

North Carolina's oldest town is steeped in history

Bath is North Carolina's oldest town. It was incorporated in 1705. There is a story that an evangelist, one George Whitfield, became unhappy with the town people of Bath. As he crossed the water leaving the town, he removed his shoes and shook the dust of Bath from his feet. He then pronounced a curse that the town would not prosper. Since then the town has burned twice, but it now prospers as a perfect reflection of the Colonial era.

Why not visit Bath and the surrounding "Down East" countryside this weekend? You will step back into Colonial history and the heritage of North Carolina.

Blackbeard is said to have married his thirteenth wife here, built a home, and gazed the waters for some six years, before meeting his death off the North Carolina coast. Talk of hidden treasure still surfaces.

Before Bath was established, the spot was inhabited by Indians who fished from the shores of the Pamlico River.

It is easy to turn back the clock in your mind as you walk through Bath. There are no crowds and no sense of urgency. The beauty and fragrance of camellias, azaleas and other plants and flowers are springtime treats.

Historic Bath is maintained as a state historic site, and several buildings that drip with history are open to visitors.

The Palmer-Marsh House, built in 1744, is a National Historic Landmark. It is an excellent example of early eighteenth century Carolina architecture, and one of the state's oldest remaining houses.

St. Thomas Episcopal Church is the earliest North Carolina church still in existence. The "Queen Anne Bell", located in a small English-type belfry, was purchased from Queen Anne's

Bounty, a fund established by her in 1704 for church furnishings and charity. On the second Sunday in June, couples who were married in the church return to renew their vows during "Bride and Groom Day".

The Williams House, near St. Thomas Church, is also a fine example of early construction.

Historic Bath is open Tuesday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m. Admission fees are \$1 for adults and 50 cents for children.

An hour and a half drive north of Bath is another picturesque and historic city, Edenton. Edenton is still a mirror of well-preserved eighteenth and nineteenth century homes.

The Barker House is the Visitor Center for Historic Edenton. The house was built about 1782. Thomas Barker, London agent for the colonies, lived here and his wife, Penelope, presided over the Edenton Tea Party on October 25, 1774, which was the earliest known instance of political activity by women in the American colonies.

The Cupola House (c. 1725), has been called "the best example of an existing wooden house in the Jacobean tradition." A vegetable garden at the back, and the formal garden in the front have been restored.

The Iredell House (c. 1776) was the home of colonial patriot James Iredell and the birthplace of James Iredell, Jr., governor of North Carolina from 1827 to 1828.

The Chowan County Courthouse was used in continuous use from the time it was built in 1767 until early 1980, when a new courthouse was completed. It is considered one of the finest Georgian courthouses in the south.

St. Paul's Episcopal Church has the oldest charter in the state and is the second oldest

church building in North Carolina. It was begun in 1736 and completed some thirty years later.

The Barker House Visitor Center is the starting point for a guided tour of the town and a visit to five buildings. Tours are given Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Sunday from 2 to 5 p.m. Admission prices are: adults \$3.00, students \$1.00; one building: adults \$1.50, students 75 cents.

Somerset Place State Historic Site near Creswell is adjacent to Pettigrew State Park. The two are a perfect blending of the natural with the historic — a discovery of plantation life as it was long ago.

Somerset is on the edge of Lake Phelps, which was once known as the "Eastern Dismal", and for many years the region was called a "haunt of beasts".

Josiah Collins III began construction of the 14-room mansion in 1830. The Collins mansion was the gathering place of the plantation society.

Large gardens, lawns, tree-bordered drives and walkways were laid out. "The buildings were so numerous that visitors often commented that the dwelling looked like a village," said one report.

The mansion is constructed of heart cypress cut on the plantation, and the design is similar to homes found in New Bern. The old carriage lane remains at Somerset Place, and it's easy to visualize carriages bringing visitors to the mansion many years ago.

Somerset Place is open from 9 to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 1 to 5 p.m. on Sunday. Guided tours are furnished, and there is no admission charge.

Historic Hope near Windsor was the home of Governor David Stone. The Historic Hope Foundation has gone to minute detail to restore the home with precise detail.

It was constructed about



Palmer-Marsh House

The Palmer-Marsh House at Bath, North Carolina, was the home of Colonel Robert Palmer, who prior to the American Revolution, was surveyor-general of North Carolina. The structure, a National Historic Landmark, is part of the Historic Bath State Historic Site.

inventor of the Gatling gun, was born nearby, and the museum contains a Gatling gun and a room with woodwork from the Gatling plantation.

Special tours with informed guides may be arranged for groups by writing: Murfreesboro Historical Association, Post Office Box 3, Murfreesboro, North Carolina 27855.

Richard Jordan Gatling,

ATTENTION MR. FARMER!

VALHALLA PRODUCE COMPANY IS NOW CONTRACTING PEANUTS THROUGH GOLDKIST, of SUFFOLK, Va. EXCELLENT PRICES FOR YOUR 1980 CROP!

BUT HURRY, WORK MUST BE TURNED INTO YOUR ASCS OFFICE BY JUNE 14!

CONTACT VALHALLA PRODUCE COMPANY RIGHT AWAY!!

PHONE: 482-7431 OR 426-3426 EDENTON, N.C.