

Carrboro history — mill town to city

by George Bacso and Gary Dorsey
Staff Writers

My memory extends to the early 1890's when there were no buildings on the site of the present Carrboro but the railway station, which everybody called "the depot," a cotton gin, a flour mill, a blacksmith shop, and one or two dwellings.

—Louis Graves, the Chapel Hill Weekly, March 21, 1947

The town of Carrboro is the school-time home of many UNC students, but few are aware of the history of Chapel Hill's often maligned western neighbor.

Carrboro's origin can be traced to the 10-mile extension of a small railroad from what was thereafter called University Station to a point about a mile west of UNC in 1882. The station served as an arrival and departure point for University students and visitors.

Its past was documented by historians Paul Wager and Hugh Lefler, a UNC Kenan Professor of History, in their biennial history *Orange County 1752-1952*,

published in 1953.

The advent of the automobile put this branch of the railway line out of business for passenger service. Carrboro's growth into a real town began in 1898 when Tom Lloyd built a cotton mill in the area. Although he could neither read nor write until he was well along in years, Lloyd quickly became the richest man in Chapel Hill.

Lloyd's was basically a family-type operation. His workers were either relatives or neighboring farmers from Orange County. A small settlement clustered around the cotton mill and grew steadily. The town, formerly known only as West End (of Chapel Hill), was named Venable after Francis Venable, then president of the University. Another mill was built in Venable in 1905. Both mills became part of the Durham Hosiery Mills in 1910.

Carrboro finally got its name when the town was renamed after Julian Carr Jr., president of the Durham Hosiery plant. Carrboro gained some recognition in successive years, when a factory producing

railroad cross-ties was built, and the town proudly proclaimed itself "the cross-tie center of the world," which Carrboro Mayor Robert Wells still likes to point out.

The economic depression of the 1930's forced the hosiery mills to close, and it was not until 1942 that the town made any sort of comeback. In that year Lloyd's second mill was converted into a munitions plant. Local residents worked in the plant until the end of World War II—the "boom time" for the small town of Carrboro.

After the war, one of the country's largest wool-manufacturing companies, Pacific Mills, bought Lloyd's original mill and opened a branch factory in Carrboro. The factory provided the first opportunity for many local farmers to get into "public service"—earning a wage. Housing was provided for workers and the town grew. Later, the company bought the old munitions plant—and the town grew.

Although the mills were the town's greatest industrial asset, other small but important businesses developed in later years. The oldest is the Fitch Lumber

Company, which was founded in 1923. Another was Colonial Press, Inc., which was established in 1947.

Despite its close proximity to Chapel Hill and UNC, Carrboro had little to do with either until the late 1950's, when the University became a great source of jobs for its residents. Until that time, the two towns' interactions were restricted primarily to trading, and the social life of the Carrboro citizenry did not revolve around the University.

In recent years, Carrboro has become a haven for UNC students who cannot find housing in Chapel Hill. Large tacky apartment complexes have sprung up almost overnight. The town's predominately black image has given way to rapid integration. Although it still strives to retain its rustic image, Carrboro is growing.

Almost 12,000 people currently call Carrboro their home, at least during the school year. A recent independent survey done by Harriet Imrey, Carrboro Public Transportation Commission chairman, in conjunction with the UNC Biostatistics Department, indicates significant changes in Carrboro's population.

The survey shows the town's population has more than doubled in the last two years; it also shows that students comprise 42 per cent of the total population, with UNC faculty and staff members accounting for 17 per cent.

"We've come from a small mill village to a city—because when you think of 12,000 people you think of a city," Mayor Wells said recently.

"We are at the point where we soon will be able to provide adequate sewer and water facilities for every residence within the confines of Carrboro," he said.

Wells said, however, he hopes he has seen the last apartment complex built in Carrboro.

The overnight change from a small town to a rapidly developing community, however, has left parts of Carrboro waiting behind the starting line.

"We still have a fire department in which only one member is paid, and that's the chief," Town Manager William Greeson said recently.

But Greeson foresees even more changes in Carrboro's future.

"I think that Carrboro has gained an identity, and will continue to show this by its continued growth and by the way it meets its own, special problems," Greeson said.

Campus Calendar

Today's Activities

Balling club meeting: 7:30 p.m., 200 Union. Plans for May Bahamas trip will be discussed. All interested in going please attend. Movie of December will be shown.

Computation Center Short Course: ASAP File Management System at 3 p.m., 220 Phillips. IBM Short Course: SPSS for the Experienced Computer User at 2 p.m., 106 Saunders.

Psychology Colloquium Series: Dr. Richard Herrnstein of Harvard University on "Choice is Behavior and Vice Versa" at 4 p.m., 112 Davis.

Open Board meeting of A Woman's Place at 3:45 p.m., Presbyterian Student Center, 119 Henderson St.

Outing Club meeting: 7 p.m., Union. All those going to Linville must attend.

Union Music committee meeting: 7 p.m., Frank Porter Graham Lounge, Union.

Junior Recital (song recital) at 4 p.m., Hill Hall Auditorium, with Henry Muldrow, Jr., tenor, and Paula Forrest on piano. Music by J.S. Bach, Haydn, Schumann, Duperac and Wolf. Admission is free.

Mandatory crew club meeting: 7:30 tonight, 431 Greenlaw. Practice at University Lake will be discussed. Also, sweatshirts and betting shirts will be handed out, so please bring dues and money if you haven't already paid.

Weight lifting club meeting: 7 p.m., Tin Can weight room.

Upcoming Events

Durham attorney Ron Rule will speak on "Gays and the Law" at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, 213 Union. All are invited.

Biology films: "The Wild Dogs of Africa" and three short films on Mendel, Darwin and Harvey at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Carroll Hall Auditorium. Admission is free.

The Di-Psi Societies will present a recital of Baroque chamber music at 8 p.m. Thursday, Diastolic chamber, third floor New West. Following the recital a TV set will be set up to watch the Carolina-Syracuse game.

Full Gospel Student Fellowship Bible Study: 7:30 p.m. Thursday, 204 Union.

Short Course: How to Use the FORTRAN Execution Error Monitor Under FORTRAN at 3:30 p.m. Thursday, 220 Phillips.

Chapel Hill Health Coalition meeting: 8 p.m. Thursday, Wesley Foundation, 214 Pittsboro St. Everyone is welcome.

Career Planning and Placement will sponsor an informal seminar on "Career Opportunities in Law Enforcement and Correction" at 3:30 p.m. Thursday, 210 Gardner.

Nader dinner applications available at Union Desk

Applications for the Survival Symposium's dinner with key-note speaker Ralph Nader, the country's foremost consumer advocate, at 6 p.m. Sunday at the Carolina Inn are now available to students at the Union desk.

"Nader's topic on Sunday night deals with the overall theme of the symposium, which is human survival and the need for man to

change his methods of thinking so he can better co-exist with the environment," Larry Shirley, Survival Symposium chairman, said Monday.

The Student Consumer Action Union (SCAU) and the Carolina Union Symposium will judge the applications, which are due by 3 p.m. Friday at the Union Desk, and make selections on the basis of the applicant's interest in the speaker.

Approximately 35 people can attend the dinner, Jamie Clark, SCAU chairman, said.

Selected applicants will be notified by the Union on Saturday. The dinner will cost \$5, and checks should be handed in at the door of the Inn's Carolina room prior to the dinner, Clark said.

Court results

Winners of on-campus Undergraduate Court seats in the Feb. 26 general elections are: District I-William Westerfield; District II-Ed Rodman; District III-John Sanders; District IV-Bruce Tindall; District VI-Sam Cooper; District VII-Jon Mundorf; District VIII-Millie Riddle.

Off-campus winners are: District I-Ashley Moore; District II-James Taylor and Julia Merricks; District III-Miles "Chip" Goldsmith; District VI-Karen Raschke; District V-Morris Caddell; District VI-John Ragsdale.

The incoming student body president will nominate students for the remaining 28 court seats.

YSA to hold meeting

The Young Socialists Alliance (YSA) will discuss the Socialist Workers Party election platform—"A Bill of Rights for Working People"—at a public meeting at 7:30 tonight in Room 213 of the Union.

Members will also discuss the party's candidates for president and vice president in 1976 and begin organizing a UNC chapter of YSA.

SBI investigating dorm holdup

Campus Security director Ted Marvin said Tuesday the State Bureau of Investigation is aiding the campus police in their search for the suspect who robbed the Hinton James dormitory snackbar March 1.

According to reports, the suspect was seen in the area of the snackbar three hours prior

to the robbery. Fifteen minutes before closing time, he threatened the store attendant at gunpoint, and then forced her to give him more than \$300. The suspect then escaped into the woods behind the dorm.

He is described as a black male, about 21 years old, six feet tall and 165 pounds, with a

medium complexion, medium-length afro hair style and a small mustache.

Marvin also said spring break on campus was surprisingly calm, but he expressed alarm at the number of bicycles left in racks outside dorm areas. He said students could eliminate the risk of theft by locking their bikes in their rooms.

"We had a good spring break, but this week will tell us some more. If something is missing, we'll get some reports," Marvin said.

Marvin also said tampering with parking stickers continues, but has slackened off since the first half of the semester.

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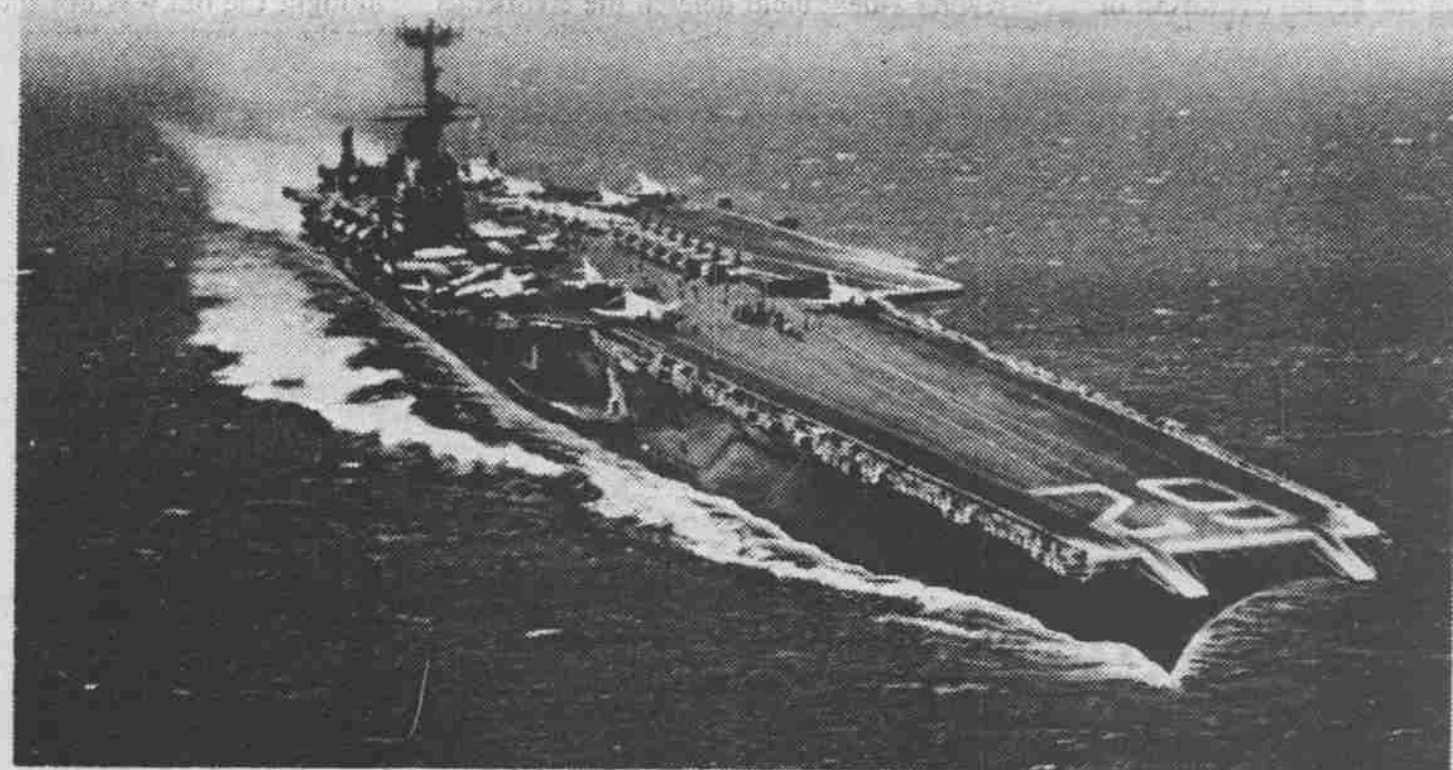
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IT WAS JUST A MATTER OF SELF-CONFIDENCE, MODESTY! SIR!