

Bogue Banks Library: A Prehistory

By Walt Zaenker

This article has been adapted from one written by Walt Zaenker for the Pine Knoll Shores history blog. His complete article, with graphics and endnotes, is available at pineknollhistory.blogspot.com.

The agreeable quality of life in Pine Knoll Shores is based on many appealing amenities. One of these is the Bogue Banks Public Library. In the parks and recreation survey of 2011, 55% of respondents cited the library as popular and important. Again in the strategic planning survey of fall 2013, 51% of respondents cited the library as an amenity used most frequently.

To help residents, neighbors and friends of Pine Knoll Shores understand the distinction of having this treasure in our midst, we will be presenting a series of articles documenting the prehistory to current functioning of the library in our community. We hope to encourage continued patronage of the facility and support of The Friends of Bogue Banks Library. The focus of this article is on the prehistory of the library and its relationship to the creation of libraries in Carteret County.

Occupying a small room in the NC Marine Resource Center in Pine Knoll Shores, the Bogue Banks Public Library opened for business on September 27, 1981, but the following story is about what came before. This prehistory reveals several intriguing connections between Pine Knoll Shores and key players in the story of libraries in Carteret County.

Precursor to Bogue Banks Library: the bookmobile. In the September 1973 issue of the *Shore Line*, a brief note is made reminding the readers that the bookmobile would be visiting once a month in Pine Knoll Shores, stopping on Wednesday morning from 10:30 to 11:15 a.m. It would park in front of William and

Nettie Murrill's home on Yaupon Drive, a few houses south of Oakleaf. (During the early years of Pine Knoll Shores, homes did not have numbered street addresses. The reader was expected to know where the Murrills lived. House numbers were not required until 1976.)

One of the early *Shore Line* articles about the bookmobile included a list of other library facilities that were available to readers. They included the Webb Library, the library at the Carteret Technical Institute (now known as Carteret Community College) and the Carteret County Public Library in Beaufort.

The bookmobile in 1973 was run by the Carteret County Public Library and was staffed by two persons—a driver and a librarian. Searches to date have not identified when it started serving Bogue Banks. The service started in 1947, using a truck with side panels that opened to display the books. That truck was replaced in 1959 with a Dodge panel truck that allowed inside display, so the patrons could be out of the weather. There were more vehicle replacements before the last one in service was damaged beyond repair in an accident in late 1999. The library system lacked the funds to replace it, and for a time a station wagon was employed to deliver books to remote parts of the county and to shut-ins—most of these deliveries were made to the Down East area. The bookmobile service ended in 2001.

History of public libraries in Carteret County: links to Pine Knoll Shores. In 1933, the Women's Club of Morehead City established a small lending library, originally housed in space at the old Municipal Building on the corner of Evans and 8th streets.

Mrs. Eva Webb was a member of this club. Her husband, Earle W. Webb Sr., started construction on a commercial building on the corner of Evans and 9th streets in Morehead City in 1929. This site was the location of his childhood home.

In 1936, Mr. and Mrs. Earle Webb Sr. announced they would remodel the Webb Building and give it to the Morehead City community as a memorial to their son, Earle Webb Jr., who died in 1932. In 1937, the Women's Club lending library was moved to the Webb Building.

(Continued on page 11)

This Month's Puzzle Solutions

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