

# THE BETTER WE KNOW US ...

**KINSTON**—His announcement from the pulpit on Sunday, August 1, that he would retire from the pastorate of First Missionary Baptist Church, East Street, Kinston, effective October 17, 1976, noted the termination of a 48-year professional tenure on the part of Dr. R. Irving Boone.

A two-year principalship of the Lincoln Heights High School of Wilkesboro, was followed by a ten-year period as supervising principal of the 96-teacher, Rockingham-Richmond County Negro Schools. During five of these same years, he served as pastor of the Providence Baptist Church of Rockingham and the Friendship Baptist Church of Hamlet.

In 1941, he began a 23-year pastorate of the Central Baptist Church of Wilmington. During his ministry in Wilmington, he founded, and for 15 years, served as President of the Eastern Carolina School for Ministers.

In 1964, he accepted an appointment to the faculty of Elizabeth City State University, in the capacity of Assistant Professor of Sociology and Campus Minister. He served the university for a period of ten years, retiring from his post there in 1974. During his tenure on the faculty at

ECSU, he served, simultaneously, as pastor of the Pleasant Plains Baptist Church of Ahoskie.

In the meantime-seven years ago-he accepted the pastorate of First Missionary Baptist Church, East St. Kinston. During his first three years at the local pastorate, he commuted, periodically, to serve the Kinston pulpit, while also utilizing the services of assistants, to serve in his absence.

In 1974, upon his retirement at Elizabeth City State University, he and Mrs. Boone took up residence in Kinston, moving in their newly-built home, at 605 Eagle Road.

With the beginning of his local pastorate-seven years ago-there was immediately launched a broad "Go Forward" program, involving a variety of remodeling, renovation, and beautification projects, with improvements on the church plant in excess of \$75,000.00; and all of these improvements on a "Pay-as-you-go" basis, which means that, presently, there are no encumbrances on the church.

In the meantime, concurrently, there has gone forward an extensive organizational expansion program, with numerous additional activities and large budgetary increases for the

various denominational objectives. During the same period, approximately 100 new members have been added to the church membership, and five functional auxiliaries and departments added to the organizational structure.

With his major concentration in the areas of religion and education, Dr. Boone has found time to identify himself with a variety of other activities, on the local, state and national levels.

For the past fifteen years, he has served as Editor of The Masonic Journal, Official Organ of the Grand Lodge of Prince Hall free and accepted Masons in North Carolina, and as Grand Director of Public Relations-for a token honorarium. These offices he still holds. For the past six years-up until his recent retirement from such office - he has served the National Role of Grand Chaplain of the Improved benevolent protective order of Elks of the world. Upon action of the Grand Exalted Ruler of IBPOEW, of Philadelphia, he is presently - named for life - Grand Chaplain, Emeritus, of the Elks.

He served for ten years as statistician of the General Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Inc., and for four years as Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Conven-

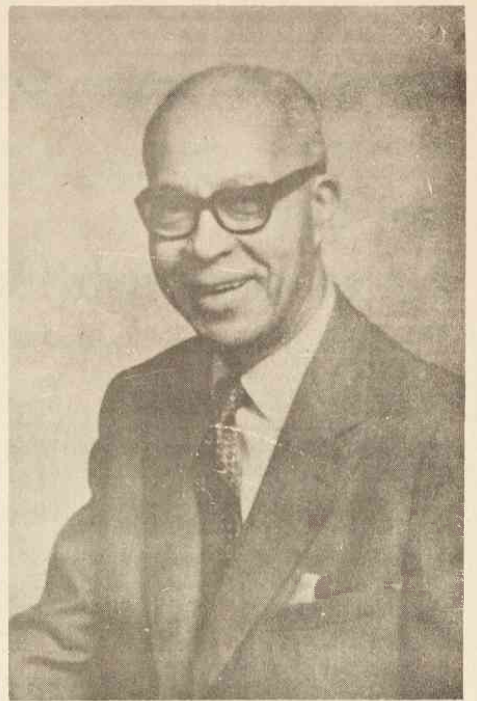
tion's Executive Board; while he served, repeatedly, as Chairman of the Denomination's Committee on Resolutions. He is still a member of the Executive Board.

His scholarly manuscripts include, means and ends in Religious Education: Some Distinctive Problems of the City Church; A Functional Study of the Ministerial Profession; Vital Dimensions of Effective Power; Negro Progress. 8 Volumes.

A native of Mufreesboro (Hertford County) N.C., his educational background includes Shaw University, Raleigh; Lincoln University, Oxford, PA; N.C. Central University, Durham Union Theological Seminary and Columbia University, New York City; The University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; while his travels abroad include tours of parts of three continents - Europe, Africa, and Asia, Embracing all of The Holy Land.

In addition to an abbreviated schedule with religious and fraternal activities, Dr. Boone, following his retirement, will be utilizing his time in rest and relaxation with his wife at their Kinston residence, and engaged in the writing of three additional books, already begun. There are also plans for some further (deferred) travels.

To know Dr. Boone, also means, **THE BETTER WE KNOW US.**



## THE TRIBUNAL AID

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WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 25, 1976
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MEMBER: North Carolina Black Publishers Association
North Carolina Press Association, Inc.

The 1976 Editions of THE TRIBUNAL AID will be dedicated to America's bicentennial Celebration, with emphasis on contributions our Race has made in the making of America, from birth to the present.

In 1976 there should not be a need to lift these contributions from isolated sources. Our past should be interwoven into the fabric of our civilization, because we are, except for the Indian, America's oldest ethnic minority.

We have helped make America what it was, and what it is, since the founding of Virginia. We have been a factor in many major issues in our history. There have been many misdeeds against us, yet we have been able to live through them and fight back. This is living proof of our history.

Our role in the making of America is neither well known or correctly known. Many positive contributions have escaped historians and have not found their way into the pages of many history books.

We will strive to give readers, Black and white, many little-known facts about our past and it is hoped that a proper perspective of our history will be of value to persons who may believe that as Black people we have an unworthy past; and hence, no strong claims to all rights of other Americans.

Faye Ashe, Black History Editor

**A VIABLE, VALID REQUIREMENT  
RESPONDING TO  
BLACK NORTH CAROLINA**

## FLORENCE SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

*"What is now the Florence Primary School has gone through many changes since its beginning as an all Black School in the Florence Community. Mrs. Joanne Delaune, School Historian was unable to establish the exact date of the first school. She has through her research been able to compile the history of the Florence School and its community. Mrs. Delaune spent many hours going through school records, books and interviews with local citizens. On May 20th her research ended with the presentation of the book to the P.T.A. which is now in the school library. All facts cannot be presented here, but you are invited to visit the Library and read the History of the Florence School and community.*

A history of the Florence Community would be incomplete without an account of the Beard Family and the famous Beard's Hat Shop which was located 3/4 miles south of the Village.

Richard Beard came from Nan- ket in 1772 and settled in the Florence Community, building his house about 300 yards south of the Friends Meeting House. His son, William, inherited his father's place and lived there until his death in 1795. William was a man of many skills, among them being that of making men's hats. At his death he willed his hatter's tools to his son, David, who bought land from Phineas Mendenhall and built a shop, home, and school about 3/4 of a mile south of Florence where he made hats from about 1797 to 1849. Locally, this residence was known as a station in the underground railroad. He was a key figure in smuggling slaves and the free Negro out of the South until 1860. Beard's Hat Shop was a thriving industry through all these years and Beard's hats were known all over this part of the Country. People who were going west, as so many did from this section in the 25 year preceding the Civil War, would take along a new

hat. And they must have been proud of these hats, for even to this day descendants of some of these travelers come back to visit the haunts of their ancestors, and one of the most frequent questions concerns Beard's Hat Shop. Time has erased these sites as they no longer exist.

Another of the Florence landmarks was Barnums Chapel. Lavania Beard married Thomas Barnum, a Methodist Minister, and settled across the road north of the old Beard home. They built a church in Florence known as Barnums Chapel. This church was used for years as a place of worship for all denominations. It was built on the present site of the Turner's Chapel grave yard. The original building was constructed of bricks made by David Beard. In Colonial times bricks were always made on the site of construction. Sometime before the Civil War the Barnums' moved to Indiana.

The property was purchased by J. Harper Johnston and later purchased by the Black congregation of A.M.E. Church.

As mentioned in the article, "The Village of Florence" by H. Clay Briggs the Rody Lancaster house was purchased by a black man, Pressley Wyatt Raper. "Pres Raper" was a well known and respected leader in the community, and it is thought today that he played a part in settling the turbulence of the re-construction period. The ruins of his house stands on the property adjoining the present Florence Primary School playground and the Guilford County School Board is presently acquiring this parcel of land.

The first school building erected in the Florence community for blacks is remembered and said to have existed on the back part of the Pettiford property.

Mrs. Savannah Williamson remembers her grandmother's memories of a tending a log cabin school. The children who attended this first Florence school are no longer living; therefore, we were unable to secure any more information.

The children of Florence then went to the Jamestown office building opposite the old Mendenhall store, corner of High Point City Lake property. Judith Mendenhall taught the black children the usual subjects plus household duties, religion, and good behavior. This school was part of the petty body funds.

Continuing to follow education for the Black man in Florence will be strictly from approved minutes of Guilford County School Board meetings.

### Chronological Order:

January 3, 1887 - Jamestown District #1 (colored)  
Board members were:  
Dr. Nereus Mendenhall, Chairman  
Dr. Mc...  
Professor M. H. Holt  
"By order of the board, Dr. Mendenhall was ordered to stop said District because of want of patronage and general dissatisfaction on part of patrons"

December 5, 1887-Jamestown District #1 (colored)  
Secretary ordered to visit Jamestown and report as to advisability of moving school site on dividing districts."

September 29, 1888  
Petition of Jamestown citizens asking for new district (white). Petition was granted.

January 2, 1889 - Jamestown District #1 (colored)  
The board ordered that Charles

Nelson, Preston Raper, Alexander Pettiford be appointed school committee for District #1 (colored).

1890 - This second Florence School was built somewhere on the Dell (sis) Cain property. The present site of the Wil Fuller Service Station. The school had its beginning with approximately 30 students in an unpainted, one room structure featuring hand-made benches cut from rough lumber and a recreation platform across the front of the room, a rectangular space on the wall painted black to serve as a blackboard and a large cast-iron stove in the center of the room. For 19 years this school, always taught by a man, served the growing community.

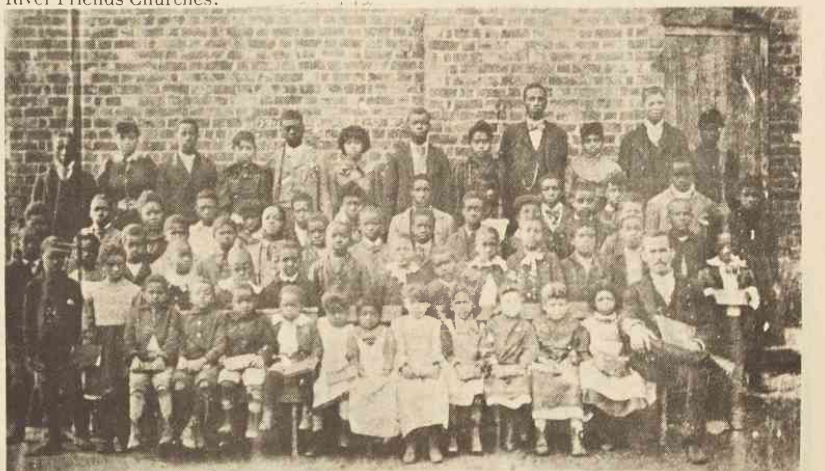
December 5, 1892  
Ordered by the board that the school #1 Jamestown (colored) be moved back to Florence.

1894 - School can be traced to old Induiged Meeting House (better remembered by the blacks as Primitive Baptist Church). This parcel of land existed inside of High Point City Lake property and is one of the Deep River Friends Churches.

### Founders Day Program Held At Florence School



Mrs. JoAnn Delaune (right) shows a notebook she compiled about the history of Florence School to four women who took part in a Founders Day program at the school. They are (l-r) Mrs. Florence Allen, Mrs. Alice Jackson, Mrs. Annie Smith, and Miss Savannah Williamson. Florence School, on Penny Road near Wendover Road, goes back to the early 1800's. The Founders Day program was sponsored by the Florence School P.T.A.



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