

THE Northampton County TIMES-NEWS

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County's Most Noted Author Dies In Durham

SEABOARD — Northampton County's most noted literary figure, Bernice Kelly Harris, died last Thursday in a Durham rest home.

Funeral services were held at 2 p.m. Saturday at Seaboard Baptist Church for "Miss Kelly," 79.

Mrs. Harris had been in the convalescent home for five months prior to her death.

Author of a number of books and plays, Mrs. Harris was widely acclaimed in state literary circles.

She was winner of the master playwright award of the North Carolina Drama Association, winner of the North Carolina Award for Literature and holder of the first Mayflower Cup, which was bestowed her in 1939 for authorship of *Purslane*, published by the University of North Carolina Press, the first novel ever published by the Chapel Hill organization.

Mrs. Harris was the first woman to serve as a president of the North Carolina Literary and Historical Association and she was convener of the Roanoke-Chowan Group.

Honorary doctorates were awarded Mrs. Harris by the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and by Wake Forest University. She has been called "North Carolina's first lady of letters."

Mrs. Harris taught for 10 years a creative writing class at Chowan College.

She was a native of Wake County, born in the Mount Moriah community. She graduated from Meredith College in Raleigh.

Mrs. Harris first came to Northampton as a school teacher at Seaboard. It was there she met her husband, the late Herbert Kavanaugh Harris.

According to her files, *Purslane*, Mrs. Harris wrote *Portulaca* that was published by Doubleday. Other books were *Sweet Beulah Land*, *Sage Quarter*, *Janey Jeems*, *Wild Cherry Tree Road* and *Hearthstones*.

Her novel *Southern Savory*, a book primarily about her life, is considered her most popular and best work. At her death she was working on a sequel.

The Santa on the Mantle and The Very Real Truth About Christmas, childrens novels, were also works of Miss Kelly.

Plays were Miss Kelly's favorite works. She felt it was necessary to develop a character and conversation for novels through plays. A group of one-acts, *Folk Plays of Eastern Carolina*, was authored by Mrs. Harris after she completed playwrighting instruction in Chapel Hill.

Two Killed In Gaston Wreck

GASTON — An Ebony, Va., man faces two counts of manslaughter following a double fatality that occurred near here Tuesday afternoon.

George Davis, 24, was charged with two counts of manslaughter and driving under the influence of alcohol when his car ran off N.C. 48 and crashed into a tree Tuesday.

Dead on arrival at Halifax Memorial Hospital in Roanoke Rapids were Calvin Drumgoole, 16, of Rt. 2, Gasburg, Va., and Calvin Orville Jackson, 20, of White Plains, Va.

They were passengers in the Davis car, which sideswiped a car driven by Silas Moody, 63, of Rt. 1, Garysburg and crashed into a tree, according to a report by State Highway Patrolman B. R. Cooper.

Cooper said Davis was thrown out of the car before it crashed.

The highway patrolman said the Davis' car was "hopped up," and that Roanoke Rapids police had been chasing a car fitting its description shortly before the fatal accident.

The two deaths increase Northampton County's list of highway accident fatalities to 14 for the year.



Bernice Kelly Harris, Author

Mrs. Harris organized the Northampton Players, a drama group that became well known and won numerous dramatic awards.

Her plays have been produced in Chapel Hill, Norfolk and Raleigh.

Strange Things Happen and Southern Home Remedies were anthologies compiled by Mrs. Harris' creative writing class at Chowan College.

Dr. Bruce E. Whitaker, president of Chowan, said of Mrs. Harris: "It was our privilege and honor to know her and to count her among our loved ones and friends. She was affectionately known and addressed by all who knew her endearingly as 'Miss Kelly' or 'Dr. Kelly'. Reflecting her modesty, she preferred 'Miss Kelly'.

"She was a great human being, a real humanist in the best sense of the word. She had a genuine interest in persons — whether of high or low estate, rich or poor, black or white. She looked upon all human beings as persons, in her words, 'to be treated with dignity.'"

"She won a lasting place not only in the hearts of her friends and acquaintances in this rural village and

surrounding area, but throughout the state, nation and world through her writings. She was a great humanitarian.

"She had a great capacity for friendship. She had a sense of the appropriate. Among her friends were people in high government circles, the literary world, the educational family, the city, the village, the town, the farm. She used her ability to express herself,

often, by means of friendly but well-written letters and other communications.

"She stood by and valued her friends like Sam Ragan, Richard G. Waiser, Bernadette Hoyle and Thad Stem who wrote a tribute to her published in the News & Observer in October 1964.

"Through her membership and influence as a member of the North Carolina Writer's Conference and the Chohan creative writing class, there are many authors and would-be authors who shall be forever grateful to Miss Kelly for sharing her experiences and insights and for nudging them forward in the development of their own creative writing impulses and skills.

"Dr. Harris was a churchwoman, unashamedly and unabashedly so. Her friends inform me that when in town and her health would permit, she was not only present at the worship services of the church, but was active as a leader and teacher in Training Union and in Sunday School among other things.

"I have any criticism at all of Dr. Kelly it was that she was too timid; it always embarrassed her if she were singled out from among her friends and neighbors as one who had special abilities and made almost unique contributions to the life of the mind and the spirit of man. But even this somehow made her all the more a choice personality and a cherished friend.

"We thank Dr. Harris for sharing her mind and spirit with us. We, and all who knew her either personally or through her writing, are the wiser and better for having had this encounter in life.

"I commend the spirit and the worthwhile life of Bernice Kelly Harris."



Ralph David Britt

NCHS Senior Is National Merit Semifinalist

CREEKSVILLE — Ralph David Britt, a senior at Northampton County High School, has qualified as a semifinalist in the 1974 National Merit Scholarship Program.

Britt is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Britt of Severn. He will compete for one of the 3,100 merit scholarships to be awarded in the spring of 1974.

The semifinalists were the highest scorers in each state on the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test — National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test, administered last October to over one million students in about 17,000 schools nationwide.

Semifinalists must qualify as finalists to advance in competition for merit scholarships. To become finalists, the students must fulfill requirements that include receiving the endorsement of his schools, confirming his high PSAT-NMSQT scores on a second

examination and providing evidence of his academic and other accomplishments.

Ninety percent or more of the semifinalists are expected to become finalists.

A selection committee, made up of experienced college admissions officers and secondary school guidance counselors, will judge all information about each finalist in combination high school academic record, accomplishments, leadership qualities, extracurricular activities, as well as test scores.

Winners may be awarded the one-time \$1,000 grants, or the renewable four-year scholarships that could amount to \$6,000 over four college years. Names of winners will be announced in April and May of 1974.

Young Britt was the academic leader in his class last year and served as chief marshal at commencement. He is also a member of the Beta Club. He attended Governor's School last summer in the field of science. He is active in 4-H work.

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Three File For Posts On Municipal Boards

JACKSON — Only three candidates have filed for municipal elections in Northampton since Friday when candidates could first file.

In Jackson, the first woman ever to enter a political race in the county seat has entered the race for town commissioner.

Jerri G. Boone, wife of a service station operator and secretary to Jackson Attorney Felton Turner Jr., is running for one of the three seats up for grabs on the town board.

School teacher Melvin Broadnax was the first to

enter the commissioners race in Seaboard.

Broadnax, who is also a farmer and cucumber buyer, is a native of Seaboard and is seeking one of three seats open there.

Stanley Davis Jr. of Garysburg has entered the commissioners race there in the first election ever held in Garysburg.

Davis is a native of the town and a farmer. He is running for one of five seats on the town board.

Candidates have until noon Oct. 12 to enter municipal races.

Prospective candidates must file with the Northampton Board of Elections in Jackson Monday, Wednesday and Friday for town elections in all towns but Rich Square, Severn and Gaston which are conducting their own elections.

Gladys Futrell, Rich Square town clerk, urges persons who are registered with the town but not with the county to get their names on county books.

Voters must be on the county books in order to vote in the Nov. 6 general election.

There are no county offices up for election; however, Northamptonians will voice their opinion on liquor-by-the-drink legislation and on a record \$300 million school bond issue.

Filing fees are \$5 in every town with the exception of Rich Square and Gaston where the fees are \$10.

Candidates Mrs. Boone is the daughter

of Almond Buxton and Eula Stephenson Gay of Garysburg. She grew up in Garysburg and attended Weldon schools.

Mrs. Boone has been employed previously by the county in the Register of Deeds office and she has also worked for the Soil and Water Conservation Service.

She is the mother of one daughter, Evelyn.

A member of Jackson Baptist Church, Mrs. Boone's hobby is poetry. One of her poems has been set to music and used by church choirs nationwide.

Broadnax, 43, is a graduate of Coates School in Seaboard. He received his undergraduate degree in science from Shaw University in 1955. He earned his masters in science education at North Carolina A & T University in Greensboro. He was awarded an honorary doctorate from Shaw in April.

Broadnax, who says he has a keen interest in Seaboard and would like to work for the betterment of the town, is married to the former Ruth Bracy of Garysburg. They have a daughter, Melvetta, 13.

Davis, the father of six, is a newcomer to politics. Davis said he is pushing for annexation of territory north, south and east of Garysburg.

Davis attended Northampton Training School and is married to the former Hattie Vick of Enfield. Their children are Stanley Jr., 22, Brenda, 21, Maurice, 20, Gwendolyn, 17, Edna, 14, and Gregory, 10.

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Burgwyn Will Plead Case Before State ABC Board

JACKSON — Bart R. Burgwyn, controversial chairman and supervisor of Northampton's Alcoholic Beverage Control system, will be given an opportunity to defend his double position Oct. 1 in Raleigh.

The state ABC Board has informed Burgwyn of the chance to explain why he should not relinquish one of the posts as has been requested by the state board.

Burgwyn was ordered Sept. 10 by Dr. L. C. Holshouser, chairman of the state board, to give up one of his ABC jobs on face a dismissal. The state board's request follows a conflict of interest investigation into county ABC setups across the state.

Burgwyn, whose salary is \$6,000 annually, claims he is carrying out the duties of the Northampton ABC Board within the powers of the board.

Holshouser, no relation to Gov. Holshouser, stated that Burgwyn is the highest paid ABC board chairman in the state. In Charlotte-Mecklenburg the board chairman earns only \$3,600 per year, the state chairman stated.

A hospital spokesman said Davis was admitted to Halifax Memorial Hospital and was in satisfactory condition.

The accident occurred about 4 p.m. one mile north of Gaston.

Roanoke Valley Rescue Squad removed the bodies from the scene and took Davis to the hospital.

JACKSON — A Rt. 1, Jackson man was handed a suspended sentence Wednesday by District Court Judge Ballard S. Gay for larceny of the rear end of a car.

Raymond Harrell was handed six months suspended and fined \$50 and costs on the misdemeanor conviction.

He pleaded not guilty to the charge of stealing the rear end from a 1955 Chevy owned by Cornell Hawkins Aug. 26. The part was valued at \$50.

Other cases heard and their dispositions:

Julius Peters of Gaston — assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill and hit and

Following the Sept. 10 order, Burgwyn appeared before state officials at the ABC office in Raleigh and requested the hearing.

State board member

Marcus T. Hickman of Charlotte said Burgwyn is "going to have to make a real case for hardship or the order to drop part of his duties will be upheld."

JACKSON — The Bureau of the Census is surveying a sample of households in this area this week asking about immunization against selected diseases, Joseph R. Norwood, Director of the Bureau's Data Collection Center in Charlotte, announced.

The Immunization Survey, conducted nationally every year, provides data on immunization against influenza, smallpox, polio, diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, measles and mumps.

The survey this year will also gather information about chickenpox, diabetes and certain chronic lung and heart

conditions. Results of the survey provide information needed for administration of health programs geared to disease prevention.

The health questions are in addition to the usual ones asked in the monthly survey on employment and unemployment conducted nationwide by the Bureau for the U. S. Department of Labor.

Results of the monthly survey provide data on conditions in the labor force, prime indicators of the economic health of the country. For example, the

(See CENSUS, Page 3)

Gaston Man Gets Suspended Sentence In Larceny Case

run, probable cause found; driving under the influence, \$100 fine and costs; public drunk, nol pros with leave.

Louis Edward of Gaston — reckless driving, \$25 fine and costs.

Edison R. Underdue of Henrico — speeding 82 in a 55 zone, nol pros; no operator's license and drunk driving, six months suspended on a \$100 fine and costs.

Patricia Ann Taylor of Rich Square — fail to see movement in safety, costs.

Reginald Tryone Hockaday of Roanoke Rapids — speeding 75 in a 60, \$10 fine and costs.

Robert Lee Edwards of Odom Prison — felonious escape, waiver.

Joseph L. Blount of Rt. 1, Seaboard — assault, 90 days suspended on costs and special conditions.

Robert Louis Grant of Jackson — reckless driving and leaving the scene of a wreck, nol pros with leave.

James Ashby Sykes of Garysburg — driving in the wrong direction, costs.

James Dale Mosher of Margarettsville — drunk driving, nol pros; no operator's license, \$25 fine and costs.

Danny Keith Martin of Rt. 1, Seaboard — (See SUSPENDED, Page 3)

Renovated County Home To Be Occupied In Mid-October

JACKSON — Oct. 15 is the new target date for occupation of the newly renovated county home building by the Department of Social Services.

Northampton commissioners Monday decided to consider final acceptance of the building at the Oct. 1 meeting.

When Social Services moves to the remodeled structure, the sheriff's department will occupy the present social services building across from the courthouse and an internal alteration project is slated for the courthouse to allow for expansion of the Clerk of Court's office. Other offices will be shifted within the courthouse.

Raleigh architects Paul Brown and Dave Arnold met with commissioners Monday at the regular mid-month meeting. The architects and county officials toured the facility, located one mile north of the county seat.

Brown reported that the building is more than 90 percent complete. He added that heating controls have not been wired properly, the water system has not been sterilized and the boiler hasn't been inspected by the state.

Only minor points like shutters, blinds and temperature controls are holding up occupation of the building.

Cost of remodeling the building is over \$250,000. The county will receive an estimated \$33,000 in rent from the state annually for use of the building. The state is paying \$300 per month for the present facility on Jefferson Street.

Social Services Director Jim Clark told commissioners his staff is ready to move but explained that a move during the first 10 days of the month when the workload is heaviest is not desirable.

In other matters, the board — Accepted the resignation of Elaine M. Jackson of Weldon, assistant county extension agent.

Mrs. Jackson's husband is transferring out of the area. Her resignation is effective Oct. 11.

Opened bids from two companies bidding on a new garbage compactor for the county solid waste program.

Sanco of Winston-Salem submitted a bid of \$32,642 for a

38-yard capacity truck and Simpson Co. of Wilson is bidding \$32,081 on a 35 yard capacity vehicle. Neither bid was accepted.

Approved attendance at a computer and programming school in Boston by Carolyn Wheeler, clerk in the county manager's office.

Meeting Set Oct. 8

JACKSON — The Northampton County Council on Aging will hold a second organizational meeting Oct. 8 at 7:30 p.m. in Jackson.

The place of the meeting will be announced at a later date.

According to John Foriest of Rich Square, secretary of the newly formed Council's executive committee, the committee feels it needs more input from the county's aging.

All interested elderly are urged to attend the meeting, stated Harold Ruffell, president of the Council.

Seaboard Man Gets ECU Alumni Post

GREENVILLE — A Seaboard man has been appointed assistant director of alumni affairs of East Carolina University.

J. Michael Howell, a 1972 graduate of ECU and a former employee of Home Savings and Loan Association of Greenville, will assist Don Leggett, newly named director of alumni affairs.

The two will monitor and coordinate the total fund-raising activity of the university.

Howell is married to the former Rose Jean Drake of Como.

Dr. Leo W. Jenkins, chancellor of East Carolina, commented, "This move was made to bring about a greater degree of coordination in our total fund-raising program, while at the same time broadening the structure within which we might expand on the success already experienced by our alumni program."

"This should cause our alumni and fund-raising programs to reach new heights as we attempt to supplement state allocated funds for further development of University programs. We urge all of our alumni and friends to support these efforts," Jenkins added.

LASKER — The newly organized Northeast Academy Boosters Club is seeking membership in the club that has been formed to promote and finance the Northeast athletic program.

The Eagles Club membership is open to all adults who are patrons of Northeast and junior membership is open to the private school's students.

Co-chairpersons of the membership drive are Dr. Julian Edwards and Claudie

W. Lassiter of Rich Square. Mrs. Eugene Brown Jr. of Rich Square is Eagles Club secretary.

Community chairpersons are Mrs. Carl Price and J. P. Harrell, Jackson; Mrs. E. L. Timberlake Jr., Woodland-Potocasi; Crystal Whitley, Murfreesboro; James Barnes and Gumberry Margarettsville Seaboard; Aubrey Baird, Gaston; David Baisey, Roxobel; A. D. Woodard, Conway; Mrs. A. C. Martin, Severn-Pendleton; Bill Long, Garysburg-Weldon; Mrs. J. V. Wade, Lasker.

Job Corps Interviewing

RICH SQUARE — A Job Corps counselor will be interviewing interested agencies and individuals helping with Job Corps recruiting next week in Rich Square.

Hazel Taylor will be interviewing in the Chanoke Area Development Association branch office in Rich Square all day Sept. 28.