

# 1990: Looking Back On A Year Of Good And Bad News In Kings Mountain

## KM Had Good Times, Bad Times In 1990

Like most other towns and most other years, Kings Mountain saw its share of good and bad times in 1990.

Many people lost their jobs because of the closing of two major textile plants--Sadie Mills and Kinmont--but more jobs were created through expansion of existing plants such as Phillips and DuPont of Grover and Cinderella Knit of Kings Mountain, and the addition of new industries in the area such as Pioneer Motor Bearing and HH & NK.

Kings Mountain Schools completed two major building projects--additions at Kings Mountain Middle School and Kings Mountain High School--and projects were begun at Grover and East Elementary Schools. All that was possible because of two half-cent state sales taxes and a successful \$30 million bond referendum approved by Cleveland County voters in 1989.

The City of Kings Mountain also got well under way on major bond projects. City voters approved a \$9.2 million referendum in 1989 to improve the utilities system and as 1990 came to a close several phases of improvements to the electrical, water and sewer systems were about 50 percent complete. Bonds will be sold for remaining projects early this year and the city hopes to be near completion of all of the projects by the end of the year.

Some of the news highlights of 1990, as taken from the front page of the Herald:

### JANUARY

Leonard Anderson of Kings Mountain got his Christmas wish. He underwent a successful liver transplant at Duke Hospital in Durham. The 38-year-old had needed a liver since July and on Christmas Day the call came from Duke Hospital that one was available...

Jeff Rosencrans of Lancaster, S.C., was hired as city clerk-treasurer at a starting salary of \$34,197. He served as finance director of the City of Lancaster for four years and was hired from a field of 75 applicants for the position vacated by Marvin Chappell in November...

City manager George Wood predicted there would be no rate increases for city services in 1990...

City employee Emmett Moss was recuperating from injuries sustained on August 12 when a car slammed into a barricade where he was working on a broken water line...

The United Fund announced its largest fund raiser ever with gifts totaling \$126,235.75...

The Kings Mountain School Board named a committee to study reassignment of elementary students to achieve racial balance...

City workers were running bacteria tests at Pilot Creek where an oil leak from Spectrum yarns during the Christmas holidays killed a large amount of organic bacteria necessary to treat waste water.

Grover City Council approved a resolution of intent to annex 43 homes in the area of Hardin Circle, 226 North and Bethlehem Church Road...

Ellen Elam was honored for 35 years of service as organist at First Baptist Church...

The City appointed a recycling committee to begin formulating rules and regulations for use of the city's new recycling center...

Dr. Stan Hardin, Shelby chiropractor and entertainer, was guest speaker at the annual Chamber of Commerce dinner...

Kings Mountain hired its first full-time executive director of the Chamber of Commerce. Lisa Rhyne, 26, worked one day and quit...

KM's Leanne Sanders got a part in the new Tom Cruise movie "Days of Thunder," being filmed in the Charlotte area...

Popular Plonk Brothers salesman, Jimmy Harris, died at the age of 68.

### FEBRUARY

Kings Mountain purchased a new communications system for the police department at a cost of \$144,907 to be paid for over a four-year period...

Council denied a rezoning request by J.W. Tesseneer after opposition from neighbors. He wanted to open a business to rent small electric tools...

Pioneer Motor Bearing Co. broke ground for a new 25,000 square foot manufacturing plant near Grover. It began operation in June...

Dr. G.K. Howard Jr. was elected president of the Chamber of Commerce...

The N.C. Board of Education ruled that satellite news shows can't take class time, causing KM Schools to cancel plans to show Channel 1 at the high school and middle school.

Dean Ridings was named publisher of the Kings Mountain Herald.

A ruptured gas main in front of 106 N. Battleground Avenue, resulted in the evacuation of 10 residents, the Kings Mountain Depot Center and First Wesleyan Church...

Kings Mountain Hospital announced plans to open a psychiatric unit to serve Cleveland County and surrounding areas...

Paul Cash was hired as new Grover policeman...

Charles F. Harry was elected chairman of the organizing Board of Carolina State Bank...

A \$1.1 million building project was approved for Grover School...

The possibility of closing East School came up again at the Feb. 12 board meeting. John Goforth, chairman of the special committee studying elementary organization, said the committee listed that as one of the options even though the School Board had previously voted not to close the school...

KM sixth and eighth graders ranked among the best in the state in state writing test scores...

KM teachers approved a differentiated pay plan as part of the state's Senate Bill 2 package...

KM Schools and the City of KM approved contracts to share each other's facilities...

A \$3.2 million contract was approved for improvements to the Pilot Creek Waste Treatment plant...

The city voted to move its recycling bins to the community center...

The city paid Gastonia \$500,000 for its share of the Crowder's Creek Waste Treatment plant...

### MARCH

By lack of a motion, a request to close two alleys to give more room for an apartment complex near Cansler Street was defeated, but despite what some areas may have thought, the action did not stop the project from going on as planned...

The dismissal of Ken Jenkins' law suit against the city was upheld by the N.C. Supreme Court. Jenkins



**SPEAKS ON SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ZONES** - Alan Propst addresses the KM School Board on possible elementary school organization during a meeting in 1990. The board appointed a committee to study the best ways to achieve racial balance and later in the year hired a private firm to recommend assignment plans.

sued the city after he was terminated as head of the cemetery department.

The city approved \$1 million over the next two years for water, sewer, paving and drainage improvements in Bridges Drive, which officials termed "a maintenance headache for the city."

Grover City Council approved a \$54,238 addition to Town Hall.

Kyle Smith retired as recruiting manager at Combustion Engineering.

Grover hired Mike Church of Kings Mountain as water treatment plant operator.

Lizzie Talbert celebrated her 97th birthday.

Kings Mountain Kiwanis Club celebrated its 50th anniversary.

Loretta Husky Cozart, 29, joined the Chamber of Commerce as executive director.

Fire destroyed the old Stroupe Florist building on North Piedmont.

Mayor Kyle Smith broke a tie vote for the first time in two years to put the recycling center on the east side of town.

Vandals knocked out windows at seven businesses on North Piedmont.

### APRIL

Celebrate Central Day was held at Central School, which was closed as a middle school and a permanent facility for students. (However, East students are using the building this year and West students will use it next year while their new classroom additions are constructed).

New Grover Councilman Norman King said Mayor Bill McCarter over-stepped his authority when he postponed a Town Board meeting.

J.M. Huber Co. announced it would sell its mica mining operation near Grover.

Peggy Hord and John Gladden, 1945 KMHS classmates who hadn't seen each other since high school graduation, were reunited at a class reunion and later married at First Baptist Church.

A union vote was delayed at Eaton Corp. Arthur Depalma of Winston-Salem, assistant to the regional director of the National Labor Relations Board, said Teamsters Local 61 filed charges accusing Eaton of promising workers higher wages and better benefits to keep the union out.

Kings Mountain Schools learned they would have to return over \$150,000 from its budget because of the state budget shortfall.

Popular Nazarene minister P.D. Montgomery, 80, of Grover, died.

Property owners on the west side of KM threatened to sue the city if it approved a new high voltage transmission line near Davidson Park.

City council awarded \$3.9 million contract to Thamer Construction Co. of Atlanta, Ga., for the major portion of the waste water utility improvement projects.

### MAY

A tornado ripped through Bethlehem, destroying a mobile home and farm buildings.

Top academic scholars were honored at a banquet at KMHS.

Cablelink opened a 15,000 square foot addition to its manufacturing plant on Childers Street.

KM's Joyce Cashion and Ollie Harris were winners in the Democratic primary election but judicial candidate Scott Cloninger and Senate hopeful Bruce Scism lost.

Grover teacher Theresa Briggs was named KM Teacher of the Year.

The city completed street widening project on Cleveland Avenue.

Ex-POWs Boyd Howell of Kings Mountain and Bob Harneson of Mesa, Ariz., were reunited after 47 years at Howell's home in Bethlehem.

Finishing touches were put on the new walking track at the community center.

The first annual Wellness Kickoff was held at John Gamble Stadium, with citizens receiving information on physical fitness, diet, blood pressure and cholesterol and also participating in recreation events.

School reorganization committee recommended that the School Board close East and West schools and consolidate them with Bethware, Grover and North to make three larger K-5 campuses. (The board later voted against the recommendation).

Graduation was held for 234 seniors at KMHS.

Retired teacher Piccola Blalock died at the age of 87.

Michael Whisnant, 32, died in Atlanta, Ga.

Charlie Ballard, Don Parker and George Harris were inducted into the Kings Mountain Sports Hall of Fame.

A Japanese firm, HH & NK Company, announced plans to construct a 20,000 square foot building on U.S. 74 to manufacture custom dimension wood stock for the golf club industry.

### JUNE

KM Schools voted to hire YSAC, Inc. to re-draw elementary attendance lines.

Grover Town Council announced a \$359,152 budget and 29 cents tax rate.

KM announced a \$16.88 million budget, down from \$17.2 million.

City Council voted to put up a high powered electric substation on Deal and Parker streets rather than in the Davidson Park area.

Seven arrests were made in a fight which left three people injured. Joe Cody, 20, his half brother, Bart Truesdale, 20, and their friend, Eric Sparrow, 19, drove to North School for an arranged meeting with a man

he had been feuding with. When they arrived they found a truck full of 10 men and one woman.

Carolina State Bank announced its KM site would be on East Gold Street.

The United Fund set a goal of \$127,500, its biggest ever.

Jean Thrift was promoted to the position of director of pupil support for KM Schools.

The Chamber of Commerce shot a video promoting the city.

The city installed weirs at Moss Lake dam and repaired critical cracks in beams connecting the original water plant to the four million gallon T.J. Ellison Water Treatment plant expansion.

Shirley Bynum resigned as principal at West School.

Bob Maner gave his 122nd pint of blood during a 35-year period.

### JULY

Twelve power outages since May had KM electrical employees puzzled but they vowed to work 60 hours a week until the problem was found.

The weather was drying up crops as the temperature reached the high 90s.

A second Cleveland County child became ill with Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever.

Foust Textiles opened a new plant on Canterbury Road.

Four were promoted by KM Schools. Sherrill Toney was named principal of West School; Ronnie Wilson was named assistant superintendent for personnel; Jane King was named assistant superintendent for instruction; and Carolyn Roark was named director of the exceptional children's program.

KM CAT scores were up in grades three through eight.

Ground was broken for KM's two million gallon expansion and sludge dewatering facility at Pilot Creek.

KM citizens were urged to cut back on power due to hotter than average temperature.

KM school lunch prices increased by 15 cents.

Archdale residents petitioned the city for city water.

Darrell Austin rejoined the Herald as publisher.

Sadie Mills, KM's oldest family owned mill, closed. Over 100 employees lost their jobs.

A \$25 million expansion was announced by Phillips and DuPont Optical, Inc., in Grover, increasing production capacity by 30 percent and creating 75 to 100 new jobs.

George McClain retired from Cooper Furniture for the second time. He had worked with the company for 45 years.

### AUGUST

A rezoning request by realtor Warren Reynolds drew opposition from property owners and KM School officials. Reynolds wanted property he owned near East school rezoned so a car stereo shop be built. He later withdrew the request.

New expansions were completed at KM Middle School and KMHS just in time for the opening of school.

Random drug testing was authorized by City Council for some city employees, including police, gas department employees, firemen, clerks, receptionists, meter readers, etc.

Lisa and Roger Bazemore took over management of Jim Testa Chevrolet.

Cinderella Knitting Mills announced an expansion which will create 150 jobs.

Grover Board approved the annexation of land. Gas prices soared after Iraq invaded Kuwait.

Harold Riddle, 62, owner of Riddle Fabrics, died.

School Board spent most of its 90 minutes meeting time discussing a proposed policy which would increase teacher work days from seven hours and 20 minutes to 7 1/2 hours a day. The board put the policy on trial for 30 days and at the next meeting the matter was dropped.

TG&Y-McRory announced it would close Oct. 31, saying the new 74 bypass killed its business. TG&Y opened here in 1972 and closed in 1984, but because of public protest reopened in May 1985.

School officials feared high gas prices may lead to a four-day school week and depletion of gas funds by mid-February.

Traffic was hot and heavy on Phifer Road on the opening day of school, with some people waiting in line for 30 minutes. The city and school officials began lobbying the state DOT to build a connector road to ease the traffic problem.

Kings Mountain National Guard began getting its equipment in order for a possible call-up because of the Persian Gulf crisis.

City council protested the census figures of 8,804, saying census counters must have missed many homes. Because redistricting is required every 10 years city officials said it could delay the 1991 elections.

Pinebrook Colony, a 43-unit subdivision, began construction in the Oak Grove area.

### SEPTEMBER

Cyndi Hawks and Kevin King of New Jersey drove over 750 miles to be married in Kings Mountain because the town had "King" in its name.

Etzel Yarbrow and Willie Black, 82, married.

Fred Dixon, 44, former KM teacher, died after a long battle with cancer.

KM Schools voted to participate in the Tech Prep Program with Cleveland Tech and the Shelby and County School Systems. The program is designed to ensure a smooth transition for students into the vocational and technical curriculum at the community college.

Senator Ollie Harris received the American Medical Association Dr. Nathan Davis Award.

Grover Town Board deeded land on which the fire department is located to the Grover Fire Dept.

Winn Dixie was robbed of \$800 when a man went to the checkout counter and, when the clerk opened the cash register, he grabbed a handful of money and ran.

C.J. Gault, Hilliard Black and Bill Russell were teaching a Bible class to residents of Kings Mountain Convalescent Center.

A \$1.2 million contract was awarded for construction of new classrooms, cafeteria and administration offices at East School.

Caroline Harper, 24, was killed in a car wreck in Asheboro.

City Council authorized expenditures of \$3,241,194, including an architectural contract of \$76,427 for renovation of the old Post Office as the law enforcement center.

Midpines residents submitted a petition with 213 names protesting the county's decision to place a manned collection/recycling center at the site of the current green box.

Former city fireman T.C. "Red" McKee, 81, died.

### OCTOBER

Despite rain, Mountaineer Day was a huge success. Sam P. Manning of Spartanburg spoke at the 210th anniversary of the Battle of Kings Mountain.

Ground was broken for improvements at T.J. Ellison Water Treatment Plant.

A committee was named to study five-year recreation needs for the city. Members are John Blalock, Twyla Robinson and Scott Neisler.

State Supt. Bob Etheridge spoke at dedication of new high school and middle school facilities.

A contract was awarded for construction of the new 3,600 square foot Carolina State Bank at 114 E. Gold., the first new bank to open in the county in 67 years.

Vandals damaged Grover Cemetery, turning over 15 monuments and causing thousands of dollars damage.

Plans for a new 14-classroom addition at Bethware School were approved.

Avalonia H. Weaver, 90, died.

Mrs. Willie Dilling, 86, died.

### NOVEMBER

U.S. textiles celebrated their 200th anniversary.

Mother nature broke the drought with a vengeance as the remnants of two tropical storms passed through the area, dumping seven to eight inches of rain.

Herald reporter Lib Stewart broke her wrist and a bone in her leg while covering a story at Warren Reynolds' huge revival tent on Highway 161. Recent rains had softened dirt in a recently-dug ditch and when she stepped across it, the dirt gave way.

William Orr was honored for many years of service as president of the Lincoln District Lay Council.

Amy Ford was crowned KMHS homecoming queen.

What began as a fun fishing trip for five KM and Shelby men turned into a nightmare when power was knocked out during a storm on the outer banks and the Herbert Bonner bridge across Oregon Inlet was damaged by a ship, stranding thousands of people on the island.

The first Habitat For Humanity home in Kings Mountain was being planned for Tracy Street.

John C. Caveny, well-known KM businessman, died at age 77.

### NOVEMBER

Joyce Cashion was a winner in County Commissioner race; 18-year veteran Ollie Harris was defeated in the State Senate race; and John Weatherly lost in he State House race.

Gene White was named to the County Planning Board.

Homer Baucom and Carrol Gray purchased Jim Testa Chevrolet.

Major John Smith III, operations and security officer of the 812th Transportation Battalion in Charlotte, spoke at the Veteran's Day ceremony at Mountain Rest Cemetery.

The first KM Schools Parent Fair drew 137 parents at KM Middle School.

Schools approved a plan to cut bus waiting time and shorten routes to try to save fuel.

The city board approved a study of Davidson Lake dam, asking engineers to get cost estimates and recommendations on whether to repair it, breach it, or lower the water level to under the state requirements.

The city approved updating signalization on West Gold Street and approved 90-day 15-minute parking along East Gold.

Susan Hendricks was KMHS Carrousel Princess.

Mayor Smith wrote a letter to service personnel in Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf and asked citizens to sign it.

Nikki Hildebreth, 18, lost all her worldly possessions when a fire destroyed the camper in which she had been living for just a few days.

### DECEMBER

KM Christmas parade drew over 150 units.

The "Blue Light Bandit," a man in a Trans Am and impersonating a police officer, stopped a woman in Kings Mountain but she sped away. He stopped several others in the area.

Fred Tate retired after 28 years as Rural Route 2 carrier.

YSAC, Inc. presented its first elementary school re-assignment draft to the Board of Education.

Joey Hopper, North School Principal, was named KM Principal of the Year.

The city approved \$191,157 over a five-year period to purchase a Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition System which will allow the city electric department to automatically monitor the system and cut voltage during high demand periods, saving over a half-million dollars over a five-year period.

The city asked the county to reconsider its plans to place a manned garbage collection/recycling center at Midpines.

Contracts were approved for a \$1.1 million classroom addition at Bethware School.

KM plants took long holidays because of the slow economy.

Kinmont announced it would close December 31.

The Empty Stocking Fund and United Fund fell short of their goals.

Alexander Realty of KM and ERA Marlene Peeler and Associates of Shelby announced that they would merge January 1.