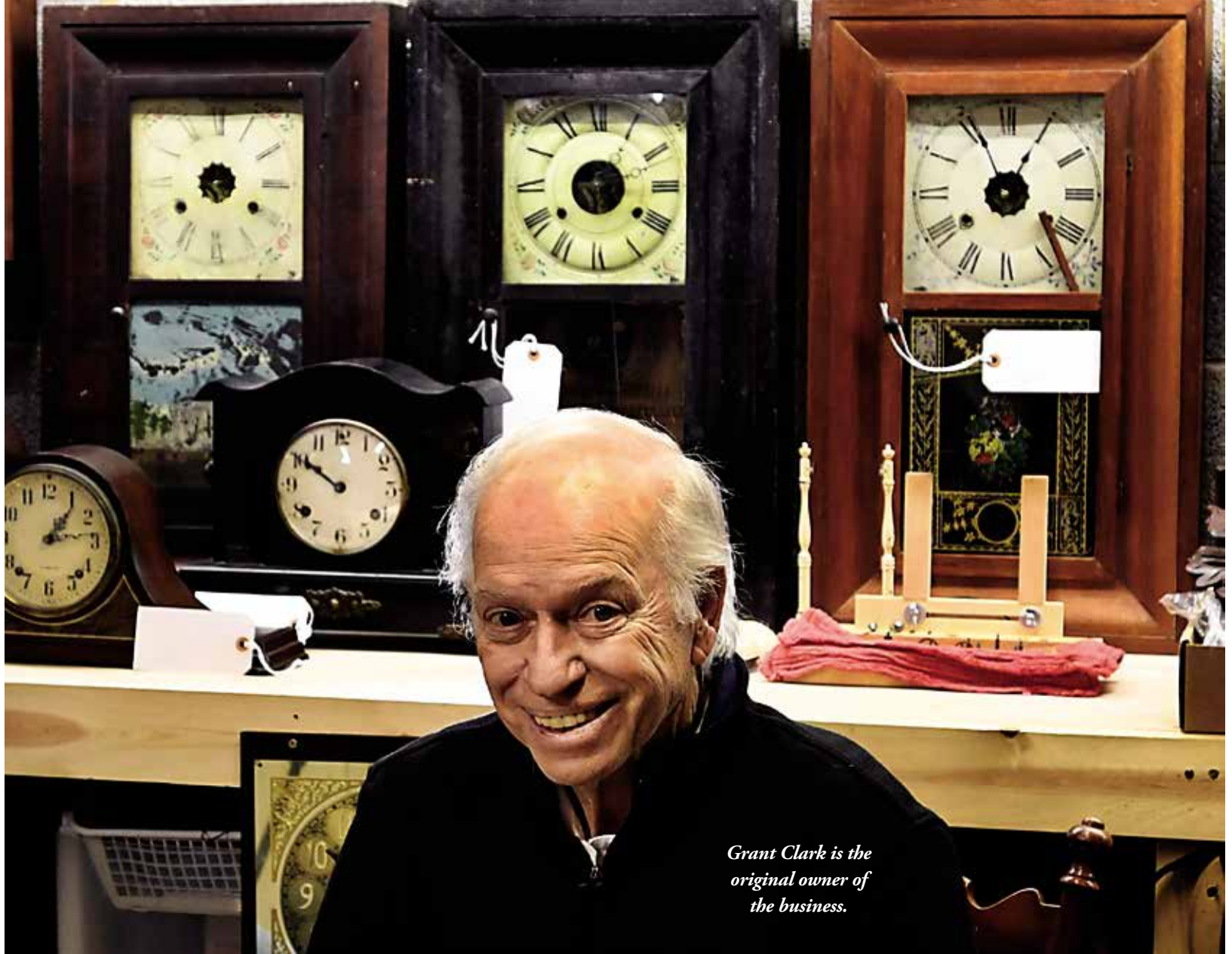




Above: Grant Wood has a number of grandfather clocks that he has purchased and repaired for sale in his basement shop.

Right: This dismantled clock is a 'baseball clock' or some called it a 'globe clock' because ball-shaped face on the left.





Grant Clark is the original owner of the business.



The clock face from a 'coffin clock.'

He retired in 1989 from Piedmont Airlines as director of customer service resources.

When Wood was in high school, he decided he wanted to help out his grandfather.

"That's one of the joys of my life, being able to work with them," Clark says.

When Wood was a senior, he completed his graduation project on the history of timekeeping. He learned to service clocks as part of his work hours for the project.

And, he got paid.

"I began to think, hey, I want to do this," he says.

Even though he has a degree from UNC-Pembroke in botany, he decided to go into business with his grandfather.

"When I figured out the basics and troubleshooting, that made me interested," he says.

His grandmother, Beth, is a retired history teacher.

"It helps to have an interest in history, because most clocks are old," he notes.



Grant Wood has boxes of new parts that were made in the 1950s on his shelves.

It also helps to be detail-oriented, he says, because these clocks — many of which are more than 100 years old, have fragile inner workings.

“You could create more work for yourself,” Wood points out.

Each week, Wood and his grandfather average about 350 miles on the road together.

“He’s a quick study,” Clark says of his grandson. “He knows exactly what to do.”

“Every clock has a story, and I think that’s very, very cool,” Wood says.

Wood works on grandfather clocks, mantel clocks, cuckoo clocks, wall clocks — the list goes on and on.

“We don’t back away from anything,” Clark says.

“I get to work on all the clocks I’d love to own,” Wood says. “I’m doing good, and I’m

helping people along the way. There’s always more to learn.”

Wood says that most clocks just need service — oiling and cleaning — and then he makes sure they run OK. A clock must be level to run

“
*Twelve o’clock
in this place is
something.*”

— GRANT WOOD

correctly, and its pendulum must run in an even tempo.

Still, Wood keeps an extensive parts inventory. “If you can think it, I have it,” he says.

Wood is the youngest of five, with four older sisters, including a twin sister who’s two minutes older. They’re spread out in Walkertown, Montana, Washington, D.C., and Charleston.

When he has time, Wood enjoys hiking, camping, golfing, and fishing. He also spends time with his fiancée, Marissa Baker. Her grandfather, Ralph Baker Sr., had a clock to be worked on, and that’s how he and Marissa Baker met. The two attend LifeWay Church in Salisbury, and are planning a May 2023 wedding.

In the meantime, Wood says, “I make a living on people loving their clocks.”

Contact Grant Wood at 336-251-3655. **S**



Charles Newsome sits among the choir members who gave a special concert for him at the Simba House in Mwandi.

a calling in **AFRICA**

Charles Newsome returns to Zambia

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARK WINEKA



Clockwise from top: The people touring the Mbereshi hospital walk toward the laundry building and past the clothesline holding the items that have to be washed by hand because the laundry's washers and dryers don't work; a street vendor in Lusaka; mule-drawn carts are a common sight on the road to Mwandi.



Charles Newsome, middle, stands with UCZ health secretary Regina 'Gina' Siatwinda-Oliver and UCZ general secretary the Rev. Chipasha Musaba.

MWANDI, ZAMBIA — Late on a June afternoon, a church choir of about 30 young adults filed into Simba House for a concert. Taking positions in front of the lodge's fireplace, they prepared to sing to one man, an American most of them had never met before.

But they had heard of Charles Newsome. Over the past 30 years, he had become closely identified with the church, hospital, and all the visiting doctors and mission groups who had visited their village.

The choir members sang Christian songs in both their native Lozi and English. Newsome, sitting on a couch close by, appreciated every note. To him, it was as though the music rose to the heavens and bounced down to shower him in rich-

es, like the waters of Victoria Falls.

"I want to say a special 'thank you' for tonight," he told director Sifali Mwinda and his choir. "I'm 85 years old, and I want you to remember that Jesus loves each one of you, and he charges you and you and me to love each other.

"... At the end of the day, I go home, but you stay here, and what you do will really make a difference. Today was a blessing, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart."

Newsome figures he has made more than 30 trips to Zambia — and Mwindi, in particular — since 1989. On this most recent excursion, he quickly corrected the assumption made by many — that because of his age, he probably was making his last Zambian visit.

"I'm not done yet," he said more than once.

Indeed, Newsome's latest journey to Africa was as much fact-finding as it was a victory tour. He had specific goals in



Clockwise from top: Newsome played a key role in planning and raising \$200,000 toward the new Mwandu church, which was dedicated in 2016; farmers try to sell their fruits and vegetables at the market in Mwandu; a plaque inside the new Mwandu church pays tribute to Newsome and other Presbyterians in the United States whose contributions made it possible.





Newsome leads the way with a group of UCZ and Mbereshi Hospital officials touring the grounds.

mind, as he met new and old acquaintances in places such as Lusaka (the capital), Livingstone, Mwandi and Mbereshi.

When Newsome returned home from his first visit to Zambia 32 years ago, he fully believed his Sunday school class at Thyatira Presbyterian Church could build an electrical substation to provide power to the Mwandi Mission Hospital.

It took three years, \$350,000 in fund-raising and tough negotiations with ZESCO, the country's power company, but the substation came online, and utility lines were run two miles to the mission hospital, bringing it into a new age.

That project, with Newsome as its chief ramrod, opened the door for continuing trips to Mwandi from Presbyterians here and throughout the country. Independence Presbyterian Church in Birmingham, Ala., became heavily committed, for example.

In addition, a strong missionary presence in Mwandi developed with the Church of Scotland and the Uniting Church of Australia.

Major projects — always with Newsome playing a key role — included construction of

Lawrence Kamba stands next to batteries storing the power from the hospital's solar panels.

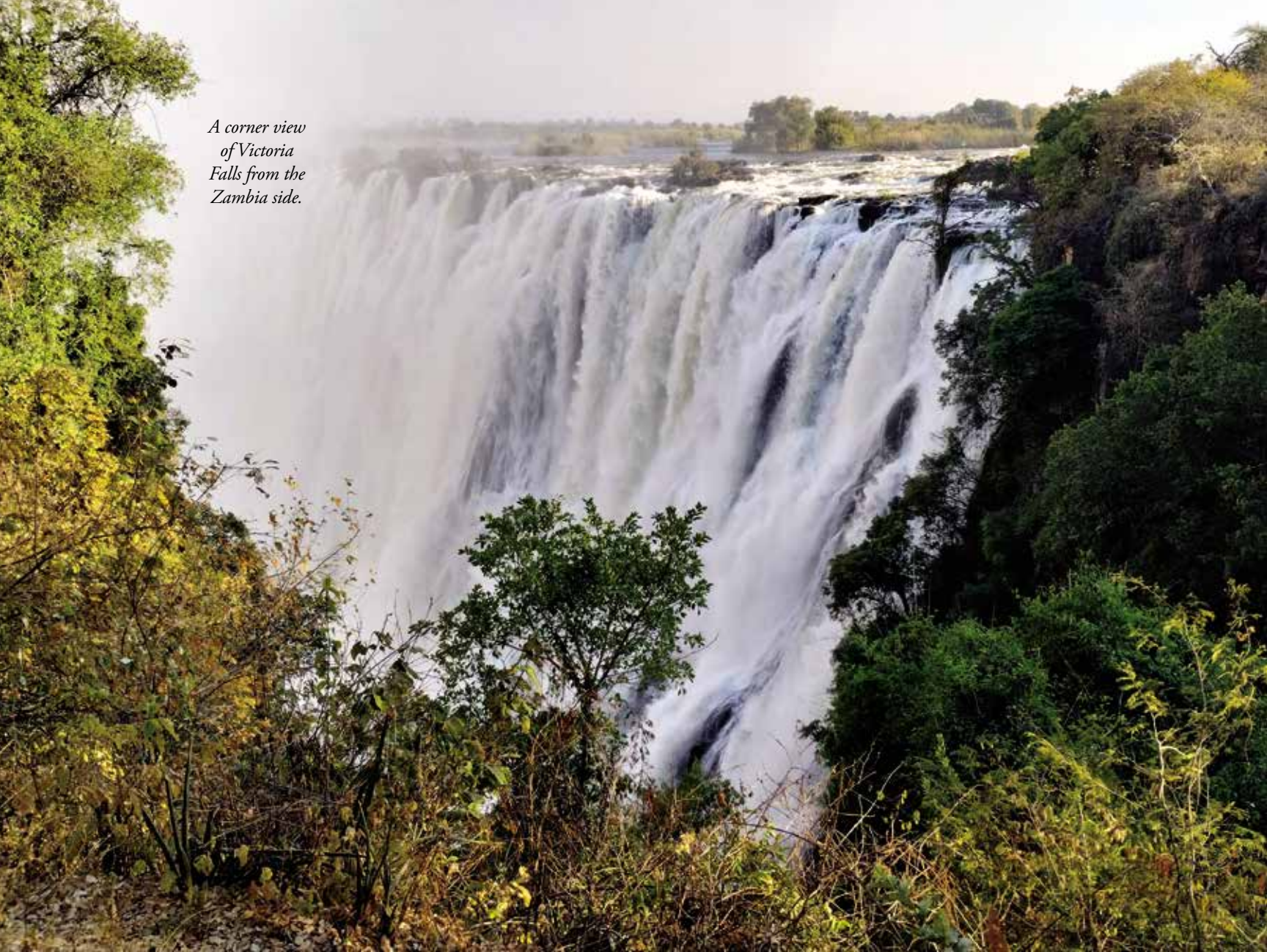


Simba House as a place for visiting missionaries, constant improvements to hospital buildings, erection of a new UCZ church and support of the Orphans and Vulnerable Children Project.

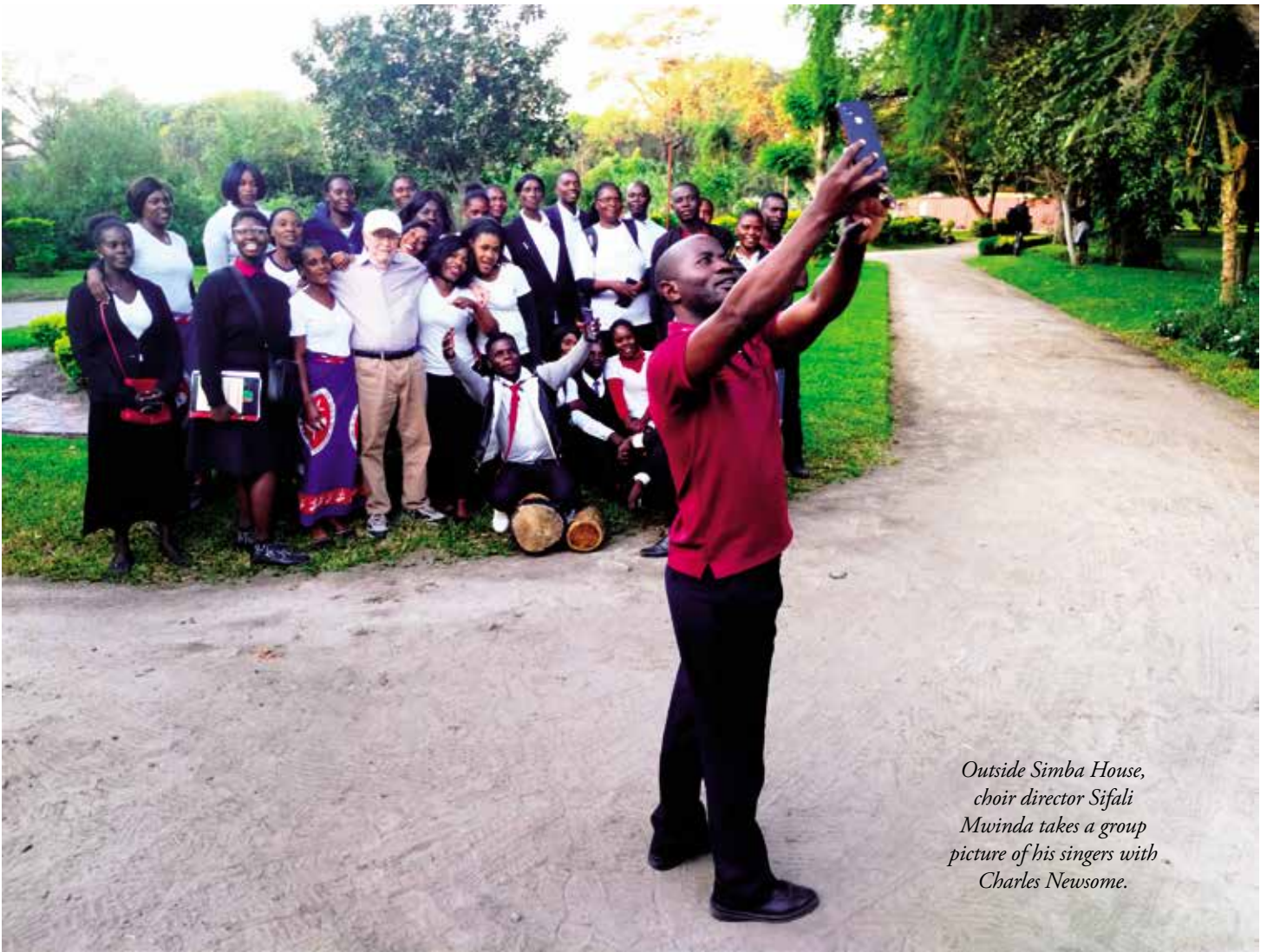
Newsome fostered continuing Mwandi partnerships with Davidson College and the med-

ical school at East Carolina University. Today, the Mwandi Hospital American Partners pays for key staff and provides consistent funding for the modest, Level 1 medical center. Newsome founded the original American-Zambian board for the hospital and chaired it for 10 years.

*A corner view
of Victoria
Falls from the
Zambia side.*



Above: The driveway leading to Simba House, which provides housing for visiting mission groups. Left: Charles Newsome with longtime Simba House cook Irene Simonda.



Outside Simba House, choir director Sifali Mwinda takes a group picture of his singers with Charles Newsome.

Visiting doctors from the United States routinely made Mwandu the destination for their mission work and still do. Salisbury ophthalmologist Dr. Ozzie Reynolds, for one, performed more than 500 cataract surgeries in Mwandu over the years.

Other accomplishments in Mwandu — whose impoverished people rely mostly on fishing and farming — have included a better water system, a river boat clinic, a pre-school, sewing and carpentry centers, and an infant feeding program.

Newsome takes great satisfaction in knowing that most of these modern-day achievements started with his little Sunday school class at Thyatira Presbyterian.

Meanwhile, his own interest in Mwandu and the Zambian people has never waned. It became and remains, his calling.

Newsome retired in 2019 after 50-plus years with Johnson Concrete in Salisbury — a career that culminated with his induction into the National Concrete Masonry Association Hall of Fame. He has since moved from Salisbury to Waxhaw, where one of his newest projects is to build a church for his wife, Chris, and her



Senior Chief Inyambo Yeta meets outside his home with longtime friend Charles Newsome.



Clockwise from top: Lawrence Kamba and Charles Newsome make a quick inspection of the electrical substation that was Newsome's and his Sunday school class' first project 30 years ago; on the road to Mbereshi, a woman carries supplies on her head — a common sight throughout Zambia; an inside look of the new Mwandu UCZ structure.



The main entrance and driveway to the Mwandi hospital.

Taiwanese friends and family.

Not long after he retired, Newsome decided he wanted to be the U.S. ambassador to Zambia, even though he already was in his 80s. He put together a committee of industry friends familiar with the ways of Washington, D.C. They started a letter-writing campaign on his behalf and made telephone calls and visits to congressmen, but the efforts derailed in 2020 thanks to an election year and the pandemic.

Newsome often has told people that following him around is not for the faint of heart. He's a good delegator and taskmaster — just ask the scores of people who have found themselves saying "yes" to one of his requests over the years.

In Zambia this June, Newsome renewed valued friendships with people such as Ida and Keith Waddell, missionaries in Mwandi from the Church of Scotland; the Rev. Harris Silishebo, former general secretary of the United Church of Zambia; Senior Chief Inyambo Yeta of the Barotse Royal Establishment; Percy Muleba, a former choir director at the Mwandi UCZ church; Lawrence Kamba, who doubles as the Mwandi hospital's projects director and Simba House manager; Irene Simonda, long-



In Mwandi, Mutumbe Silisheo and Deaconess Josephine Kabamba present Newsome with a rapper, carrying the logo of the United Church of Zambia.

time cook for Simba House; and Ruairidh Waddell, son of Ida and Keith and a key leader for World Renew.

Among Newsome's aims for this visit was

gaining more information from the Waddells on plans for an oxygen-generating plant at the Mwandi Mission Hospital.

He also wanted to see how he could help the



Scottish missionary Keith Waddell gives Newsome a look at some of the bricks produced by a new block-making machine from Lusaka.



***Left:** The Rev. Harris Silishebo, former general secretary for the UCZ.*

***Right:** Not used to the sight, children swarmed to greet the five-passenger plane Newsome took to Kawambwa, which was on his way to Mbereshi.*



UCZ mission hospital in Mbereshi, a place he had assisted before, particularly with erection of a new water tank and raising funds for its baby incubator.

In Lusaka, Newsome met at UCZ synod headquarters with the general secretary Rev. Chipasha Musaba and UCZ health secretary Regina “Gina” Siatwinda-Oliver. He hoped both could travel with him to the Mbereshi hospital on a five-seater plane Newsome already had chartered for later in the week.

Musaba, the general secretary, told Newsome his visit to Zambia was important from a historical standpoint, allowing church officials and new members of the UCZ to meet a person who had meant much to the Mwandu hospital in particular.

“To see someone who was behind that, who made that happen, how you’ve been able to leave your footprint — it’s massive, it’s huge,” Musaba said. “Your presence there, your contribution there, has impacted lives. ... This is a powerful story you have. Living for others and doing something for them is great.”

A humbled Newsome answered, “It certainly has been an enriching experience for me. It has helped me to grow. Really, God’s hands have been in it since the beginning.”

In the end, Siatwinda-Oliver and UCZ Projects Director Abel Kafunda went with Newsome to Mbereshi. On a tour of the hospital, administrator Damon Mkandawire enumerated the major problems, which included nonworking washers and dryers in the laundry and an aging septic tank system with few working toilets.

Newsome later wrote the UCZ a \$500 check to hire a technician to fix the washers and also repair the non-operating incubator.

On another side of the country in Mwandu, the Waddells showed Newsome what progress was being made on the building that would house an oxygen-generating plant. Paying for the German-manufactured equipment and its installation would still require grants and donations of \$185,000. It became Newsome’s new Zambian priority.

Within a couple weeks of his return to the States this summer, Newsome had raised that



Women walk down the main road in Mwandu.

money.

The car trip from Livingstone to Mwandu always proves to be arduous because of the road conditions. In maneuvering around and through all the potholes and craters, what should be a one-hour ride ends up taking more than three hours. Drivers have to steer their heavy-duty vehicles back and forth in short bursts of forward progress. Many times they travel on the sandy shoulders for long distances, just because they are better than the actual road.

Newsome paid for drivers to and from. Along the way, he saw the usual sights — thatched-roofed huts; people steering ox-drawn or donkey-led carts; plenty of goats, cows and pigs; and folks trying to sell anything of value on the roadsides.

While in Mwandu, Newsome also surveyed a few of the 4,000 animals in the new Simalaha Community Conservancy outside the main village. Among its species are red lechwe, zebra, puku, giraffe, eland, sable, wildebeest, water-

buck, roan antelope, and buffalo.

Kamba served as Newsome’s guide during much of his stay in Mwandu. Besides tours of the hospital and OVC Project, they stopped at the electric substation built 30 years ago. Yes, it was still humming along, although the hospital today also has started to rely on solar panels on its roof, to reduce what it has to pay ZESCO.

With Kamba making the arrangements, Newsome visited his longtime friend in Mwandu, Senior Chief Yeta, whose help Newsome needed when original negotiations with ZESCO for the substation broke down.

The chief and Newsome reminisced about those days while sitting on the grounds outside of Yeta’s home. “I think the first time you came, Charles, we sat underneath that tree,” the chief said, pointing to another spot in the yard.

Over time, Yeta has made a couple of visits to the States on behalf of Mwandu and he has stayed at Newsome’s house. The chief laughed, remembering the discussion that ensued one evening around the dinner table.

“I think your support in the beginning — and throughout the years — was so important and crucial,” Newsome told Yeta as they talked



about all the hospital improvements. “I think this is a demonstration of what is possible if we all work together.”

Before he left, Newsome asked Yeta for a favor: “I would like you to pray for us and pray for America,” he said.

“I always pray best in Lozi,” Yeta answered, explaining that God hears him better in his native tongue.

Wildebeest roam the grasslands of the Simalaha Community Conservancy near Mwandia.

Newsome also asked a favor of the choir members who sang for him that one evening at Simba House. As they were outside preparing to leave, Newsome pleaded for one more song. And they obliged.

Newsome stood at attention in front of them, feeling blessed. **S**

Newsome expects a book he is writing about the mission work in Mwandia to be published this fall. Mark Wineka, former editor of Salisbury the Magazine, has been helping Newsome with that project and accompanied him on the recent trip to Zambia.





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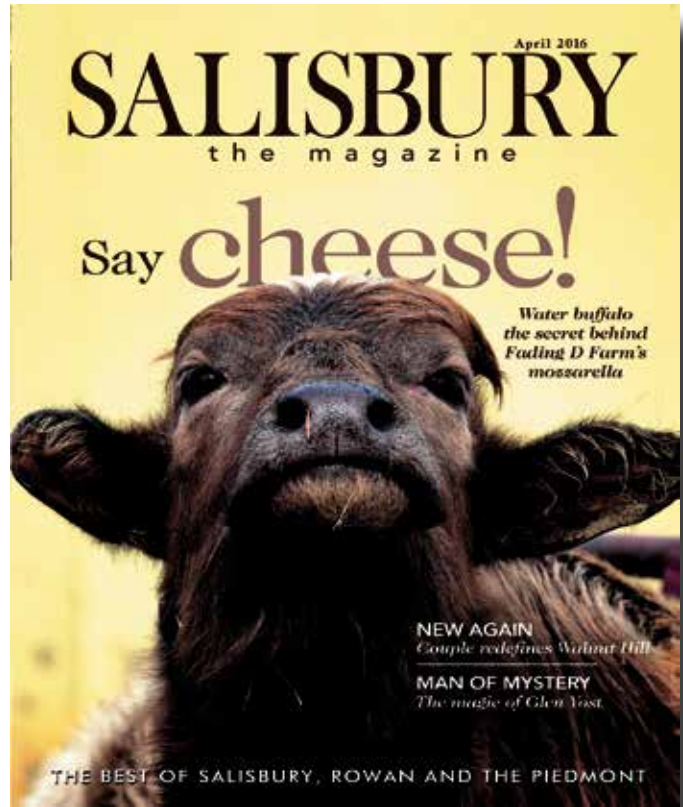
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