

History and Background of the City of Concord



Concord's history dates back more than 200 years. In the late 1700's, the German and Scotch-Irish settlements in the area disagreed over exactly where the County seat of the newly formed County of Cabarrus should be located. Eventually, a compromise was reached, and the new city was founded in 1796 on a 26-acre site purchased by John Means and Leonard Barbrick for \$62.30. To reflect the spirit in which the issue was settled, the city was named Concord, meaning "*harmony*," and the main thoroughfare through downtown was labeled "Union Street".

Concord emerged as a major textile center for the country in the late 1800's when John Odell, James Cannon, and Warren Coleman established mills. Although much of the City's heritage centers on the textile industry, recent decades have witnessed an entrepreneurial spirit that has flourished the current economy with diversity and vitality. Major industries now include automotive racing, coffee, healthcare, manufacturing, educational institutions, retail sales and food distribution.



In addition to increased economic diversity, significant population growth (30,843 in 1990, 50,564 in 2000, 79,066 in 2010, and 92,067 estimated in 2018) has fueled Concord's economic vitality and influence as a key economic component of the Southeastern U.S. Concord continues looking toward the future with plans visioning far ahead to the year 2050. The ideals of sustainability guide these plans, as the growth of residential, commercial and industrial areas drive the need for improved infrastructural, recreational, and public safety systems.

Citizens enjoy a multitude of options for dining, shopping, and entertainment, and have easy access to travel options if a trip is required. Concord is located conveniently along the I-85 corridor just minutes from Charlotte. I-85 provides access to I-485, allowing connectivity to the I-77 corridor as well. U.S. routes 29 and 601, along with NC routes 49 and 73 serve drivers in, around, and out of town. The City is home to Concord-Padgett Regional Airport and within a half-hour drive to Charlotte-Douglas International Airport.



When you look at Concord today and see the wonderful mixture of progress and heritage, and the perfect blend of business, industry, and residential life, you can see that Concord still embodies the meaning of its name - "*harmony*."



Concord: A Bicentennial Sketch
1796-1996
by
Clarence E. Horton Jr.

Although Cabarrus County government was formally organized by the newly formed Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions at its first meeting on January 21, 1793, and the first county officials were elected, the dispute over the location of the seat of government continued until 1795, when a site was agreed upon. A town to be named "Concord" was laid off on a 26-acre tract of land lying on the ridge near the old Indian Trading Path and to the west of Three Mile Branch. By traditional accounts, the name was chosen to represent the "harmony" or Concord between the opposing factions in the site location dispute.

By the April 1796 Session of the County Court, the land had been purchased, surveyed into lots and sold at public auction to the first Concord landowners. Many of them purchased lots for investment, while maintaining their principal residences outside the town site. By the 1800 Census, the new town had a population of 33, including four enslaved persons. Prior to its formal incorporation in 1806, it was managed by the County Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions. Often referred to as the "county court," the Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions was composed of the duly-appointed Justices of the Peace for the County, who exercised both judicial and administrative functions. In a sense, the county court fulfilled many of the combined duties of today's County Commissioners, Clerk of Superior Court, and lower courts. Among other things, it set tax rates, supervised the maintenance of roads, probated wills and deeds, and elected most local officials.

Concord was incorporated in 1806, but the earliest official records of city government have been lost. Records of the 1821 city elections are preserved in area newspapers. The City's written records begin with Minutes of a meeting on March 13, 1837, when newly-elected Magistrate of Police (now Mayor) J. L. Beard, and four Town Commissioners met to take their oaths of office and to organize city government. By 1838, the tax list showed "taxables" in Concord as 46 white males and 29 African-American males. The poll (head) tax on each male was 50 cents; town property was taxed at 25 cents per \$100 valuation. Those valuations yielded a total of \$111.00 in total tax for the year.

From the end of the Revolutionary Period to the end of the Civil War, counties in North Carolina exercised judicial and administrative functions through their local County Courts while towns were generally small trading centers and seats of local government until 1865. Wilmington, the most populous city in the State, was the only municipality with more than 5,000 people. The towns had few government functions. Thus, our records show that the early Concord officials wrestled with questions of imposing and collecting taxes, preserving the public health and safety through local ordinances, and opening and maintaining the public streets. In addition to providing for collection of taxes by the town constable, the Board appointed responsible citizens to repair the firefighting equipment and the public streets. Early ordinances penalized persons for running their horses through the streets of Concord, and for firing a gun within the city. Other safety ordinances provided fines for persons allowing cattle to lie in the city streets and for carrying "fire in the streets except in a firepan."

During those formative years churches were built in Concord and provided a center for both social and spiritual life. With the encouragement of their Presbyterian friends in the established congregations of Rocky River and Poplar Tent, land was obtained in 1804 for the fledgling Presbyterian congregation in "Conkord." That flagship church was the center of worship in the town until 1837, when an area Methodist revival led to the formation of the Concord Methodist congregation, now Central United Methodist Church. In 1843 Lutheran members of the old rural Cold Water Lutheran church decided to build a new church in town, and St. James Lutheran Church was erected on East Corban Street near a cemetery site donated by George Kluttz.

Education in the City was provided by several private academies. The Concord Academy was organized in 1855, with R. W. Allison serving as the President of the Board of Trustees. A boarding school for females was opened in 1856 at the residence of Rev. D. A. Penick. The following year, Miss Maggie Bessent conducted a "subscription school" in a two-room frame building behind the Concord (later, Central) Methodist Church campus. Lutherans were anxious to educate and retain young men in North Carolina to fill the need for Lutheran pastors; in 1859, Mt. Pleasant (originally, Mt. Comfort) was incorporated, as was a Male Seminary in the new town.

The oldest African-American church in Concord, Zion Hill A. M. E. Zion Church, began as Zion Chapel in 1859. Zion Wesley Institute, which is now known as Livingstone College and is located in Salisbury, was started in 1879 to provide educational opportunities for church members. Members of the Zion Hill congregation left the mother church to build Price Temple, now Price Memorial A. M. E. Zion Church, in 1895. Members of the Price Temple congregation started the First Congregational Church, now First United Church of Christ, in 1902.

The 1850 Federal Census reveals that 471 county residents owned 2,681 slaves, so that 28% of the population were enslaved people. There were 119 black and mulatto residents who were freed former slaves. When the 1860 Federal Census was taken during the summer of that year, 428 Cabarrus residents owned 3,030 slaves, so that about 29% of the County's population were enslaved persons. There were 119 free African-Americans and mulattoes in the County according to the Census takers. Many of the enslaved people worked on the large farms, which raised Indian corn and wheat, important cash crops providing food for the family. Cotton was an important cash crop, but only a few Cabarrus farmers tried to raise tobacco. Other important crops included peas, beans, and both Irish and sweet potatoes. Farmers canned goods for sale, and produced butter and honey, as well as sheep for slaughter.

During the period after emancipation, the newly-organized historically black churches provided an important part of the social life for the freed slaves, supported efforts to educate new black citizens, and provided important structure and political connection for the community. For both white and black citizens, the churches met both religious and social needs for the community.

The old vacant Presbyterian church building on South Spring Street was home to a growing Episcopal congregation until 1892 when local builder, A. H. Propst, built the lovely brick building on West Depot Street. In 1880, a Reformed Church missionary held services in the courthouse in Concord. A congregation was organized on January 1, 1881, and a church building finished in 1885. Baptists who lived in town worshipped at the old Cold Water Baptist Church until 1886, when services were held in the County Courthouse. The first services in Concord's First Baptist Church, erected at Spring and Grove Streets, were held in January of 1889.

The Presbyterian Church was responsible for the formation of a major school in Concord during Reconstruction. Prior to the Civil War, the Presbyterian Church had divided, as had other Protestant denominations, over the question of slavery. After the end of the War, Rev. Luke Dorland, a minister in the northern branch of the Church, founded a seminary in Concord for freed young women of color in 1867. In 1870, the school was chartered as Scotia Seminary; its goal was to prepare black women to work as social workers and teachers. By 1908, the School had 19 teachers and 291 students. In 1916, it was renamed Scotia Women's College. In 1930, it merged with Barber Memorial College of Anniston, Alabama, and became known as Barber-Scotia Junior College. Leland S. Cozart then became the first black President of Barber-Scotia in 1932, following five white male Presidents. In 1946, during his Presidency, the school became a four-year women's college and by 1954 was a co-ed institution. Mr. Cozart served with distinction at the helm of Barber-Scotia for 30 years.

Among the college's distinguished alumna is Mary McLeod Bethune. Ms. Bethune served as an advisor to President Franklin Roosevelt, and started a school for black students in Daytona Beach, Florida, that became Bethune-Cookman University. Ms. Bethune served as President of the College from 1923 to 1942 and then again from 1946 to 1947, during a time when it was rare for a female to serve as a college President. She died in 1955.

Ms. Katie Geneva Cannon, born in 1950, was graduated from Barber-Scotia with her Bachelor of Science degree. She then received her Master of Divinity from Johnson C. Smith Seminary, and became – in 1974 – the first black woman ordained in the United Presbyterian Church in the United States. Later, Rev. Cannon received advanced degrees from Union Theological Seminary in New York, and became the Annie Sides Rogers Professor of Christian Ethics at Union Presbyterian Seminary in Richmond, Virginia.

Mable Parker McLean became the first female President of Barber-Scotia, after attending there. She first served in 1974, and then on two later occasions. After her final retirement, the college's Student Union was named in her honor.

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During the first century of the town's existence, agriculture was king, but local craftsmen produced wagons, hats, and tinware, among other items, for sale.

The textile industry, so important to the economic history of Concord and Cabarrus County, began with the organization of the first cotton mill in 1839 to the north of the town limits on a location which is now the site of Locke Mill Plaza. Later, the city limits and Union Street were extended to the factory. By 1842 machinery had been installed and the steam-driven plant was in "full operation," advertising that it was ready to supply cotton yarn, shirting, drilling, and nails to the public. By 1850 the small plant employed 70 persons. Public schools in the form of the iconic "one room schoolhouses" had their beginnings in legislation passed in 1841 in North Carolina, financed by an unexpected federal tax surplus which was refunded to the states.

As the decade of the 1840s neared its end, a company of Volunteers from Cabarrus County participated in the Mexican War. Upon their return in August, 1848, a memorable celebration was held in Concord. The major development of the decade that shaped the local economy, however, was the legislative action authorizing a railroad to be constructed from the South Carolina border through Charlotte and then the Piedmont, eventually passing through Raleigh and on to Goldsboro in the East. It is hard to overstate its importance. One of its strongest supporters was Cabarrus Representative Rufus Barringer, a lawyer and member of a prominent Concord family, who envisioned the railroad as bringing the future to Concord. The location of the railroad just to the west of the town ensured its future growth, and an 1852 article in the town's newspaper, the *Concord Mercury*, rhapsodized about the "spirit of improvement" pervading the town and community. Rufus Barringer, who became a General in the War to come, was correct: the location of the railroad made Concord a hub of cotton-buying and shipping after the Civil War, and helped ensure that modern textile factories would build on the foundation of the Cotton Factory of the 1840s. The erection of the Cotton Factory, location of the Railroad, and creation of a public school system in 1841, became the driving forces behind the prosperity to come.

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We have few records of life in Concord for the decade following the end of the War of the 1860s, although we know the town was occupied for a short time by Union soldiers. In 1868, during the troubled days of Reconstruction, Jim Cannon, at age 16, followed his older brother David to Concord to seek his fortune in the little courthouse village of less than eight hundred persons. The

small town had muddy streets and frame buildings, without sidewalks or street lamps, but had the small cotton mill which was started in 1839 and another valuable asset: the North Carolina Railroad ran just to its west, so cotton and other goods could easily be shipped to market. The town also had a stately courthouse which was destroyed by fire in 1875, and replaced the following year by the lovely structure which is now the Historic Cabarrus County Courthouse.

County government in North Carolina was re-structured during the Reconstruction Era with the creation of the County Commission form of government, as a part of which elected boards were elected. The old system of the Courts of Pleas and Quarter Sessions was abandoned for a time, but in 1875, the laws were amended to provide that County Commissioners served under the Justices of the Peace. By 1895, most Counties elected Commissioners who were not subject to the control of the Justices of the Peace. By 1905, the system was made uniform all across North Carolina.

Towns grew larger after the War. Wilmington had a population of 10,000 people in 1870, while Concord numbered about 800 citizens that year. By 1880, Asheville, Charlotte, and Raleigh reached the 10,000 population mark. City governments began to deal with problems of providing potable water, public transportation, electric and telephone systems. Most of these services were initially furnished by franchised private companies until the turn of the century. Schools were operated by school districts, and the cities and towns predictably had better schools than the rural areas. The larger cities began to pave streets, to satisfy the demand for better paving and utilities. Public health regulations were more comprehensive and were more strictly enforced. In Concord, the growth of the textile industry provided a growth in population and job opportunities, greater capital investment, and strengthened confidence in the City's future.

Captain J. M. Odell, a native of Randolph County, purchased the old steam-driven Concord Cotton Factory at a foreclosure sale in 1877. The old plant had 1,500 spindles and no looms. By 1892, Captain Odell had added three more mills to his original plant, with 21,000 spindles and 846 looms. A town of 800 people, Forest Hill, grew up around his mills, just to the North of the Concord boundary. The only bleachery in the South was also located there, and could treat 40,000 yards of cloth a day. A new enterprise, the Kerr Bag Manufacturing Company, shipped huge quantities of bags throughout the country.

Meanwhile, J. W. Cannon applied himself to his work as a merchant and learned the business of cotton buying. Before he was 21, young Cannon had already established a reputation for hard work and integrity. In 1887 he organized the first of his textile companies in Concord. As demands for "Cannon Cloth" grew, he opened a new plant in Concord in 1892 near the railroad.

Inspired by the success of Odell and Cannon, an enterprising black businessman named Warren C. Coleman, a native of Concord who was born into slavery, launched what one biographer called a "noble experiment" by building a textile plant in Concord to be operated by only African-American employees. Mr. Coleman had made a fortune during the latter part of the nineteenth century through his mercantile activities and investments in property, and was considered one of the wealthiest black citizens in North Carolina. He invested much of his fortune in a cotton mill, however, to demonstrate that his factory could produce quality textile goods, with black operatives performing the jobs normally reserved for white workers. Unfortunately, he died of a fever in 1904, and the business did not survive his passing. After his untimely death, the plant became part of the Cannon chain.

Although Warren Coleman is the best-known African-American businessman of his time in Concord, there were other well-known entrepreneurs. Charles Alexander operated a cement black plant and a rest home in Concord. He also formed a touring black orchestra, Alexander's Happy Pals Orchestra, which was quite successful in the 1920s and 30s. His son, James Henry Alexander, Sr., was a popular teacher at Logan School. After integration of the schools, James Alexander moved to Concord Junior High (Middle) School where he taught music and served as assistant principal. His son, James A. Alexander, Jr., was a speech-writer for President Bill Clinton. Frederick H. Watkins, who was born in Rockingham in 1860, became the first African-American medical doctor in Concord, laying the foundation for many to follow. Dr. Watkins died in 1925.

The Concord textile men soon came to need their own bank; though they could fund it, they needed a special man to run it. They found their man in Daniel Branson Coltrane, a Confederate veteran who had ridden with "Jeb" Stuart's calvary in the war, and survived three wounds in battle. He returned to his native North Carolina from Missouri in 1888 and Concord National Bank opened in July of that year.

With the success of the great mills, no city in North Carolina had more vitality and excitement than 1890 Concord. The town's population had more than doubled to 1600 persons in 1880, and then to 4,000 persons by 1890. Near the depot, R. A. "Bus" Brown was forming 35,000 bricks a day at his new steam-driven plant, trying to keep up with all the construction in town. From the depot, visitors to town could ride up the hill into town on the new steam street railway, the "dummy line." Salesmen could find lodging at the elegant new St. Cloud Hotel or the Morris House. By 1900, Concord's population had swelled to 8,000 persons.

Concord's excellent public school system was established in 1891 when schools were approved by a margin of only three votes at an election held in May of that year. E. P. Mangum of Chapel Hill served for several years as the first superintendent of the Concord City School system, which then had six teachers. Frank T. Logan, former slave and a minister from Greensboro, was appointed Principal of Concord Colored School in 1891. The School became Logan School during a 1924 expansion. Rev. Logan's valuable legacy – and name - lives on after him, as the grateful Logan community bears his name.

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During the formative early years of the twentieth century, Concord took on many of the trappings of a modern southern city. In common with cities and towns across North Carolina, some streets and roads were paved to accommodate the automobiles that used them. Cities began to take over the water and sewer systems, as it became harder for private companies to meet the demands of citizens and make a profit. Likewise, a number of towns acquired the electric systems that had been operated by local businessmen since the War. To meet the demands of public growth in a time of rapid growth, city police departments were established, and fire brigades were formed to work with volunteer departments. That became even more important in Concord after much of the downtown was damaged by fire in 1885. Building codes were adopted and libraries supported. The cities began to take on the contours of modern municipalities, and Concord was among them.

A city fire department was officially organized on December 21, 1900, replacing the all volunteer Concord Hose and Reel Company which had operated since its organization in 1887, and the Concord Hook and Ladder Company,

composed of black volunteers. John L. Miller led the City Fire Department, aided by L. T. Biles – a paid employee – and volunteers. The Hook and Ladder Company was led by Foreman Martin Boger; Secretary Julius Harriss; John Causan, and about 20 active members. The City fire department was housed in the new city hall building on South Union Street. Other city offices in the modern three-story building were those of the Chief of Police, J. L. Boger, the City Tax Collector, Ross McConnell, and the Mayor, J. B. Caldwell. An "Opera House" on the second floor was used by traveling companies for Shakespearean plays and vaudeville shows. Public meetings and local entertainments were also held in the hall.

Efforts to establish a local library began in 1902 with the appointment of a Board of Directors on July 8th of that year. The library was reorganized in 1911 when the Board of Aldermen appointed a Board of Directors composed of dedicated Concord citizens led by Mrs. L. D. Coltrane.

James P. Cook, editor of a Concord newspaper, *The Standard*, led an effort to take young boys out of the state prison system and into a "training school." Seventeen years of effort led to the formation of the Stonewall Jackson Manual Training School, with Mr. Cook as its first Chairman and D. B. Coltrane as Treasurer.

Concord was also moving from the days of the horse and buggy into modern transportation during those first decades of the new century. In 1908 the Board of Aldermen approved a franchise for a street railway. The inaugural run of the battery-operated street car in the United States was made in Concord in the fall of 1910 to considerable local enthusiasm. The battery needed constant recharging, however, and the car proved to be unsatisfactory. It was replaced in 1912 by a traditional trolley car which operated along the old tracks for another decade.

The city continued its steady growth, its population increasing from 7,910 in 1900 to 8,715 in 1910 and 9,903 a decade later. In 1911 a modern post office was constructed on South Union Street, near St. James Lutheran Church. Interested Concord citizens petitioned for a Red Cross Chapter Charter in April of 1917, and the chapter began to write a history of service with Mrs. C. A. Cannon as Chairman and Mrs. L. D. Coltrane as Secretary.

During the early decades of the twentieth century, the residents of Concord witnessed the first great world conflict, the Spanish Flu epidemic, the boom times of the 1920s, and the beginnings of a massive worldwide depression. During those decades of growth, the population of Concord increased from about 9,000 persons in 1916 to about 13,500 persons in 1936. Four miles of bitulithic streets had increased to 21 miles of paved streets in the city, while deposits at city banks had swelled to more than 7.5 million dollars, with another 2.7 million dollars in the three savings and loan associations. Savings banks boasted another 2 million dollars in assets. The city's principal industries included cotton manufacturing and hosiery mills, bleachery and finishing plants, an oil mill, ice plant, lumber mills, foundry and gas plant, as well as two wholesale grocery houses which served Cabarrus County and parts of all the surrounding counties.

According to a special issue of *The Concord Tribune* in 1954, the population of Cabarrus County in 1950 was 63,910 of whom 16,720 lived in Concord. The County had just completed the sesquicentennial celebration of the discovery of gold in the eastern portion of Cabarrus County in 1799 on land of John Reed, a former Hessian soldier. It was the first authenticated discovery of gold in the United States. In the County as a whole, the tax valuation of property in 1953 was more than 97 million dollars and that of Concord was more than 26 million dollars. There were three banks in Concord, none of which had ever sustained a bank failure. The community was served by a public library in Concord and a bookmobile, and protected by a police force of 31 men, in addition to a fire department with 5 fire trucks and 1 hose truck. Although there were still 15 volunteers to assist with fire protection, the department employed 15 paid firemen. Local Cabarrus Memorial Hospital was undergoing a renovation which would result in a 300-bed facility. The City was governed by an elected Board of Aldermen and a Mayor, all of whom were said to be businessmen, who ran the city "on a business basis."

Mid-century began as a time of segregation, but changes were gradually coming. In 1952, Lawrence Evans was the first black policeman hired by the Concord Police Department. While the 1950s were a difficult time to serve for black officers, Mr. Evans was well regarded, and attained the rank of Sergeant. David "Chalk" Steele also joined the force and became a Sergeant. Evans and Steele encouraged Julius Franklin to join the Concord force, and Mr. Franklin became the first African-American officer to attain the rank of Lieutenant. Edie

Moss was the first black female police officer in the City. Hired in 1985, she was well known for the compassionate way she treated all those with whom she came into contact, regardless of their position or situation. Ms. Moss served faithfully for 30 years.

Integration also brought more visible positions to black citizens interested in a lifetime of service in education. Betty Evans Eddleman was the first African-American female elected to the Concord Board of Education in 1969. In 1982, Betty Bruner-Alston was the first black female elected to the Cabarrus School Board. When the two systems merged in 1983, the two women served together on the combined board. Ms. Alice Steele-Robinson devoted her life to education. She graduated from Logan High School in 1961; after integration of the schools, she was appointed to as Director of Elementary Education. In 1995, she became involved in the Academic Learning Center, which provides tutors for children in the lowest-income City schools.

By 1985, Concord had a population of about 18,000 persons and was poised for its greatest period of growth. On June 30, 1986, the city annexed 8.06 square miles of land along its western and southern boundaries, with an increase in population from 18,465 to 26,149. The highly developed area was rich in industry, and included the huge \$100 million Phillip Morris, U. S. A., cigarette manufacturing complex. The giant motorsports complex centered around the Charlotte Motor Speedway was already a part of the city, as the result of an earlier annexation.

In 1991, an additional 3.66 miles was added to the city by annexation. On February 2nd of that year, Phillip Morris announced a 400 million dollar expansion of its Concord plant, the largest industrial expansion in the history of the state. Oiles American Corporation, a manufacturer of self-lubricating industrial bearings and the first Japanese firm to locate in Cabarrus County, began construction of a 30,000 square foot facility as the first tenant of the Concord International Business Park. The second tenant of the Park, Seymour/Legrand, a manufacturer of electrical devices, completed construction of its manufacturing facility in December of 1991.

As it neared its Bicentennial Celebration, Concord enjoyed many of the advantages of small town life, and continued to be a progressive community.

After settlement of a dispute with Cabarrus County over a regional airport facility, the Concord Regional Airport became a reality. The City and Cabarrus County also formed a countywide water and sewer authority to provide necessary services, and plan for orderly growth. In other successful litigation, Concord established the right of a municipality to refinance bonds at a lower rate by issuance of new bonds, a decision which was of significance to cities across North Carolina.

Quality cultural experiences were provided to Concord residents through the Old Courthouse Theater, as well as numerous local civic and arts groups, such as the Cabarrus Arts Council. The City made extensive improvements to Les Myers Park, a city-owned facility, and purchased 310 acres of land between the Concord Regional Airport and the Charlotte Motor Speedway for a city-owned golf course and recreational area. Cabarrus Memorial Hospital, with recent extensive additions, was offering the best of modern medical care to residents of the area.

As it neared the end of the twentieth century, Concord faced many of the problems shared by most other cities of the New South: the flight of merchants from downtown business districts; the demand for more governmental services without increases in tax revenues; the need to diversify the tax base and grow good jobs by attracting business and industry; and the search for funds to ensure quality educational facilities for the City's children. The Concord Downtown Redevelopment Corporation was successfully working to revitalize the downtown Concord business district. The City dramatically increased its boundaries and population with a December 31, 1995 annexation of 13.75 square miles of area to the south and west of the City, including the thriving residential areas along Weddington Road, Poplar Tent Road, and N. C. Highway 73. The annexed area increased City population by some 6,200 residents. The City sought to deal with the explosion in the school population through new construction, and City leaders sought to attract more businesses which would strengthen the tax base without adding more young residents to the already crowded schools.

As Concord began to plan for her month-long Bicentennial Celebration in April, 1996, she looked back on two centuries of progressive government and industrial growth, and stood poised for the greater challenges of the new century to come, confident that she would build and grow upon the solid foundations erected during two centuries of vision, sacrifice, and achievement.

INTO THE THIRD CENTURY

(1997 - 2019)

Two hundred and twenty-three years of success is a respectable amount of time for a city, and the record of your accomplishments cannot help but raise the question, “Where do you go from here?” Not long ago, the bridge on Cabarrus Avenue crossing the railroad was named for community leader Allen Small, city councilman and educator. Mr. Small served as Principal of Logan High School before integration, then as Principal of Coltrane-Webb Elementary and Wolf Meadow Elementary. After his death in 2006, his widow Ella Mae Small, herself a retired teacher, filled his position on City Council. If Mr. Small were answering the question about our accomplishments today, I suspect that he would give his traditional answer: “Things are looking up!”

And “looking up” they were in 1997. Under the leadership of Mayor George W. Liles and an able city council and manager, the City had completed several large annexations in 1986, 1991 and 1995; worked hard to identify the future needs of the City and the next generation of its citizens; and had begun the patient planning necessary to meet those needs. Having passed through eras dominated by agriculture and then by King Cotton, Concord entered its modern era, a time of growth and diversification, with the eyes of her leaders and citizens focused on the future. The struggle over opening the Regional Airport in the early 1990s was validated by its successes, and by its attraction both for the racing industry and for businesses considering a move to the area. The great roads passing through the county and near Concord that made the area easily accessible, the proximity to Charlotte and its economic opportunities, coupled with the quality of life in the Concord area, began to open economic doors. Robert Lee Mathis, a Navy veteran and community leader, retired in 1997, after serving as the first African-American City Councilman for 18 years. In 1998, a distinguished African-American lawyer, Johnnie B. Rawlinson, a native of Concord, was named to the U. S. District Court in Nevada; Judge Rawlinson was elevated to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in 2000, the first woman of color to serve on that court.

In 1999, all these factors came together and resulted in the welcome opening of a mega-mall by the Mills Corporation on Interstate 85, near the Motor Speedway, the Airport, and the city-owned Golf Course. It is little wonder that it is now one of the leading tourist destinations in the entire state, combining – as its creators promised – both shopping and entertainment.

Concord and Cabarrus County would soon need all their vision and determination to deal with some of the mixed economic news the new century brought. In 2003, Pillowtex Corporation (purchaser of the former Cannon Mills Company and its local plants) finally had to

close its doors, resulting in massive local layoffs and losses. Although Phillip Morris had taken action in 1991 to expand its Concord plant at a cost of some \$400 million, in the new century the tobacco industry was dealing with massive lawsuits and a shrinking number of American smokers.

Fortunately, a local industry, S & D Coffee Company - a coffee bean roaster and distributor founded in 1927 – had established a growing footprint not only in North Carolina, but in the nation. S & D became well known for the quality of its coffee products, supplying some of the major American restaurant chains. The business expanded to include Tea as part of its product line and its company name, but management elected to maintain its headquarters in its familiar Concord location.

The local hospital, Cabarrus Memorial, became a part of NorthEast Medical Center (now Atrium Health), expanded its size and services dramatically, and provided additional job opportunities for local workers. Although the regional airport was relatively new, it quickly became an important part of the attractions of the area. Concord Telephone Company, founded in Concord by the Coltrane family in 1897, was an important employer and provider of services as the third century began and continued to do so after its purchase by Windstream.

In 2004, Concord was honored with the All-American City Award. So despite some unavoidable losses, the balance sheet was still positive in Concord and helped mitigate the difficult economic times we usually call “The Great Recession,” beginning in 2008. Despite the effects of the Recession, Concord continued to grow. The 2000 Census recorded a population of almost 56,000, which grew to more than 79,000 in 2010. By 2015, Concord was about 60 square miles in area, and was ranked as the city with the 16th fastest growing economy in the United States. With that growth, however, came the need for similar growth in city buildings and services.

NEW CITY POLICE HEADQUARTERS OPENED IN 2006

Planning for the new century of service identified the need for a modern headquarters for a modern police department. Architects designed a building for the intersection of Market Street and Cabarrus Avenue that would meet the needs of law enforcement and complement the traditional look and feel of downtown Concord. A highlight of the City’s 210th Anniversary in 2006 was the grand opening of the new quarters to the public on October 9, 2006.

The new building had 65,000 square feet and was built at a cost of more than \$14 million, including land, site preparation, construction, and furnishings. A \$1 million grant to the Department allowed implementation of an innovative records management system. It provided space for 170 sworn police officers in addition to numerous support personnel such as crossing guards, code enforcement officers, records personnel and administrative support staff. It

replaced the former 11,000-square-foot Market Street headquarters, opened in 1973 at a cost of some \$350,000, and designed to house about 50 people.

REV. DONALD ANTHONY HONORED

Rev. Donald E. Anthony, minister at Concord's Grace Lutheran Church since 1997, continued his activities in the community. In 2014, he won the Kannapolis City Schools Champion for Children Award. The following year, Rev. Anthony chaperoned Cub Pack No. 134 on its visit to Selma, Alabama, in March 2015, on the 50th anniversary of the civil rights movement.

NEW CONCORD CHIEF OF POLICE GARY GACEK APPOINTED 2015

In July 2015, Concord welcomed its newest Police Chief, Gary Gacek, and his family, as they moved from Milwaukee. Chief Gacek began his law enforcement career in 1990 in Milwaukee, and built a solid resume, including a Master's Degree in Public Service, while rising to the rank of Captain in the Department. Leaving Milwaukee, with a population of 600,000 persons, brought its own set of challenges, but he thought it well compensated for by the mild climate and opportunities for growth. Understanding the need to establish goals and expectations, Chief Gacek spent a great deal of his first weeks in office meeting with his command staff and supervisors, doing just that. After having the opportunity to assess those closest to him in the command structure, the Chief began to schedule public meetings, and to become highly visible in the neighborhoods that form the Concord community, meeting persons of influence in their neighborhoods, and bringing police and the community closer together in their efforts against crime. In furtherance of his dedication to transparency and communication, the story of the first 18 months of departmental efforts during Chief Gacek's leadership, together with relevant statistics, was published in 2017.

For the sixteenth year, Concord continued its participation in the National Night Out in August 2017. Its goals include an increase in crime and drug prevention awareness, garnering support for local anti-crime efforts, and strengthening partnership bonds between community and police. The City also publicizes and supports local efforts to combat the opioid epidemic sweeping North Carolina. For the sixteenth year, Concord continued its participation in the National Night Out in August 2017. Its goals include an increase in crime and drug prevention awareness, garnering support for local anti-crime efforts, and strengthening partnership bonds between community and police.

FIFTY YEARS OF COUNCIL- MANAGER FORM OF GOVERNMENT IN CONCORD

(1965-2015)

On July 15, 2015, we celebrated the 50th Anniversary of City Manager form of government in Concord. The Board of Aldermen (now the City Council) began discussing the possible change in the late 1940s, but Bradley Barker was not hired until 1965 as the first City Manager. J. P. Francis succeeded Mr. Barker, serving from 1969 through 1973. William C. Hamann served for about 3 ½ years, followed by Jerry L. Gawltney who served for about three years, from 1978 to April 1981. J. L. Greeson, the fifth manager, served from May 1981 through January 1985.

After five managers who served about 3 ½ years each, Leonard B. Sossomon and the present Manager, Brian Hiatt, have provided an important continuity in the office since Mr. Sossomon began his service in February 1985. After Mr. Sossomon's retirement from the position in April 1998, Mr. Brian Hiatt was hired in October 1998, following 14 years as an assistant manager in Hickory, and utilized his long experience and sound judgment to ensure continuing good government for the City.

Transportation needs have been a priority for the City during the past 50 years. In 1965, the Board of Aldermen agreed to ask the State Highway Commission to build an eastern bypass around the City, an eight-year process that resulted in Branchview Drive. Other projects include the George Liles Parkway Extension, the widening of Derita Road, the Highway 49 Exit projects, among others.

Mayor Scott Padgett often says that he believes Concord is the best-managed City in the State, perhaps the Region, and congratulated Mr. Hiatt on his "professionalism, experience, and integrity" Mr. Lloyd Payne was Concord's newest Assistant City Manager, following service as Town Manager of Elkin and Lake Waccamaw, and a long career in the North Carolina Army National Guard.

COUNCIL MAINSTAYS DAVE PHILLIPS AND JIM RAMSEUR RETIRE

AS NEW CITY HALL FOR CONCORD IS DEDICATED

2015 was a year that brought mixed emotions for Concord City Government. Planners were proud of their new \$227 million budget that maintained the same local tax rate. By mid-year, great progress had been made on the new City Hall building on East Cabarrus Avenue, projected to open in December 2015 and provide more than 76,000 square feet of space in a beautiful modern building that complemented the older buildings in the downtown area.

City officials were anxious to have builders complete their work in time for the scheduled City Council meeting in December 2015, as long-time Council members Dave Phillips and Jim Ramseur wanted to attend their last Council meeting in the new facility. Both men had served faithfully on the City Council since 1995, participating in Concord's greatest period of growth and population explosion. Both were active in their community in many other efforts and organizations. Mayor Scott Padgett described them as his "friends and colleagues, [who] spent nearly as much time preparing to serve on Council as they did in office, which is why they were so successful and served for so long. Both are deeply rooted in the community, were successful in the business world, and have a passion for being civic-minded." Fortunately, construction completion estimates were accurate, and both men were able to attend a final meeting on Council on December 10, 2015, in the new City Hall they participated in imagining, planning, and budgeting for; and sharing in some well-deserved accolades with Mayor Padgett, City Manager Brian Hiatt, and a host of dedicated coworkers.

POPULAR MAYOR SCOTT PADGETT DECIDES TO STEP DOWN

From the standpoint of Concord history, the most important story of 2017 was the decision of Mayor Scott Padgett to step down as the successful Mayor of one of the state's largest cities, completing four decades of public service beginning with his service as a school teacher, then principal, service on the Planning and Zoning Commission, the Concord City Council, then 16 years as Mayor. He was not going to rest on his laurels during his retirement, however, as Governor Roy Cooper had already appointed him to the North Carolina Local Government Commission.

Mayor Padgett looked back over his years at the helm at accomplishments that include years of steady growth and job opportunities for the City's citizens. With the 2003 closure of the textile mills that were descendants of the Cannon chain, the City nourished other economic engines, such as tourism, grounded in motorsports and the Speedway, as well as the attraction Concord Mills Mall holds for shoppers and sportsmen around the state. Mayor Padgett continued to emphasize the need for growth, but also pointed out that it was equally important to maintain a "day-to-day quality of life" for the citizens of Concord.

During his tenure, planning took place with one eye on the future. Projecting a long-range need for water for manufacturing and the needs of citizens, the City entered into an agreement with Albemarle and the City of Charlotte to purchase water from them. Other accomplishments include improvements to the Regional Airport, renovations to the public recreation center, opportunities for outdoor exercise and recreations on the greenways and in the parks; a new building to house the police department; and a new city hall. All of those improvements, and many others, have been financed in a fiscally sound manner, keeping the local tax rate at an attractive level. He always stresses, however, that the overriding guide has

been to provide the best quality of life possible for not only those who were born here and want to remain and rear their children; but for those who live elsewhere but are drawn to this special area as a place to put down new roots and live out the American dream.

Mayor Padgett stepped down at a time when he was both popular and effective, but was proud to continue to serve his state on the Local Government Commission. Formed in 1931 to help our local governments cope with the challenges of the Great Depression of the 1930s, it has built a sound fiscal foundation for North Carolina's local governments. Three members of the Commission are appointed by the Governor, two by the General Assembly, and four are designated by state law. The Commission oversees the incurrence of debt and the issuance of bonds by units of local government.

Mayor Padgett left at a time when Concord was adjusting both to continued population growth and its current challenges and to plan for the inevitable future needs of a growing region. According to census estimates as of July 1, 2016, Concord pulled ahead of Asheville to become the 11th largest municipality in the state. Concord's estimated population was 89,891 in 2016, while Asheville's was 89,121. During the period from 2010 to 2016, Concord experienced an annual growth rate of more than 13%.

Among the attractions drawing new residents is the small-town feel to the growing area. The downtown area still boasts the historic Victorian homes and broad streets of an earlier time. Planners have shied away from skyscrapers and development inconsistent with the mid-twentieth century feel found downtown. Even the beautiful buildings housing the City Hall and Police Department seem to "fit in" with the City of a century ago. Designers have been working hard with County planners and architects to provide additional parking for a renovated Cabarrus County Courthouse. Designed to provide services for a smaller population, the present Courthouse will continue to anchor downtown Concord with a substantial addition behind the present courthouse. The City budgeted \$3 million as a contribution towards construction of a modern multi-level parking deck across South Union Street to provide parking for the newly-renovated courthouse.

The City continues to invest in those quality-of-life essentials such as parks and recreational facilities, expansion of greenways, outdoor programming, and planning to meet the needs found in the comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan. As the result of that visionary planning, the Hartsell Recreation Center was recently re-opened after an extensive \$1.8 million renovation. Improvements include better ADA-accessibility, as well as renovated exercise, fitness, and multi-purpose rooms open to the public.

For years, City staff have focused on reflecting the City's goals and vision through budget writing and reporting. The City recently received the coveted Certificate of

Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the 28th consecutive year. The award honors the City's annual financial report for the fiscal year ending on June 30, 2016. The award program was established in 1945, and encourages governments to go beyond minimum levels of generally-accepted financial principles, and demonstrate the "spirit of transparency and full disclosure, and [to] recognize . . . governments that [achieve] that goal." Widely known for its reporting excellence, the City has also received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award presented by the Government Finance Officers Association for the past 15 consecutive years. Mayor Scott Padgett has often commented on the hard work necessary for City staff to translate the goals and priorities of city government into a budget that is fiscally responsible but aggressive in meeting present and future needs of the city.

City staff sought to ensure constant communication with citizens through constant press releases, and regular issues of Leisure Times that include all programs of Parks and Recreation, as well as city publications and its weekly email summary of city news, "CityLink Newsletter."

NEW AVIATION DIRECTOR NAMED FOR CONCORD REGIONAL AIRPORT

Following Aviation Director Rick Cloutier's resignation, Concord embarked on a nationwide search for his replacement. Assistant Director Susan Green ably filled the position of Interim Aviation Director during the extensive search which yielded applicants both locally and throughout the country.

In mid-July 2017, City Manager Brian Hiatt announced that the City had hired Dirk Vanderleest as Aviation Director, responsible for both operations and development at the busy airport. Mr. Vanderleest, formerly CEO of the Jackson, Mississippi, Municipal Airport Authority, will begin work in September 2017. The new Director also had more than 30 years' experience in both aviation management and economic development. The City Manager welcomed Mr. Vanderleest as the newest member of the management team, responsible for operating and growing the Regional Airport as an important cog in the economy of the region.

CRA continues to be third or fourth in activity among North Carolina airports. Traditionally, much of that activity is related to the motorsports industry, serving the Nascar teams located in the Charlotte region. The airport also has a strong general aviation component, as there are regularly-scheduled low-cost passenger flights to five destinations. The new director will supervise more than 40 aviation coworkers who provide aircraft fueling, hangaring, tie-down, parking, and customer services. A fire station operated by the Concord Fire Department is on the premises, as is a control tower operated by contracted staff.

In 2018, the Airport set a new record of 145,510 passenger enplanements, an increase of 21 percent over 2017. All enplanements came from the service provided by Allegiant to six destinations, including the addition of Destin/Fort Walton Beach, in Florida.

MONEY MAGAZINE CONFIRMS CONCORD IS GOOD PLACE TO LIVE

In September 2017, Money Magazine ranked Concord at number 38 on its list of Top 100 places to live. Working with realtors.com, the magazine examined places with a population of between 10,000 and 100,000 persons. Researchers weighed such factors as the healthy local economy, cost of living, education, crime, amenities and ease of living. The article described Concord with a population of almost 90,000 persons, with a median income above the state median, reasonable home prices and average commute times, and 214 clear days each year.

Robert Carney, Jr., Executive Director of Cabarrus Economic Development welcomed the positive publicity, which included the recognition of our “thriving work force,” with a number of highly-skilled individuals in the area. Amenities are growing in the area, he noted, resulting in a quality of life that attracts millennials to the area. Mayor Scott Padgett felt it demonstrated that the people in the community were dedicated to working together to succeed.

The recognition came on the heels of the announcement by flooring distributor Haines that it will open its new 500,000 square-foot distribution center in early 2018. The new facility in the Concord Airport Business Park on Derita Road will employ 172 persons at salaries above the average for Cabarrus County. The new center is near the Amazon distribution facility, which opened in 2015 and also employs hundreds of workers.

CITY CONTINUES CAREFUL DEVELOPMENT USING LAND USE PLAN

In mid-October 2017, Concord City Council agreed to annex a 14.5-acre tract on Cold Springs Road and near the Arena as a possible hotel site. The property is being developed as a mixed use site, with multi-family residential and an opportunity for a hotel or other commercial use. Council felt the annexation was consistent with the Land Use Plan, but denied an application to annex 402 acres on Zion Church Road for single-family homes, a projected density that would not be consistent with the Plan. The Council did annex a third tract, located on Archibald Road near Zion Church Road, part of a project that was planned for 149 homes at a density of about two homes per acre with about 21 acres of open space.

City Council began work on long-range plans to renovate and improve the old mill properties in the Brown Mill community by approving a Declaration of Intent to issue \$17 million in tax-exempt bonds to be repaid through private funds. Proceeds would be used to renovate the Norcott Mill, resulting in a 131 multi-family development to be called Norcott Mill Lofts. Norcott was one of the mills consolidated into giant Cannon Mills Company in 1928. Once the project is underway, Council will need to approve actual issuance of the bonds. The project is expected to provide historical housing, as well as provide needed improvements in the appearance of the building, now more than a century old.

It is anticipated that for the next 10 – 15 years, the development of the Concord community will be guided by a land use plan. A draft of the 2030 Land Use Plan was made available to the public in January 2018 for review and comment, prior to a series of hearings that will be scheduled before adoption.

BILL DUSCH SUCCEEDS PADGETT AS CONCORD MAYOR

When long-time Mayor Scott Padgett announced in mid-2017 that he was not running for re-election in the fall, a number of well-known local residents expressed interest in the office. Alfred Brown, a member of Concord City Council since 2001; Liz Poole, a member of the Cabarrus County Board of Commissioners; well-known local residents Bill Dusch, Anthony Weiss, and Willie Clay announced their candidacies in what promised to be a closely-contested election. However, early results on November 7 election evening showed Dusch distancing himself from the group, finishing the night with about 40% of the vote, followed by Alfred Brown with slightly over 26%, and Liz Poole with slightly under 22%.

Gratified by his victory, Mr. Dusch indicated that he intended to work towards continuing Concord on a positive growth track, continuing to encourage development. To continue the success of his recent predecessors, Mayors Scott Padgett and George Lyles, the Mayor-elect indicated would require a concerted effort by city officials, business leaders, and citizens alike. It would also require cooperation with state government to work on projects of mutual interest and benefit, such as major transportation improvement projects.

In a much closer race for City Council, Terry Crawford upset incumbent Lamar Barrier in District 5 by about 300 votes. Barrier had served on City Council for more than 30 years. In the District 4 seat that Alfred Brown vacated to run for Mayor, J. C. McKenzie defeated a crowded field with almost 36% of the vote. Incumbent Ella Mae Small retained her District 3 seat, which was uncontested, with a top concern being the recruitment of sound companies to the region, businesses able to pay good salaries and hire local workers.

NEW CITY LEADERS TAKE OATH OF OFFICE

At a regular meeting of City Council on December 14, 2017, outgoing Mayor Scott Padgett administered the oath of office to Mayor-elect William C. “Bill” Dusch, as well as newly-elected Council Members JC McKenzie (representing District 4) and Terry Crawford (representing District 5). Padgett also administered the oath to re-elected veteran Council Member Ella Mae Small, who was first appointed to Council in 2006 to succeed her deceased husband, Allen Small, in representing District 3. The newly-constituted Council elected Jennifer Parsley as Mayor ProTem.

Earlier that week, outgoing Mayor Scott Padgett; Alfred Brown, Jr.; and Lamar Barrier were honored at the Council's Tuesday work session on December 12, 2017, for their combined seventy years of outstanding service on behalf of the citizens of Concord.

Outgoing Council member Alfred Brown, Jr., was honored by the City on July 12, 2018, when officials gathered to officially name the street that leads into the Brown Operations Center as Alfred Brown Jr. Court, Southwest. The Operations Center was itself named for Brown's father, Alfred Brown, Sr., former Council member and Mayor. Al Brown, Jr., expressed surprise over the honor. He expressed pride of some of the accomplishments in the City during his 16 years on Council, and said that he and his father tried to do the right thing and tried to leave the City better than when they took office.

WORK ON NEW CITY PARKING DECK BEGAN

During the busy week before Christmas 2017, County workers posted signs to inform visitors to Concord that the large City parking lots located at the intersection of Barbrick Avenue and Spring Street (Surface Parking Lot 3) and the lot at the intersection of Corbin Avenue and Spring Street (Surface Parking Lot 4) would close on January 2, 2018, marking the beginning of the construction phase of a five-story, 628-space County parking deck. The new facility, which will be located at the intersection of Corban Avenue SW and Spring Street SW, was completed as expected early in 2019, and provides additional parking space for the Cabarrus County Courthouse.

The City has been extremely interested in the proposed 250,000 square foot expansion of the Cabarrus County Courthouse, adjoining the site of the present courthouse in downtown Concord. Part of the expansion plan involves the closure of Means Avenue between Church and Union Streets to provide space for a pedestrian walkway, and a safer, more convenient entryway into the renovated and expanded courthouse. The closure of Means Avenue has been approved by City Council.

CITY HONORED WITH "BEST PLACE TO LIVE" DESIGNATION

As part of its effort to identify the best place to live in each state, Money Magazine named Concord as its North Carolina choice. The magazine used criteria such as economy, education, affordability, convenience, safety and other amenities in assessing its candidate locations. Factors which weighed heavily in its selection appeared to include its location relatively near Charlotte, the median household income of about \$54,500.00 (above state average), and the predicted strong job growth over the next few years. Concord's efforts to maintain its small town feel and a welcoming atmosphere were rewarded, as the writers noted that the City's "friendly downtown features shops, restaurants, historic buildings, two live

theaters, a gourmet chocolatier and regular events” in addition to a similarly hospitable climate, with 214 clear days per year.

In addition to the prized designation, the local press also reported that crime was down in the City, according to Concord Chief Gary Gacek. Speaking at a public meeting held at Forest Hill UMC, Chief Gacek. As a result of increased police visibility and increased interaction with residents, among other things, the Chief summarized the results for the prior year as exceeding his own expectations. The Department had reached out to the community in 2017 through a Youth Police Academy, bicycle rodeo, a Public Service Academy and opioid conversations, as well as increased social media exposure on the Department’s own Facebook page. Major Jimmy Hughes presented figures indicating that both violent crimes and property crimes were steadily decreasing. Violent crimes decreased from 136 in 2015 to 101 in 2017, while property crimes decreased from 2436 in 2015 to 1855 in 2017. Overall, violent crime is down 23.3 percent over the last ten years, while over the same period property crime is down 33.4 percent. Major Hughes also attributed much of the improvement to efforts to increased positive interactions with the public, leading to better cooperation between the public and the Department. Over the longer haul, officers were concerned with the opioid crisis and its effects, as well as the significant decrease in students enrolling in basic law enforcement training throughout the state.

Later in February, City officials joined with Allegiant Air to announce that the airline had added a sixth nonstop destination originating in Concord from its Regional Airport to Destin-fort Walton Beach Airport. Concord Aviation Director Dirk Vanderleest noted the benefit to those in the Concord and Charlotte communities, as the Regional Airport continued to attract those looking for convenient nonstop service to their favorite vacation destinations. Concord officials also announced that seven-days-a-week express bus service from Concord to the Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) JW Clay Boulevard Station on the LYNX Blue Line Extension would begin on March 19, 2018, giving local residents expanded access to jobs, medical treatment, entertainment, and various educational options.

From the City’s beginnings, arts and music have played an important role in the cultural life of Concord. Around the beginning of the twentieth century, the second floor of the newly-erected City Hall on South Union boasted an Opera Hall that allowed touring companies to present important operatic works to appreciative local audiences. Efforts were then underway to establish a well-stocked local library, gifted teachers were establishing a strong public school tradition, and local citizens subscribed to widely-read newspapers and magazines. The City continues to publicize arts and crafts events in the vicinity, including one of the most important in the art shows held at the Clearwater Gallery on Crowell Drive NW, in Gibson Village. The

recent shows included works by many of the artists who lease space at the Gallery, and offered an opportunity to talk with and hear lectures by some of the artists.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN ENTREPRENEUR WARREN COLEMAN HONORED

Council designated February 1, 2018, the first day of Black History Month, as Warren C. Coleman Day in Concord, although the actual celebration was set for later in the month. Coleman, who was born into slavery in the middle of the nineteenth century, became a leading property owner and businessman in turn of the century Concord. He envisioned a textile mill financed, guided, and operated by black operatives, and built Coleman Mill as a way to carry out his dream. Unfortunately, his untimely death spelled the end of the successful enterprise, but advanced textile job opportunities for black workers. As part of the Black History celebration, Ordinances designating Coleman Mill as a local historic landmark were adopted. A street festival was held in downtown Concord on Saturday, February 24, near an historical plaque honoring Mr. Coleman's memory. Vendors offered their wares at the same location in which Mr. Coleman operated a highly successful general store. Coleman was described by local historian and activist Norman McCullough as a "giant of a man . . . [who] did many things, many, many things that I could not even dream about doing."

CITY MANAGER BRIAN HIATT ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT PLANS

ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER LLOYD PAYNE NAMED TO SUCCEED HIM

After 37 years of experience in local government in North Carolina, Concord City Manager Brian Hiatt announced that he intended to retire in March 2018. Mr. Hiatt became City Manager in 1998, making him one of the senior City Managers in North Carolina. His early announcement was designed to give the Mayor and City Council ample time within which to conduct a search for his replacement. Brian and his staff have managed to implement the immediate and future goals of the Council while producing a balanced, stable budget each year. Among many other accomplishments on his watch, Concord has worked to ensure diversified industries with good jobs for the future in Concord, together with a high quality of life for citizens; a guaranteed source of water for the future; infrastructure improvements; an attractive downtown area, with striking government buildings, anchored by the unique Historic Courthouse and other historic buildings.

Although Mr. Hiatt's departure will leave big management shoes to be filled, his successor will have the benefit of a well-conceived visionary plan for Concord that stretches well into the middle years of her third century of growth and service to her citizens.

In announcing his departure, Mr. Hiatt expressed how difficult it will be to leave the position he has graced for two decades, and complimented his co-workers, characterizing them

as the backbone of the organization. “In the meantime,” he said, “there is plenty to do in the next months. One of the great things about Concord is there are always positive activities and accomplishments. I look forward to continuing to work with our team toward accomplishment of the Council’s many goals.”

In February 2018, the Mayor and City Council formally named Lloyd Payne, who had served as Assistant City Manager since 2015, to succeed Mr. Hiatt, his appointment to be effective on April 1, 2018. Before assuming his duties in Concord, Mr. Payne served as Town Manager of Elkin in Surry County for ten years, after serving as Lake Waccamaw Town Manager in Columbus County for four years. Payne has served in the state Army National Guard for more than 24 years. A Command Sergeant Major, Mr. Payne served three years of active-duty deployments, including a combat deployment to Bosnia in the mid-1990s and two tours in Iraq/Kuwait between 2003 and 2010. The new City Manager is recognized by the International City-County Management Association as a credentialed manager, and holds Bachelor of Science and Master of Public Administration degrees from Appalachian State University; in addition, he completed the Rural Economic Development Institute through the state’s Rural Center, the UNC School of Government’s Municipal Administration Course and Public Executive Leadership Academy, the ICMA Gettysburg Leadership Institute and Leadership Cabarrus. Mr. Payne spends his scarce free time with his wife, Beth, and children Ella and Liam, as well as an occasional visit to the golf course.

Newly-elected Concord Mayor Bill Dusch praised Payne’s appointment, saying that “(h)is 17 years of local government management and his distinguished service in the N. C. National Guard make him a uniquely qualified city manager.”

As planned, Mr. Payne officially started work as City Manager on Sunday, April 1, 2018, after being sworn in by new Concord Mayor Bill Dusch. Despite his experience in management, Payne modestly insisted that he had a lot to learn, saying the he was not the “smartest person in the room,” but that he wanted to surround himself with the smartest people in the room. He indicated that he wanted to encourage a team-oriented environment, in which staff is involved in the decision making that will guide the City in the future. With scheduled retirements for a few department heads, he hopes to have the new team, including two more assistant managers, in place in his first three or four months in office. He then plans to meet with individual members of City Council to learn their individual goals for the future, align the 2030 Land Use Plan with the development ordinances, remain watchful for available land for future development, and forming a cohesive community for the Concord neighborhoods. I am looking forward, he said, to “seeing with all the thing going on in the city, all the activity, all the growth and everything that comes along with it – how we can kind of take that and move the city forward. It’s exciting times.”

Under the guidance of the new City Manager, City Council voted to amend the boundaries of the district boundaries for the City to help ensure more proportionate representation for the growing City population. City Manager Payne pointed out that the City Charter required that the voting districts be kept as nearly proportionate as possible, and that the districts had not been adjusted since 2011 when the population was only 80,000 persons. City staffers worked through various configurations, trying to consider not only where the current board members reside, but expected future development and natural boundaries. City Council approved the proposed districts at their December 2018 meeting.

CONCORD REGIONAL AIRPORT RENAMED

TO HONOR OUTGOING MAYOR SCOTT PADGETT

At its April 12, 2018, meeting, Concord City Council honored former Mayor Scott Padgett for his long service to the City on City Council and as four-term Mayor from 2001 through 2017. In a related press release, present Mayor Bill Dusch noted that “Scott Padgett played a critical role in the growth of our airport into a community asset and regional economic driver. He started as an elected official in Concord just after the airport first opened, and it is fair to say the airport would not be what it is today without his decades of service.” Dusch commended Council on its “meaningful and appropriate” action. In addition to years of government service, Padgett worked in the local public school system for 40 years. He was appointed by Governor Roy Cooper to the Local Government Commission, where he is presently serving.

During Padgett’s tenure as Mayor, the City made several improvements to the airport, which opened in 1994 with one general aviation terminal and a 5,500 foot runway. Council extended the runway to 7,400 feet and strengthened it, in addition to building a commercial service terminal and parking deck. The airport proved popular with the motor sports industry, providing a convenient alternative to the Charlotte facility, and became one of the busiest in North Carolina, with commercial service to six destination cities provided by Allegiant Air. Padgett honored the City officials who had the vision to foresee the value of the local airport to the future growth of the City, at a time when that future was being shaped.

Aviation Director Dirk Vanderleest will send all necessary documentation to the Federal Aviation Administration, seeking approval of the name change. After months of careful consideration, and approval by those authorities, staff in Concord look forward to changing present signage, letterhead, and publications, to reflect the name change to Concord-Padgett Regional Airport – and complete a well-deserved tribute.

BLACKBURN AND SMITH NAMED ASSISTANT CITY MANAGERS

In May 2018, City Manager Lloyd Payne named LeDerick Blackburn and Joshua Smith to fill the assistant City Manager vacancies in Concord government, with their appointments to be effective on June 18, 2018. Blackburn, who was the first African-American Assistant City Manager, had been serving as Community Development Manager for the Planning and Development Neighborhood Department. He had been active in government for more than 25 years and was honored in March 2018 with the Jo Atwater Continuous Core Values Award. Smith has served as Town Manager for Dobson, in Surry County, since 2010. City Manager Payne is confident that the men, with the benefit of their local government experience, will “hit the ground running,” and “will be critical in the planning and implementation of projects associated with the continued growth in Concord.”

Before relocating to Concord in 2006, Mr. Blackburn – a native of Louisiana - was involved with the Downtown Development District for New Orleans. After moving to Concord, he led long-range planning projects and helped administer Federal Community Development Block Grant and HOME Investment Partnerships. Blackburn, a graduate of LSU and the University of New Orleans, continued his education in local government topics, after moving to North Carolina with his wife Joslyn and their two children. He acknowledged that he was honored by the appointment, which afforded him the opportunity to continue serving a place that he had come to know and love over the past 12 years.

Joshua Smith worked in the Police Department for Winston-Salem from 2005 until he was appointed as Town Manager for Dobson in 2010. A native of Kernersville, Mr. Smith is a graduate of Appalachian State University, and continues his education in government-related areas. He is married to Monica and has two daughters. He is a golfer, a Carolinas Panther fan, coaches youth basketball, and spends time with his family. Mr. Smith says that he and his family are excited about making Concord their home “and are looking forward to establishing lasting relationships within the community.

CITY TO RECEIVE PRESTIGIOUS

STATE NATURAL RESOURCES HONOR

Recognizing Concord’s long dedication to conservation, the City was honored in July, 2018, when it was selected to receive the Wildfire Federation’s 55th Annual Governor’s Municipal Conservationist of the Year Award. The award is the highest natural resources honor given by the state. The award was based on the City’s work with the Concord Wildlife Alliance and others by its Environmental Educator, Mandy Smith-Thompson. Among its many accomplishments, the City achieved Certified Community Wildlife Habitat status; through its Mayor, it signed a Monarch pledge; completed a native plant project in partnership with a local

juvenile detention facility; competed in the Global City Nature Challenge; and formed partnerships with local schools, community groups, and libraries.

Recipients of the coveted Awards are determined by a committee of scientists, environmental educators, and conservation activists. The award will be presented at a meeting on September 8, 2018, in Cary, North Carolina.

LOCAL INVESTMENT AND TOURISM CONTINUE TO GROW

Cabarrus County continued to be an attractive destination for domestic visitors, according to latest travel impact studies. Visitors spent almost \$447 million in the County during 2017, moving Cabarrus to the 12th rank among the state's 100 counties. The Charlotte region as a whole enjoyed more than \$7 billion in tourism spending during the year; Cabarrus County ranked second in the region, behind only Charlotte and Mecklenburg County.

The Cabarrus travel and tourism industry employs more than 4,500 people, and generates a total payroll of more than \$106 million. During 2017, state revenue from travel exceeded \$25 million, while local tax revenue generated in Cabarrus County was almost \$8 million. Pam DuBois, chair of the Cabarrus County CVB Board of Directors, said that as a result of the numerous visitors to the county, "additional revenues are generated, which aid in funding services and infrastructure that enhance the overall experience in the community."

During 2017, domestic visitors to the state generated almost \$24 billion, an increase of some 4.2 percent from the preceding year. Visit NC Executive Director Wit Tuttell commented that "The continued growth in visitor spending is great for communities across our entire state. North Carolina's continued position as the sixth most-visited state in the nation, with more than 46 million visitors in 2017, reinforces its status as a premier tourism destination."

Industry also continues to view the Cabarrus area as an attractive destination. Cabarrus Economic Development a new speculative investment by Griffin Industrial Realty in its Carolina Tradeport development in Concord, at the intersection of Poplar Tent Road and International Drive. Griffin intends to add two additional buildings in Tradeport, one 147,000 square feet and the other 136,500 square feet, generating almost \$13 million in new investment. President and CEO Michael Gamzon attributed the new investment to the company's success in leasing the 227,000-square-foot warehouse on the site, acquired by Griffin in 2017. The Tradeport is located in the growing Cabarrus County/Concord market, with excellent access to Interstate 85. In the type of governmental cooperation urged by former Concord Mayor Scott Padgett, both Cabarrus County and Concord agreed to provide tax incentives to the firm. Steve Morris, Chair of the Cabarrus County Board of Commissioners and Concord Mayor Bill Dusch both applauded the company's decision to expand at the Tradeport location, noting that the high-quality buildings planned would attract quality employers and contribute to a broader tax base.

On November 6, 2018, Steve Morris, chair of the county commission, together with other members of the commission, joined with Concord Mayor Bill Dusch and members of city council, to participate in a groundbreaking ceremony at 160 and 180 International Drive, the location of the two buildings to be built in Tradeport. Michael Gamzon, president and CEO of Griffin Industrial Realty, joined the elected officials, as did Cabarrus Economic Development Corporation's Robby Carney. President Gamzon thanked all present for the warm welcome given Griffin and the economic incentives that got the project off the ground. He expressed hope that the new construction would bring new companies to the Concord area as well as new jobs. It is anticipated that the two new buildings will include numerous loading docks, two drive-in doors, and each will have more than 130 parking spaces. They are expected to be ready for occupancy in late spring of 2019.

In another investment announced by Cabarrus Economic Development, Fortius Capital Partners planned to construct Meadows Corporate Park, comprising two multi-tenant industrial buildings near Poplar Tent Road and I-85. The company's investment is expected to be \$9.9 million. The two new buildings will have 112,000 square feet and 80,000 square feet respectively, and will be located on a 21.5 acre site with a Pitts School Road address. Mayor Bill Dusch commented that the City's support of the project "will lead to new jobs, a broader tax base, and a stronger economy." Concord joined with Cabarrus County in offering a tax incentive package to the developer. Steve Morris, head of the Cabarrus County Commissioners, said that "Vision leads to progress, [and] Fortius' vision will help frame the real estate landscape in an area that has great economic potential."

The City has worked hard to attract business through economic incentives, through a good working partnership with Cabarrus County, and through its efforts to make the City a good place to raise a family. The quality of life has been enhanced through a thriving Parks and Recreation program, quality schools and athletic programs, the shopping mecca that is Carolina Mills Mall, the City Golf Course, Regional Airport, a thriving local arts community, a top-drawer medical facility, and a strong faith community. There has been great continuity of visionary, dedicated local leadership, who have imagined the future and built a strong foundation on which the successors are building. Those factors have combined to produce the growth that the County and its cities are enjoying, and are paying a rich dividend for those who choose to call old Concord home

In order to increase the attractive draw of downtown Concord, with its sense of last-century charm, despite the growth of the City around it, City planners began inviting public comment on plans to improve the streetscape along Union Street by limiting - perhaps altogether - parking along the street. Steve Osborne, the planning and neighborhood development director for the City, noted that "It's all about creating the sense of place and

becoming more of a destination.” Although there are now improved parking facilities close to the downtown businesses and restaurants, some older residents prefer closer, on-street parking, while others would enjoy the ambiance of casual, outside dining.

The proposed 2019 demolition of the former Philip Morris manufacturing site in Concord has attracted the attention of State, City and County officials, as well as the Cabarrus Economic Development Corporation. Production at the massive plant ended in 2009, and the County lost its largest taxpayer. Robert Carney, executive director, stated that Cabarrus Economic Development, saw the 3.5 million square foot site situated on about 500 beautiful acres, with existing utilities and near two major highways, as the “employment epicenter of Concord and Cabarrus County.” Owners of the site, now known as The Grounds at Concord, are working closely with government officials at all levels to attract a well-established company with manufacturing jobs and attractive salaries to locate on the prime site. A successful conclusion to the project would go far towards continuing the economic momentum for both the City and County in the coming decade.

Former Concord Mayor Scott Padgett served as Grand Marshal of the Concord Christmas Parade on November 17, 2018, and his wife, Teresa, acted as co-hostess for the event. Padgett was one of the longest-serving North Carolina Mayors, retiring in 2018 with more than 23 years of appointed and elected service. Salisbury officials announced that former Concord City Manager W. Brian Hiatt will serve as interim planning director for Salisbury beginning Monday, November 19, 2018. Hiatt said that he was “honored” by the appointment, which will continue until the end of the ongoing search for a permanent planning director.

RAY ALLEN RETIRES; JAKE WILLIAMS NAMED CONCORD FIRE CHIEF

Adding to the major personnel changes for the City of Concord during the past two years, Jake Williams was named to replace retiring Chief Ray Allen. Mr. Williams, a twenty-year veteran employee of the City, will replace Chief Allen effective May 1, 2019.

Williams began as a firefighter for the City in 1999. He was subsequently promoted to Captain, then to Battalion Chief, before becoming Deputy Chief in 2014. As Deputy Chief, Jake gained valuable experience managing daily operations for the Department, including creating a budget, planning, and promotional processes. His new responsibilities as Chief include directing more than 210 coworkers in meeting the goals and objectives of the Department, and managing a budget that exceeds \$22.5 million. Williams acknowledged the honor that accompanied his new position, and pledged to continue to work with the community to provide the best emergency services possible.

Mr. Williams is a member of many professional organizations, and has served as a member of the Odell Volunteer Fire Department since 1995 and is now its Chief. He will not

continue to serve as Chief of the Odell Department, but will remain a valuable member of that Department. The N. C. Association of Fire Chiefs recognized him as the 2018 Volunteer Fire Chief of the year.

Mr. Williams was born in Greensboro, but has lived in Cabarrus County for more than 35 years. He graduated from Northwest Cabarrus High School, CPCC, and Fayetteville State University. He has continued his professional education, earning certificates from the UNC Charlotte Fire Rescue Management Institute and the N. C. Chief Fire Officers Executive Development Program. He lives in the Odell Community with wife Laura and daughters Bree and Madison.

Clarence Horton, July 1, 2019

Outline of Concord History
Prepared for Concord 101 Class of 2013
by Clarence Horton

Cabarrus County Background:

- 1732 According to traditional accounts, a Scots-Irishman named John Rogers settled in the area that became Cabarrus County; it was then in New Hanover County, later Bladen County (1734); Anson County (1750); and Mecklenburg County (1792).
- 1730s/40s Scots-Irish and German Settlers traveled the Great Wagon Road (Warriors' Path) from Pennsylvania through the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia to what was then Bladen County, and built homes.
- 1745 St. John's Lutheran Church organized.
- 1749/50 Anson County formed from the western portion of Bladen County.
- 1751 Poplar Tent and Rocky River Presbyterian Churches organized.
- 1755 Governor Arthur Dobbs visited his lands in that portion of Anson County which became Cabarrus County.
- 1762 Mecklenburg County formed from Anson County.
- 1771 The Gunpowder Plot, in which 9 young men from the Rocky River Section of Cabarrus County blew up the King's gunpowder, which was intended to be used against the Regulators, who were western NC farmers protesting against the policies of English officials.
- 1775 According to many historians, on May 20, the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence was signed in Charlotte by a countywide delegation which included eight representatives from the section which would become Cabarrus County. Although there continues to be controversy over the document, the original of which was lost in a fire, the date appears on the NC State Flag by act of the Legislature. In any event, the admittedly genuine Mecklenburg Resolves were enacted on May 30, 1775.
- Local militiamen participate in early actions against the Cherokee Indians and the Scovellites, who were Tories in South Carolina.
- 1783 Taylor's Meeting House, now Bethel UMC, organized.

- 1790 Cold Water Baptist Church organized.
- 1792 After a number of setbacks, a Bill was ratified on December 29, setting off the Northeastern portion of Mecklenburg County as a new County to be named Cabarrus, after the popular Speaker of the House of Commons, a French native named Stephen Cabarrus.
- 1793 January 21 – First meeting of the Cabarrus County Court of Pleas & Quarter Sessions, at which Cabarrus County government was organized.

Concord Beginnings:

- 1793-1795 The County Court met in the home of the widow of Robert Russell, while local residents debated the location of a seat of government for the new County.
- 1795 After the Legislature threatened to intervene, the dispute was settled. There was an agreement to locate the public buildings for the new County seat on the land of Samuel Huie (Hughey) and to have the tract surveyed.
- 1796 February – 26-acre tract conveyed by Huie to Commissioners. Lots in a Town to be named Concord (“Harmony”) to be surveyed and sold. In April 1796, deeds to the purchasers of the town lots were probated (proven) before the County Court.
- 1798 Act passed by General Assembly to better regulate the Town of Concord.
- 1799 Gold discovered in Cabarrus County, on the lands of a Hessian soldier, John Reed.
- 1804 A Presbyterian Church organized in Concord.
- 1806 Concord incorporated by the Legislature.
- 1814 Cabarrus Volunteers left for Alabama to help “Andy” Jackson against the Creek Indians.
- 1825 Lafayette visited North Carolina; men from Concord are part of his military escort.
- 1837 Written records for Concord City Government begin; earlier records lost. On March 13, 1837, newly-elected Magistrate of Police (now, Mayor) J. L. Beard, and four Town Commissioners met to take their oaths of office and organize City government.
- 1838 Concord Methodist Church (Central UMC) built on what is now Church Street, giving the street its name.
- 1838 Tax list shows “taxables” in Concord as 46 white males and 29 African-American males. Poll tax on each male was 50 cents; town property taxed at 25 cents per \$100 valuation.

Yielded total tax in 1838 of \$111.00.

- 1839 The first cotton factory in Cabarrus County organized in Concord; built in 1841.
- 1841 Beginnings of public schools in North Carolina.
- 1843 Members of Cold Water Lutheran Church decided to build a new church in Concord on East Corbin Street, adjoining a cemetery site donated by George Kluttz and a church school. After the new church, St. James Lutheran, moved to its present location on South Union Street, the site continued to be used for educational purposes, and became the site of Clara Harris School and later classrooms for Rowan-Cabarrus Community College. It is now the site of the County Jail.
- 1847/48 Cabarrus County Volunteers in the Mexican War. Upon their return in August, 1848, a memorable celebration held in Concord.
- 1850 Concord Steam Cotton Plant employed 50 persons. Smallpox epidemic in area.
- 1852 City Minutes refer to new "cross street by the jail," which became Depot Street, now Cabarrus Avenue; also, a new street "parallel to Main Street," which became Spring Street.
- 1850 Local newspaper was the *Concord Mercury*, a successor to the *Pilot*. Newspaper Commented on the local boom in business caused by the coming of the railroad.
- 1855 The North Carolina Railroad opened through Cabarrus County. A passenger stop in Southern Cabarrus County was known as Harris' Depot, later Harrisburg.
- 1855 Concord Male Academy organized; R. W. Allison President of Board of Trustees.
- 1856 Boarding school for females opened in 1856 at residence of Rev. D. A. Penick.
- 1857 Miss Maggie Bessent conducted a "subscription school" in two-room frame building behind Central Methodist Church.
- 1859 Mt. Pleasant (originally Mt. Comfort) incorporated. The Lutherans organized a Male Seminary in Mt. Pleasant.
- 1859 According to traditional accounts, the oldest African-American church in Concord, Zion Hill A. M. E. Zion Church, began as Zion Chapel in 1859. Members of the Zion Hill congregation built Price Temple, now Price Memorial A. M. E. Zion Church in 1895. Members of Price Memorial started the First Congregational Church, now United Church of Christ, in 1902.

- 1861 April 20 – First Cabarrus Militia Companies entrained for the Civil War from the railway depot in Concord. By war’s end, some 2,000 Cabarrus area men in 9 companies left for the War.
- 1865 April 18 – Confederate President Jefferson Davis, fleeing from Richmond, spent the night at the home of Major Victor Barringer on North Union Street, now the location of the Library.
- 1867 Scotia Seminary founded by Northern Presbyterian Minister, Rev. Luke Dorland.
- 1868 Sixteen-year-old James W. Cannon came to Concord from Mecklenburg County to begin a career in merchandising.
- 1869 St. James Catholic Church held services on Gold Hill Road; later, moved to Concord.
- 1873 Cannon & Wadsworth established, with J. W. Cannon and J. W. Wadsworth; P. B. Fetzer bought an interest in 1874, and it became: Cannon, Wadsworth, & Co. D. F. Cannon was added in 1877, and it became: Cannons, Wadsworth & Fetzer. By 1881, it was Cannons & Fetzer. Became a stock company in 1897.
- 1875 The second Cabarrus County Courthouse, located on the northwest corner of Union and Corbin Streets, burned; most records were saved.
- 1876 The third courthouse (today’s Historic Cabarrus Courthouse) was built on South Union Street.
- 1877 Captain J. M. Odell purchased the McDonald Cotton Mills at a “distress sale.” Formed the Odell Manufacturing Company. He enlarged the mill and became very successful. Captain Odell was a staunch Methodist, and assisted in building what became Forest Hill Methodist Church near the Mill.
- 1877 Seven Concord families organized an Episcopal Church; worshiped in the vacant Presbyterian Church building on South Spring Street until 1892.
- 1879 Zion Wesley Institute organized in Concord; it is now Livingstone College in Salisbury.
- The positions of Constable and Tax Collector were merged. Appointee served as combination of constable/tax collector/policeman at salary of \$16.66 per month.
- 1880 A Reformed Church missionary held services in Courthouse in Concord.
- Concord population had increased from 700 in 1870 to 1600 in 1880.
- 1881 A Reformed Church congregation organized; building completed in 1885.

- 1885 Disastrous fire in Concord business district led to contract in 1886 with P.B. Fetzer to maintain fire hydrants on Union Street. Mr. Fetzer operated Company until 1901 when the City purchased it for \$9,000.00. The water was obtained from A. Franklin Russell's spring on the Coltrane-Webb School Grounds. Later, two artesian wells were dug there. The water was stored in two tanks, one of 30,000 gallons to be used for fire purposes, and one of about 25,000 gallons for "domestic" purposes. There were eight double-plug hydrants on Union Street. Originally, the water and sewer customers were: Mr. D. F. Cannon; J. W. Cannon; P. B. Fetzer; G. M. Lore; and the St. Cloud and St. James Hotels. A newspaper article in 1893 indicates there were then 65 customers, with a minimum charge of \$6.00 monthly.
- 1886 Baptist services were held in the Courthouse in Concord. Led to erection of First Baptist church building at Spring and Grove Streets in January 1889.
- 1887 Concord Hose and Reel Company formally organized in 1887; 27 members.
- 1887 J. W. Cannon organized his first cotton mill on Mill Street (later Franklin Avenue), with J. W. Odell as President; a Methodist congregation, first known as Bays' Chapel, grew up to serve the community. It later became Epworth UMC.
- 1888 Concord National Bank opened under management of Daniel Branson Coltrane.
- 1889 Baptist services held in the Courthouse; first services in new building held in 1889.
- 1889 Concord Electric Light Company founded by J. M. Odell
Concord Perpetual Savings & Loan organized, with John P. Allison as President.
- 1890 Growth boom in Concord; population had doubled to 4,000 persons. A steam railway (the "dummy line"), organized in 1889, ran uptown from the depot. The new St. Cloud Hotel welcomed guests as did the Morris House. The steam railway broke down in the summer of 1892 and did not run again.
Kerr Bleaching & Finishing Works incorporated; "bleachers, finishers, dyers and nappers." W. R. Odell, President.
- 1892 Local contractor A. H. Propst built lovely Episcopal Church on then West Depot Street.
- 1892 J. M. Odell had added three mills to his original plant, with 21,000 spindles and 846 looms. Forest Hill, a town of 800 people, grew up around his mills. The Bleachery could treat 40,000 yards of cloth a day. Kerr Bag Manufacturing Company shipped huge numbers of bags throughout the country.
J. W. Cannon built his second plant near Railroad on Corban Avenue.

- 1892 No formal celebration of the County's Centennial; however, a large group celebrated the dedication of the Veterans' Monument in front of the Historic Courthouse. It was the center of celebrations of Confederate Memorial Day until 1965.
- 1893 City purchased Oakwood Cemetery from Captain J. M. Odell.
- 1895 First telephones in Concord; first customer, Captain Odell's office connected to bank.
- 1896 Concord Hook and Ladder Company organized, with 20 African-American volunteers.
- 1897 Concord Telephone Company founded by L. D. Coltrane, Sr., and investors; Cabarrus Savings Bank opened January 21, 1897.
- 1898 Cabarrus County Volunteers left on May 2 for the Spanish-American War; returned to Concord on April 22, 1899. Cabarrus County Building, Loan and Savings Ass'n held its first meeting on March 30, 1898. D.B. Coltrane and J.M. Odell on Board.
- 1898 The cornerstone for Coleman Mill laid, with full Masonic honors.
- 1900 Concord population swelled to 8,000 persons. A City Fire Department organized, replacing the all-volunteer Hose and Reel Company.
- 1901 NC Legislature allowed Concord Town Commissioners to submit bond issue of \$150,000 to local voters, for purposes of (1) payment of all debts of City, except Bonds previously issued; (2) purchase for \$9,000 present water system; (3) improving present system of waterworks and a sewerage system; (4) if any balance, sidewalks. (5) first \$25,000 to Graded School Board for school purposes.
- The 1851 Town Charter was amended to create a four-member Board of Water Commissioners, with Mayor *ex officio* member to vote in event of a tie.
- 1901 Concord voters authorized bonds, which allowed construction of Central Graded School on site of old Female Academy, and building a new school on Ann Street.
- 1903 NC Legislature authorized a Concord election to vote on issue of lighting the streets and public buildings of Concord. Citizens were to vote on "Lights" or "Darkness." Proposition carried easily. Aldermen approved contract and work began in September 1903 on new electric light plant.
- 1903 New Town Hall built in Concord on South Union Street, with fire department next door.

- 1905 NC Legislature authorized formation of Board of Light and Water Commissioners, with three members and Mayor as *ex officio* member.
- 1905 Brown Manufacturing Co. incorporated on April 12, 1905.
- 1906 J. W. Cannon begins construction of a “model mill town” on a site in northern Cabarrus County. There is early confusion about the name of the new village. A *Concord Times* story on July 10, 1906, refers to the town as “Cannapolis.” A story in the *Carolina Watchman* (published in Salisbury), discusses the correct Spelling: “It is a combination of two words, Cannon and Polis, the latter meaning a city. The final N in Cannon is dropped thus making the correct spelling Cannopolis.” November 20: The first loan of lumber (1,200 feet of green lumber) was hauled Into Kannapolis by “Trim” and another mule.
- 1906 Citizens Building & Loan Ass’n organized; office in Citizens Bank & Trust.
- 1907 June 3 – J. W. Cannon asked the County Commissioners to improve and pave the road from Concord to Kannapolis. It is now Main Street/ US 29A.
- 1908 Aldermen approved contract for a street railway, and tracks were laid. The inaugural run of the battery-operated street car made in the fall of 1911. Replaced in 1912 by traditional trolley car which operated until 1925. On October 5, 1942, the Alderman ordered the tracks removed and used in the war effort.
- 1909 Jackson Training School opened in Cabarrus County. Concord citizens and its newspaper editor were instrumental in its formation.
- 1911 Library organized under leadership of Mrs. L. D. Coltrane and many others.
- The Foard House, a hotel on South Union, was demolished so that a modern Post Office could be erected to the south of St. James Lutheran Church.
- 1918 Hoover Hosiery Company incorporated by A. R. Hoover, W.W. Flowe & S. D. Arrowood.
- 1921 J. W. Cannon died. His son, Charles A. Cannon, succeeded him as head of the Cannon textile interests.
- 1926/27 Lake Concord built, followed by Lake Fisher in 1946.
- 1927 Hotel Concord built on the site of the former St. Cloud Hotel.
- 1927 J. W. Pike, Sr., brought family to Concord and bought Pearl Drug Company; beginnings of Pike Drug chain; Edward K. Willis started Willis Hosiery with 40 employees, making women’s cotton-rayon hosiery. J. Roy Davis, Sr., and Lawrence Switzer founded S & D Coffee in Charlotte, then moved to Concord in 1928.

- 1928 C. A. Cannon organized nine mills of the Cannon Group into Cannon Mills Company.
- 1937 July 26 – First surgical procedure and first patient admitted to Cabarrus Memorial Hospital. Surgery by Paul K. Maulden, M. D.
- 1937 Celebration of Concord “Bicentennial”; new Armory dedicated
- 1941 December 7 – Pearl Harbor attacked by the Japanese.
- 1949 Celebration of Gold Sesquicentennial
Boys’ Club opened on Spring Street with 700 members
- 1953 Concord has 16,720 population; Cabarrus County: 63,910.
- 1957 New City Hall
- 1959 Charlotte Motor Speedway organized by Bruton Smith and Curtis Turner. The first race, World 600, held in June 1960. After 1961 World 600, the Speedway entered Chapter 11 bankruptcy; Smith and Turner lost control. In 1963, the Speedway emerged from bankruptcy, and group of investors led by Richard Howard assumed control. In 1975, Bruton Smith had acquired enough stock to resume ownership. He hired H. A. “Humpy” Wheeler as president and general manager.
- 1960s Integration of Concord Schools
- 1971 April 2 – Charles A. Cannon died- END OF AN ERA as leadership of Cannon Mills passed outside the Cannon Family.
- 1972 Allison Building demolished after 114 years; site of new courthouse.
- 1973 Carolina Mall opened.
- 1975 New courthouse dedicated – historic 1876 courthouse preserved through action of local citizens. Professor Albert Coates, founder of the Institute (now School) of Government, was featured speaker at the dedication.
- 1978 Phillip Morris announced its intention to build a plant in Cabarrus County. The site of its plant was later annexed into the City of Concord.
- 1980 Census put Concord’s population at 17,835.
- 1981 Concord annexed 278 acres along US 29-601.

- 1982 Concord announced plans to annex 8.06 square miles to the south and west of the City; the area included the Phillip Morris plant.
- 1982 After City Board of Aldermen voted to annex the 8.06 mile area, four lawsuits were filed to contest the annexation.
- 1983 Governor Jim Hunt offered his assistance to Concord and to Phillip Morris to resolve the annexation dispute. A settlement was reached on March 21, 1983, and an agreement setting the date for annexation at June 30, 1986, signed.
- 1984 Concord approved a \$20 million bond issue to pay for water and sewer in the annexed areas, and to build two fire stations.
- 1985 Concord population about 18,000.
- 1986 Concord's area increased to 19.57 square miles and 26,000+ in population. The area included three schools (Wolf Meadow Elementary, Winecoff Elementary, and Hartsell Middle); four sanitary districts (Jackson Park, Rockland, South Concord, and Parkwood); and parts of four volunteer fire department districts (Jackson Park, Allen, Winecoff and Poplar Tent).
- 1989 Hurricane Hugo damages Cabarrus County with sustained winds of 70 mph and gusts of about 90 mph.
- 1990 Outgoing Cabarrus County Commissioners transfer a regional airport to the City of Concord, to avoid its being canceled by the incoming Board of Commissioners. The action was contested in court, but was upheld.
- 1991 Work began on the Coddle Creek Reservoir and a Water Treatment Plant.
- 1991 Concord annexed 3.66 square miles.
- 1994 September – The first airplanes take off and land at Concord Regional Airport, just West of 1-85 in western Cabarrus County.
- 1995 At midnight on December 31, Concord annexed nearly 14 square miles into the City, gaining some 6,200 residents.
- 1995 Reservoir completed on Coddle Creek, in partnership with County and Kannapolis.
- 1996 S & D Coffee broke ground on \$10 million expansion, adding 102,000 square feet.
- 1990s In a contested election, liquor by the drink comes to Concord.

- 1999 September 16 – Grand opening of Concord Mills Mall.
- 2000 Concord population 55,977 per census.
- 2003 Textile mills close.
- 2004 November 11 – Celebration of 10th Anniversary of Concord Regional Airport
Concord recognized with All-America City Award
- 2006 October 9 – Opening Ceremony and Open House, Concord Police Headquarters
- 2007 January 19 – Grand Opening, Embassy Suites Charlotte-Concord Golf Resort & Spa, and Concord Convention Center
- 2007 May 1 – Groundbreaking Ceremony for the Windshear Wind Tunnel
- 2008 December 17 – Dedication of Fire Station #9, Concord Police Substation, City Biodiesel Fueling Station & Community Room, 1020 Ivey Cline Road
- 2009 June 29 – Grand Opening, McEachern Greenway Downtown Connector
- 2010 Concord population 79,066; twelfth largest city in North Carolina.

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Outline of Concord History
Addendum Prepared for Concord 101 Class of 2019
by Clarence Horton

Changing of the Guard (2015 -2018)

- 2015 Gary Gacek of Milwaukee named new Police Chief for Concord
- 2015 Concord celebrates 50 years of Council-Manager form of government
- 2015 New City Hall building on East Cabarrus Avenue opened in December; Council members Dave Phillips and Jim Ramseur retired after 20 years.
- 2016 Concord population estimated at 89,891 to pass Asheville for 11th largest municipality in state with annual growth rate of 13%+.
- 2016 City received coveted Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting in 2016, 28th consecutive year.
- 2017 Mayor Scott Padgett declines to run again after 16 years as Mayor; Appointed to Local Government Commission by Governor Roy Cooper. In 2018, Regional Airport renamed to honor him. (Concord-Padgett R. A.)
- 2017 City hired Dirk Vanderleest as Aviation Director at Regional Airport.
- 2017 Money Magazine ranked Concord as number 38 on its list of Top 100 Places To Live between 10,000 and 100,000 persons in population.
- 2017 Haines announced will open 500,000 sq. ft. distribution center in 2018 in the Airport Business Park.
- 2017 Bill Dusch elected Mayor with about 40% of vote. Terry Crawford upset 30+ Year veteran City Councilman Lamar Barrier.
- 2017 Announced work on new parking deck to begin; to provide add'l parking space for County Courthouse and Addition.
- 2017 Money Magazine named Concord "Best Place to Live" in North Carolina.
- 2018 Seven-days-a-week express bus service from Concord to Charlotte began.
- 2018 February 1 designated Warren Coleman Day in Concord
- 2018 City Manager Brian Hiatt retired; Asst. Mgr. Lloyd Payne named to succeed him. Payne named LeDerick Blackburn and Joshua Smith as Asst. City Managers. Blackburn first African-American Asst. City Manager for Concord.