

A History of the Bahá'í Faith in North Carolina

by Steven M. Kolins

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Acknowledgement and preface

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Acknowledgement and preface

Any project depends on many things coming together. Bahá'u'lláh says: “...*the doings of men are all dependent upon Thy good pleasure, and are conditioned by Thy behest.*” A work of history depends on a spirit moving upon the lives of people, lives then being led, and then those lives being commented on by scholars and reporters. Many will go unnamed because we have no idea who they were. This does not remove the worth of their deeds. Nor does a recorded name guarantee that named person's deed is to be exalted - these depend on God, not the recognition of the history that we tell. The virtue of history is to reach back towards that spirit and hope to see it reflected today - this is a way of speaking of relevance. Will we be judged to be relevant in times yet to come? If we are, it is likely because we are moved by the spirit moving in the world now, and of those gone before us, when they were moved. But spirit is invisible, even if it is sometimes palpable, even overwhelming. Yet still points of view vary and we all have the duty to see through our own eyes and catch that glimmer of reality as God passes by. But I must say I am especially taken with Louis G Gregory, raised to the station of a Hand of the Cause of God after his passing. Fully aware of being in so unjust a situation and striving all his life to work with “the lesson of humility” on the solution of racism from both sides, his efforts to stand up for the hearts of black and white are just very remarkable and to me follow in the footsteps of `Abdu'l-Bahá who walked the world approaching World War and still sought out every open hand, every second look, every burdened heart.

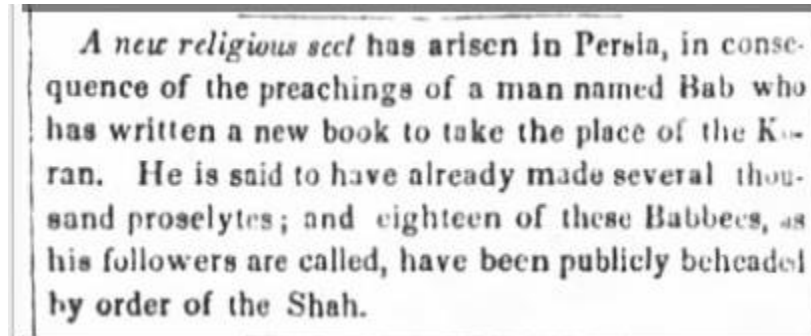
I am something of a newcomer to history though less so of research and study. I have relied upon historians to be faithful and mindful when I opened books and found something that to my eyes was that spirit in motion in the world. Impressed I would then speak of it among friends and perhaps even strangers, to take notice of a remarkable thing, a remarkable event, a remarkable life. I think the work of such as Dr. Robert T Stockman and Dr. Moojan Momen and Dr. Christopher Buck in these matters and here and beyond seek to contribute the subjects they have already published on. I need to remember the influences that taught me to care for assumptions and conclusion and faith - my forebears who helped shape my own life - my parents Eileen F. Rozumialski, James P Kolins, and then others such as Dr. Arthur Herman, and those that introduced me to the Bahá'í Faith and accompanied me on the path of faith. And there has been the friendship and kinship of fellow spirits in the work of furthering the research of this and other kinds by Don Calkins and Candace Moore Hill. I also want to recognize the effort and friendship of other researchers including the late Paula Bidwell, Mary Spires, Roger Hamrick, and Charles Uzzell.

Among those who's patience and assistance have aided me in this work are my wife Sally F Jamir and daughter Katarina E. J. Kolins. Contributions to the work have also come in various ways from friends like LisaMarie Dawson, Alisa Mappes, and the attentions and assistances of other Bahá'ís who have spoken up or taken some role in this and related work. I am thank for the assistance of Mary K. Makoski in proof reading things before and this too. We can all think we speak or write eloquently, but it takes a hearing ear to be part of the process, part of the conversation. As this is also part of a larger project of a summer seminar on the history of the Faith in North Carolina I thank the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Orange County, NC who sponsored the event which also served as a crucible to get some documented state of the research more into what can be said at a time and place. Liaison to the Assembly and its secretary, Glenn Pierce, and those assisting him with the Efland Bahá'í Center where it took place deserve recognition as well. The Spiritual Assemblies of Chapel Hill, Raleigh, and Winston-Salem also made specific contributions to the work at this juncture. I have also received encouragements from Bahá'ís across and beyond North Carolina, even old members of our state community now pioneering in far off lands or close to the curtain drawn over these worlds we see.

And I want to thank those who came or wanted to come to the seminar, and you reader for your attention. May God aide in some worthy trace being made visible for your own eye which will be of service to those named or unnamed here, but recorded indelibly in the Book of Life. This effort is scholarly, therefore it must evolve. If a talk on the history of the Faith in NC had been done 50 years ago I feel that the information given here would be very different and in another 50 years I hope and expect that the answers would change a lot.

Transient Bahá'ís in or from North Carolina

Before Bahá'ís came to North Carolina or were even in the US, newspaper mentions occurred of early Bábí era events¹ particularly noting a new sect, founder named the Báb, and that He had a new holy book, though facts are also sometimes confused. While the earliest in the world dates from Nov 1, 1845,² the first in NC would be a few years later. News of the Martyrdom of the Báb was yet to come.



The Tri-Weekly Commercial (Wilmington, North Carolina), 20 Aug 1850, p. 2
This is the earliest newspaper reference to historical events of the Bábí era yet identified

There were also newspaper mentions of early Bahá'í period circa 1892 - 1910.³ An article in the *Roanoke Beacon* about the 1910 Census noted the Bahá'ís saying: "While Baháism, strictly speaking, is non-Christian, its followers are native and not necessarily un-Christian" and reviews Bábí-Bahá'í history in a paragraph.⁴ Sometimes it was even linked in prophecy discussion.⁵ An article echoing `Abdu'l-Bahá's visit to the States was printed in Madison County.⁶ But as yet there were no local Bahá'ís we can confirm. And we are as yet unaware of the effects any of these newspaper stories had on people in NC.

In the era before the Tablets of the Divine Plan, the main periodical of the Faith was *Star of the West*,⁷ though there were various books and texts in circulation. The very earliest literature from the burgeoning presence in America was written material based on oral exchanges the earliest Bahá'ís had while visiting in Palestine. This would progress to tablets exchanged as letters and translated by secretaries of `Abdu'l-Bahá many of which would then appear in the *Star*. Along with these would be early translations of a few texts and pilgrim notes.⁸ Individual Bahá'ís would take on a personal mandate of greater or lesser scope and either from these or pursuing a job or on vacation would have contact with North Carolina on occasion and individuals would come in contact with the religion through various means. Later Bahá'í **Albert Windust**⁹ wintered in NC in 1897 and learned of the Faith about a year later in classes given by Paul Dealy. Windust eventually took a lead in the publishing of *Star of the West*.¹⁰

¹ [A new religious sect....](#), *The Tri-Weekly Commercial* (Wilmington, NC)20 Aug 1850, p. 2

² [A new religious sect....](#), *The Biblical Recorder* (Raleigh, NC)15 Sep 1850, p. 3

³ [An army of women](#), *Tarboro Press* (Tarboro, NC)11 Jan 1851, p. 1

⁴ https://bahaikipedia.org/Historical_mentions_of_the_Bábí/Bahá'í_Faiths, Bahaikipedia, July, 2018

⁵ [How they punish treason in Persia](#), *The Tri-Weekly Commercial* (Wilmington, NC)02 Nov 1852, Page 2

⁶ [Persia](#), *The Tri-Weekly Commercial* (Wilmington, NC)18 Nov 1852, Page 2

⁷ [Persian heretics](#), *Mecklenburg Times* (Charlotte, NC)8 Apr 1892, p. 7 (Credit Dr Duane Troxel)

⁸ [\(?\)...Babism](#), *The Charlotte Observer* (Charlotte, NC)6 Nov 1900, p. 2 (Credit Dr Duane Troxel)

⁹ [Resents Babism](#), *The Morning Post* (Raleigh, NC)19 May 1901, p. 12

¹⁰ [Curious facts about Babists](#), *The Roanoke Beacon*, July 7, 1905, p. 8

¹¹ [Temple for the Bahais](#), *The Concord Times* (Concord, NC)26 Apr 1909, p. 4

¹² [Temple for the Bahais](#), *The Chronicle* (Wilkesboro, NC)28 Apr 1909, p. 2

¹³ [How many religions?](#), *The Charlotte Observer* (Charlotte, NC)14 Aug 1910, p. 1

¹⁴ [Mme. Khanoum, wife of Gen. Mirza Ali Kuli Kahn](#) (sic), *Greensboro Daily News* (Greensboro, NC)12 Mar 1911, p. 2

¹⁵ [Marriage of interest in Paris to-day](#), *The Charlotte News*, April 16, 1911, p. 1

¹⁶ [Women's missionary column](#), *The Charlotte News* (Charlotte, NC)23 Apr 1911, p. 7

¹⁷ [Persian Envoy's wife a cook](#), *Sylvan Valley News*, (Brevard, NC), July 12, 1912, p. 3

¹⁸ [Creeds and creeds](#), *The Roanoke Beacon*, August 19, 1910, p. 8

¹⁹ [How Christmas grew to be what it is today - waiting for the Messiah and a new Christmas](#), *Roanoke Beacon* (Plymouth, NC)22 Dec 1911, p. 2

²⁰ [Leader of Baháism is here](#), *The News-Record*, (Madison County, NC,) May 03, 1912, p. 8

²¹ See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_of_the_West_\(Bahá'í_magazine\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Star_of_the_West_(Bahá'í_magazine)), Wikipedia, July, 2018

²² For example see [Albert Ross Vail](#), Bahaikipedia, Jan 2, 2017 - as a Unitarian minister deeply interested in the Bahá'í Faith he wrote a paper for *The Harvard Theological Review* in 1914 and its bibliography includes a variety of early literature of the Faith. He converted to the religion in 1918.

²³ See also [Chronology of Bahá'í Literature](#) compiled by Arjen Bolhuis, 2005, Bahai-Library.com

²⁴ For arbitrary reasons I'm bolding names of Bahá'ís who came to or were from North Carolina by 1944, the Centenary of the Declaration of the Báb.

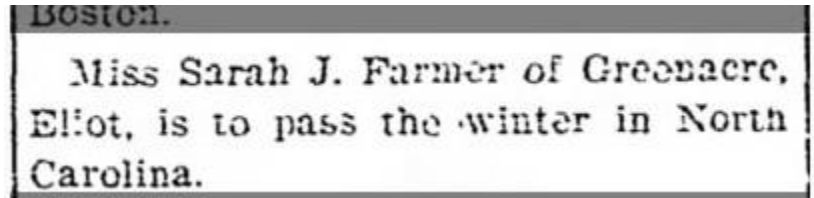
²⁵ [The education of an editor: Albert Windust and the Star of the West](#) (part 1), by Bruce Whitmore, *Baha'i News*, November, 1976, (see p. 11).



The first Bahá'í to visit the state was **Sarah Jane Farmer** who had been active in interfaith encounters by starting Greenacre¹¹ in 1894.¹² This picture of her was published in 1897 in New York as her problems were becoming critical. While progressing amidst these challenges she encountered the religion in the winter of 1900-1901 followed by a trip to Akka where she met 'Abdu'l-Bahá around March.¹³ By the summer of 1901 she was back and full of purpose. Abul-Fadl and Ali-Kuli Khan had come that summer to present the Faith, had gone on to Chicago and then to Washington, DC.

But in the winter of 1902-3 it turns out she and an aunt took the winter in North Carolina,¹⁴ perhaps at Pinehurst or Asheville. She may have received a Tablet from Abdu'l-Bahá while staying in NC - she is reported returning to Eliot ME in July.¹⁵ Her passing in 1916

was also noted in Carolina news,¹⁶ and she handed Green Acre, as it had been renamed, to the Bahá'ís.



Pauline Knobloch Hannen was born in Washington DC, but raised in Wilmington, NC. The Knoblochs date back before the later 1880s in Wilmington,¹⁷ and were known in Lutheran,¹⁸ and business¹⁹ society, living at 910 Princess St., an address that no longer exists. By the 1890s they were in DC. She had had a fear of black people since childhood, knowing of the “frightful retribution visited by whites on negroes for offenses for which I assumed they must be guilty.”²⁰ She married Joseph Hannen in 1893 in DC,²¹ became a Bahá'í in DC in 1902, and was quickly followed by her husband and several of her sisters.²² In the context of DC, the Faith was established there by Charlotte E. Brittingham Dixon in the 1890s and by 1902 the community was centered around Dixon, Abu'l-Fadl, from his time at Green Acre and Chicago, who wrote a book there *Bahá'í Proofs*, and mother and daughter Barneys (Alice and Laura). Dixon was secretary of the group (not yet an Assembly) and Laura rented facilities.²³

Pauline's story is not very well known in detail but she was a remarkable early Bahá'í. By 1908 she may have already made a teaching trip to NC, did exchange more than one letter with 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and then the Hannens went on pilgrimage in 1909.²⁴ 'Abdu'l-Bahá wrote to Pauline and Joseph: "O ye two heralds of the Divine Kingdom! Verily ye have consecrated your time and your lives to the service of the Kingdom. Day and night, your highest wish is confined to the guidance of people and praise be to God, ye are confirmed and assisted in the promulgation of Divine Teachings. This supreme favor is pregnant with momentous results and this seed which ye have sown in the garden of Reality shall yield an exuberant result. Every seed shall yield a teeming harvest and every bough shall turn into a thriving, fruitful tree."

Pauline concentrated on a quote from the *Hidden Words*:

O CHILDREN OF MEN! Know ye not why We created you all from the same dust? That no one should exalt himself over the other. Ponder at all times in your hearts how ye were created. Since We have created you all from one same substance it is incumbent on you to be even as one soul, to walk with the same feet, eat with the same mouth and dwell in the same land, that from your inmost being, by your deeds and actions, the signs of oneness and the essence of detachment may be made manifest. Such is My counsel to you, O concourse of light! Heed ye this counsel that ye may obtain the fruit of holiness from the tree of wondrous glory.²⁵

Following studies of this quote she had an inspiration during a Thanksgiving snowfall in DC observing a black woman struggling with packages and untied shoelaces - she stooped to tie them unasked and all around her people gaped. From then the Hannens began to focus on reaching to African-Americans with the Bahá'í Faith. According to Robert Stockman, “As a result of her efforts, in the period 1900 to 1912, Washington probably had the best organized (ed - and racially integrated) Bahá'í Sunday school in

¹¹ The place was regularly called Greenacre in its early days - calling it Green Acre was common later.

¹² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Green_Acre_Bahá'í_School, Wikipedia, July, 2018

¹³ Anne Gordon Perry; Rosanne Adams-Junkins; Robert Atkinson; Richard Grover; Diane Iverson; Robert H Stockman; Burton W.F. Trafton Jr. (2012) [1991]. *Green Acre on the Piscataqua* (3rd ed.). Bahá'í Publishing Trust. ISBN 978-0-87743-364-4, p. 29, 56-7

¹⁴ *South Eliot*, *The Portsmouth Herald*, (Portsmouth, New Hampshire), 1 December 1902 • Page 1 (Credit, Dr Duane Troxel)

¹⁵ *South Eliot*; *Miss Sarah J Farmer*..., *The Portsmouth Herald* (Portsmouth, NH) 25 Jun 1903, Page 3 (Credit, Dr Duane Troxel)

¹⁶ *'Was founder of Maine's Greenacre religious colony*, *The Reidsville Review* (Reidsville, NC) 6 Dec 1916, p. 7

¹⁷ *A home enterprise*, *The Daily Review* (Wilmington, NC) 30 Aug 1887, Page 1

¹⁸ *The Lutheran "Tea" well attended*, *The Wilmington Morning Star* (Wilmington, NC) 15 Feb 1888, Wed • Page 1

¹⁹ *The merchants' carnival*, *The Daily Review* (Wilmington, NC) 01 Nov 1889, Page 1

²⁰ *Bahá'í Faith in America - Early Expansion*, vol 2, 1900-1912 by Robert Stockman, 1995, p. 224

²¹ *Mr and Mrs Joseph H. Hannen*..., *Evening Star* (Washington, District of Columbia) 18 Nov 1893, Sat • First Edition • Page 8

²² *Do We Have Spiritual Ancestors? Meet Pocahontas Pope*, by Christopher Buck, Bahaiteachings.org September 15, 2016

²³ *Bahá'í Faith in America - Early Expansion*, vol 2, 1900-1912 by Robert Stockman, 1995, p. 137

²⁴ *Pauline Amalie Knobloch Hannen*, Find-a-grave, by Candace Hill, May 25, 2009

²⁵ *The Hidden Words of Bahá'u'lláh*, by Bahá'u'lláh, US Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1985, p. 20

North America.”²⁶ Pauline introduced the Faith to her sister’s seamstress **Pocahontas Kay Grizzard Pope**. She was from Halifax County, and her husband’s family was from Raleigh. They married Dec 26, 1893 in Halifax county. John W. Pope had been an assistant Principal in Plymouth.²⁷ For a time the couple lived in Halifax and “Mrs. J. W. Pope” read an essay at the AME Church,²⁸ and in the 1890s they were working with the Rich Square Academy.²⁹ They had left NC in 1900 and moved to Washington DC. There Pocahontas Pope received a tablet from `Abdu'l-Bahá.³⁰ **Louis George Gregory** encountered the religion in 1907 and then joined the Faith in 1909 after being accompanied by the Hannens. Along the way he had written about lynchings,³¹ earned a position in the Black community at the Bethel Literary Historical Society,³² and been a counter-sitting protester.³³ Posthumously he would be named a “Hand of the Cause” by Shoghi Effendi, who called him “golden-hearted.”



Pocahontas’ childhood home circa the 1880s has been identified through the unpublished work of the late Paula Bidwell being followed up now by Mary Spires. The government meeting site in the region was transferred from Enfield to Halifax County in 1758.³⁴ A tax was set after other buildings a separate clerk’s office was mentioned in the 1830s. It was a brick building (floors, walls, and roof) because of the 1830 burning of the State Capital and the loss of records there. It was 32’ x 24’ with three rooms, (2 of 11’ x 13’ and 1 of 15’ x 22’.) Lightning rods were added in 1852,³⁵ and the lot was sold to state representative and attorney general John R. J. Daniel, who died in 1868. The building was included in a settlement of debts paid to George W. Owens in 1877. Owens died and the land was sold at public auction to John A. Moore who rented the house of Mary and Lundy Grizzard, the first time it was a private residence. Lundy married Mary Sanling Kay (1846-1909), Nov 11, 1876. Mary had earlier married John Kay Jan 11, 1861, and Pocahontas was among their children. Pocahontas married J. W. Pope in 1883-4.³⁶ The Grizzards bought the home in 1886 and lived there until Mary died in 1909. Pocahontas was born around then (dates vary.) The home was used by Lundy but passed to Mary’s son Alexander who moved away. Lundy married again and the family lived there into the 1920s. Another family lived there in the 1930s and it was sold back to the County in 1940 and served as the county library until 1963. Indoor plumbing was introduced in the 1960s. In 1970 the county gave the building to the Halifax County Association who then gave it to the State to serve as a State Historic Center with plans to renovate it for historical purposes. A picture was published in 1974 in a county history.

Mary Elizabeth Brown Martin was born May 31, 1877 in Raleigh and the family moved to Cleveland, Ohio.³⁷ She and her family encountered Louis Gregory in 1912 (and thus one of the ramifications of Pauline Hannen’s faith in action), and were active Bahá’ís in 1913. She was visited by Pauline Hannen in 1917,³⁸ now an avowed leader of Bahá’í children’s classes,³⁹ and received a tablet from `Abdu'l-Bahá in 1919. Her daughter Sarah moved back to Raleigh in the 1930s, (see below.) Mary would go on to serve on the Cleveland School Board and have a public school named after her.

²⁶ **Bahá’í Faith in America - Early Expansion**, vol 2, 1900-1912 by Robert Stockman, 1995, p. 226

²⁷ **Our Schools; Prof. Cheatham...**, *The Banner-Enterprise* (Raleigh, NC), 6 Sep 1883, Page 2

²⁸ **Halifax County**, *The Raleigh Signal* (Raleigh, NC)23 Jun 1887, Page 1

²⁹ • **Notice! To the patrons and friends of Rich Square Academy**, *The Patron and Gleaner* (Lasker, NC)22 Apr 1897, Page 2

• **Rich Square Academy**, *The Patron and Gleaner* (Lasker, NC)13 May 1897, Page 3

• **Rev. John W. Pope**, *The Patron and Gleaner* (Lasker, NC)20 May 1897, Page 3

• **Returns Thanks**, by John W. Pope, *The Patron and Gleaner* (Lasker, NC), 5 Aug 1897, Page 2

• **Rich Square Academy**, *The Patron and Gleaner* (Lasker, NC), 12 Aug 1897, Page 3

• **The last grand excursion**, *The Patron and Gleaner* (Lasker, NC), 16 Sep 1897, Page 2

• **Marriage at First Colored Baptist Church**, *The Patron and Gleaner* (Lasker, NC), 2 Dec 1897, Page 3

• **Rich Square Academy**, *The Patron and Gleaner* (Lasker, NC), 5 May 1898, Page 3

• **Rich Square Academy**, *The Patron and Gleaner* (Lasker, NC),26 May 1898, Page 2

• **Prof. John W. Pope...**, *The Patron and Gleaner* (Lasker, NC),16 Jun 1898, Page 3

• **Colored people meet**, *Roanoke-Chowan Times* (Rich Square, NC), 5 Oct 1899, Page 1

³⁰ **The Black Pupil of the Eye: The Source of Light** Christopher Buck and Nahzy Abadi Buck, Bahaiteachings.org , September 16, 2016.

³¹ **Editor Post...**, by Louis G. Gregory, *The Washington Post* (Washington, District of Columbia)22 Aug 1904, Page 9

³² • **Bethel literary and historical association**, *The Washington Bee* (Washington, District of Columbia)21 Dec 1907, p. 4

• **Bethel Literary and Historical Society**, Wikipedia, Nov 26, 2016

³³ **No negro wanted**, *The Washington Bee* (Washington, District of Columbia)9 Mar 1907, p. 5

³⁴ summarized from “**Clerk of County’s Office**”, chapter of *The Roanoke Valley - a report for the Historic Halifax State Historic Site* by Wilborn, Elizabeth W; Cathey, Boyd; Cross, Jerry L. (Jerry Lee); North Carolina, published 1974

³⁵ **Mountain Road Walking Tour**, History of Halifax County Courthouses, by Kenneth Cook, September, 1972

³⁶ **During the holidays...**, *The Banner-Enterprise* (Raleigh, NC)26 Jan 1884, Sat • Page 3

³⁷ **Sarah Elizabeth Martin Eason Pereira** -> Mother Mary Elizabeth Brown Martin, Bahaikipedia, Nov 26, 2016

³⁸ **News from Washington, D. C.**, by Pauline Hannen, *Star of the West*, October 16, 1917, p. 149, 152-3

³⁹ **Bahá’í Faith in America - Early Expansion**, vol 2, 1900-1912 by Robert Stockman, 1995, p. 346

Sadie E J Shankle Oglesby was born April 10, 1881.⁴⁰ She came from the wealthy colored Shankle family from near Concord - a place sometimes called Shankletown. The patriarch of the family was Whit Shankle. Sadie lost a brother in a mine explosion in Chatham County in 1895,⁴¹ a sister, and her father in 1903. Circa 1897-1900 Sadie was a nurse and was mentioned in some newspaper articles as a colored nurse doing fundraising for a colored hospital in Pinehurst/Southern Pines and she actively sought contributions from white people to support the colored hospital for sufferers of "consumption" - tuberculosis. At present there is no evidence where she got trained as a nurse. Sadie does not appear in any Shaw University records 1890s. Mabry C. Oglesby and Sadie E J Shankle were married in Washington, DC, Oct 17, 1901. While Mabry began a life as a railroad [Pullman Porter](#) they also began a social life. They held receptions and toured sites upon the visit of Mabry's other sister in 1907. In 1908 Sadie is reported head nurse at New York Nurse's Training School and she also discussed a paper at the Thursday Evening Club. Sadie also gave a talk at St. Mark's NY Literary on "Woman in Peace and War" on the crucial place of women in society. The 1946 *Bahá'í World* biography of Mabry says the Oglebys encountered the religion in 1913, studied with Harlan and Grace Ober, and were convinced of it in 1917. They are not known to have taken any trips to North Carolina after this period, however. After many years of Mabry appearing at various local and national meetings of the Faith, Sadie went on pilgrimage on March 11, 1927. Sadie was the third black pilgrim, the first black woman, and the first black Bahá'í to be welcomed by Shoghi Effendi as head of the religion. She also would have been the first Bahá'í from North Carolina to go on pilgrimage. She recalled many observations he made about race issues in her notes and in particular about the black community needing to step forward in being part of the solution to racism in America not be reticent or slow in engaging the white Bahá'ís. Sadie says she was there 20 days. On return to America she became visible in her own right at local and national Bahá'í meetings and in particular on issues of race in America. Louis G. Gregory commented that the Boston Bahá'í community was integrated by 1935 with a large proportion being colored and largely through the work of Sadie. Both of them also had served on the Boston assembly for more than a decade. Sadie picked up the name Ammet'u'llah and used it among Bahá'í and public mentions of herself. Mabry died May 19, 1945. Sadie's last known talk, "The call to reality", came in March 1946 and she died in February 1956.

Early Teaching trips to North Carolina

Pauline Hannen undertook her own teaching trips to NC, as yet largely undocumented but before 1919 - at least one in 1917. From Gregory's biography *To Move the World*⁴² and Louis Venter's history of the Faith in South Carolina⁴³ we know that while Gregory never lived in NC per se, yet over his lifetime he spent months or more here among his many teaching trips. And we also know that the father of the first Bahá'í to declare in SC, Alfonso Twine, was from NC.

Add a few other sources and we know of several travel teaching tours of NC by 1933 (when there is a shift from traveling teachers having contacts in the state to more and more Bahá'ís living in the state):

1910 - Gregory, including Durham, Enfield, and Wilmington

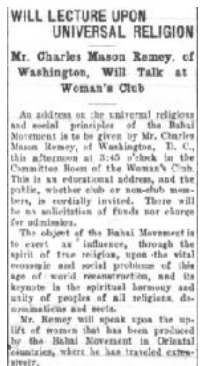
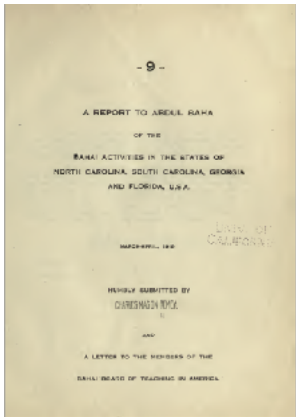
1917 - trips of the Hannens⁴⁴ and Sarah Gertrude Rawls Harris, wife of Hooper Harris, sister of Lula Rawls Carter, (Mrs. W. H. Carter) of Washington, NC.⁴⁵ The Carters might have attended Bahá'í oriented meetings in New York some years earlier.⁴⁶

- A book was donated to the Duke Library in 1916-1917 out of the Washington DC Bahá'í community⁴⁷

1919 - February? Gregory had a brief stay in Wilmington

- Charles Mason Remy took a trip in March⁴⁸ through Washington, home of Mrs. Lula Rawls Carter, Greenville at Mrs. Bechwith's East Carolina Teacher's School, and Raleigh,⁴⁹ before going south.

Note the *Tablets of the Divine Plan*, variously arriving by 1918, were presented officially in 1919 in New York in April and was reported in the *Raleigh News and Observer*.⁵⁰



⁴⁰ [Sadie and Mabry Oglesby](#), Wikipedia, July 2018

⁴¹ For a later and "final" disaster that caused the closing of the mine, see [Coal Glen mine disaster](#), Wikipedia, July 2018

⁴² [To Move the World: Louis G. Gregory and the Advancement of Racial Unity in America](#) by Gayle Morrison, Bahá'í Pub. Trust, Jan 1, 1982

⁴³ [Most great reconstruction: The Baha'i faith in Jim Crow South Carolina, 1898-1965](#), PhD dissertation by Venters III, Louis E., Colleges of Arts and Sciences University of South Carolina, 2010, isbn through BiblioBazaar as 9781243741752, UMI Number: 3402846, pages = 19-31, 35-50, 118

⁴⁴ [Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Hannen...](#), *The Wilmington Dispatch* (Wilmington, NC) 21 Aug 1917, p. 6

⁴⁵ [A Report to Abdul Baha of the Bahai Activities in the States of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida](#) by Charles Mason Remy, 1919-06-07, published on Bahai-Library.com 2013.

⁴⁶ See a Dr. W L (could be a typo for H?) and Mrs. Carter mentioned at [The members and a few friends...](#), *The New York Age* (New York, New York) 10 Oct 1912, Page 8 - note the article also typos Howard MacNutt's name. Also being mentioned in an African-American newspaper aligns with supportive interests in a school for them per the entry in the *Remy Report*. (Credit Dr Duane Troxel)

⁴⁷ [List of donors to Trinity College Library - Oct 1, 1916 to Oct 1, 1917](#), *The Trinity Chronicle*, October 3, 1917, p. 1

⁴⁸ [A Report to Abdul Baha of the Bahai Activities in the States of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida](#) by Charles Mason Remy, 1919-06-07, published on Bahai-Library.com 2013.

⁴⁹ [Will lecture upon universal religion](#), *News and Observer* (Raleigh, NC) 22 Mar 1919, Page 12

⁵⁰ [Seek a world utopia](#), *News and Observer* (Raleigh, NC) 4 Jun 1919, Page 4

1926 - Keith Ransom-Kehler visited the Raleigh area according to Gregory.⁵¹

1928 - including Durham, Gregory spoke to at least one high school class of over 500 students.

1931 - In April, in Bricks, NC, Gregory spoke to a black high school-college twice and a white college president and select students attended,⁵² (possibly Mrs. Katie R. Beckwith from Greenville.)⁵³

- Musicians and Bahá'ís Philip Marangella and Chauncey Northern also stopped in Enfield, near Bricks.⁵⁴

In many of these teaching trips Enfield or Bricks, NC, are mentioned often. Bricks generally doesn't show up on maps - it's a place near the small town of Enfield which is a black community around what is now the [Franklinton Center at Bricks](#), a product of a merger of the Franklinton Christian College started in 1871 to train black leaders for local churches and the Bricks Junior College started in 1895 through a gift of land and endowment to the American Missionary Association, (AMA). Bricks' founding leader was Thomas Inborden, who was a Fisk graduate.⁵⁵ Gregory's first visit there was in 1910. Inborn was displaced in 1925 as leader by the AMA and Inborn refused the compensation he was promised on being retired and there was never a local engagement in policy about the management of the school by the AMA policies out of New York. However it went on to become an accredited college in 1926. The school struggled with purposes of education and means of how students would pay for attending amidst the Great Depression, begun in 1929. Some 40 years after the period, one of the Bahá'í visitors recollected that the president and wife were Bahá'ís and welcomed Bahá'í teachers - roughly the early 1930s.⁵⁶ Though its basketball team did win a state competition in 1932 and 1933, AMA canceled plans for an expansion and the College closed in the Fall of 1933.⁵⁷ It was also associated with an elementary school.⁵⁸ The area facilities reorganized and kept levels of organization until it re-founded itself as the Franklinton Center. Who this Bahá'í couple was hasn't been determined.

In addition to travel teaching, there was also various newspaper coverage. Early on there was some coverage of `Abdu'l-Bahá's trip to America, if prejudicial.⁵⁹ A variety of scattered newspaper references continued into the WWI period and beyond:

- a 1913 Bahá'í convention⁶⁰
- plans coming together for the House of Worship⁶¹
- the 1915 Bahá'ís gathering at the Panama-Pacific Expo⁶²
- what was called an international congress in Boston⁶³
- notice of Bahá'ís in Chicago and Kenosha WI.⁶⁴

⁵¹ [Mr. Louis Gregory's teaching activities](#), *Baha'i News*, March, 1929, p. 8

⁵² [Inter-racial amity](#), by Louis Gregory, *Baha'i News*, April, 1931, p. 5

⁵³ Principal of East Carolina Teacher's Training College from 1909 to 1925, what was later East Carolina University at Greenville where Bill Tucker would become a Baha'i. Beckwith graduated with advanced degrees from a college in Richmond VA and began teaching in NC in 1883, was married to Washingtonian lawyer Sidney T. Beckwith and soon widowed with had a daughter, Gladys, about 1888. But by September 1887 she was opening a school for boys in Washington, NC. She was a regional and statewide social leader. A month after Remy's visit she was a grandmother. In 1931 Louis Gregory reports a visit by a white principal and select students attending one of his visits to a black school in Brick's NC, "from 30 miles away". We do not know for sure who this principal was - Beckwith was retired in 1925 but died some years later in 1948 living in Washington, NC She might have been active enough, but Greenville is closer to 50 miles away than 30 but Gregory might have been noting the difficulties of the era in reporting specific facts. A biographical chapter on her appears in [East Carolina University: The Formative Years, 1907-1982](#), by Mary Jo Jackson Bratton, East Carolina University Alumni Association, 1986, pp. 121-?

* [Mrs. K.R. Beckwith....](#) *Washington Progress* (Washington, NC)15 Sep 1897, Page 3

* [With the Club Women](#), by Mary Moses; Health Department, *The Wilmington Morning Star* (Wilmington, NC)12 Dec 1915, Page 8

* [Health Department Fayetteville Weekly Observer](#), (Fayetteville, NC) 22 Dec 1915, Wed • Page 3

* [\(article\)](#), *The High Point Enterprise* (High Point, NC)27 Apr 1916, Page 2

* [Mrs. Beckwith on "Law of love"](#) *Greenville News* (Greenville, NC)05 Nov 1917, Page 1

* [Farmville fair is a big success](#), *Greenville News* (Greenville, NC)26 Oct 1917, Page 1

* [Born, a daughter](#), *Greenville News* (Greenville, NC)29 Apr 1919, Page 6

* [Former educator dies](#), *The Daily Times-News* (Burlington, NC)17 Feb 1948, Page 2

* [Inter-racial amity](#), by Louis Gregory, *Baha'i News*, April, 1931, p. 5

⁵⁴ [Lights of the Spirit: Historical Portraits of Black Bahá'ís in North America, 1898-2004](#) ed by Gwendolyn Etter-Lewis, Richard Thomas, Richard Walter Thomas, Baha'i Publishing Trust, 2006; ["Racial Amity in America: An Historical Review"](#), by Louis Gregory, originally in *The Bahá'í World (1936-1938)*, see p. 198.

⁵⁵ [Inborden, Thomas Sewell](#), by Ralph Hardee Rives, *Dictionary of North Carolina Biography*, 6 volumes, edited by William S. Powell, 1988

⁵⁶ • [Baha'i News - Forty years ago](#), *Baha'i News*, January, 1972, p. 23

• [Most great reconstruction: The Baha'i faith in Jim Crow South Carolina, 1898-1965](#), PhD dissertation by Venters III, Louis E., Colleges of Arts and Sciences University of South Carolina, 2010, isbn through BiblioBazaar as 9781243741752, UMI Number: 3402846, pages = 252-3.

⁵⁷ * [The Brick School Legacy](#), posted by Michael Kasino Michael Kasino, uploaded on Apr 23, 2011

* [Franklinton Center at Bricks: A historic center of transformation for the entire community!](#), by the United Church of Christ United Church of Christ, Published on Sep 26, 2013

⁵⁸ [Inborden Elementary](#), School webpage, July, 2018

⁵⁹ • [Bahais cult chief seeking converts](#), *The Raleigh Times* (Raleigh, NC)25 Mar 1912, p. 1

• ["What is Behaism?"](#) *Asheville Citizen-Times* (Asheville, NC)8 Jun 1912, p. 4

• [Non-Christian faiths in America](#), by Elizabeth Vermilye, *North Carolina Christian Advocate* (Greensboro, NC)2 Jan 1913, p. 4

⁶⁰ [Bahaists in New York](#), *The Messenger and Intelligencer* (Wadesboro, NC)20 Oct 1913, p. 8

⁶¹ [First universal house of worship](#), *The Wilmington Dispatch* (Wilmington, NC)25 Apr 1914, p. 8

⁶² • [Total of 821 conventions and congresses for Panama-Pacific international exposition breaks world's record](#), by Grant Wallace, *The Wilmington Morning Star* (Wilmington, NC)1 Jun 1915, p. 9

• [Religion for whole world](#), *Durham Morning Herald* (Durham, NC)13 Oct 1915, Wed • Page 8

⁶³ [International Bahai \(sic\) Congress](#), *The High Point Enterprise* (High Point, NC)28 Apr 1917, p. 1

⁶⁴ • [Religious cult may spread](#), *The Gastonia Gazette* (Gastonia, NC)24 Jan 1919, p. 3

• [Religious cult may spread](#), *Greenville News* (Greenville, NC)10 Mar 1919, p. 4

- a piece by Martha Root about the Báb⁶⁵
- a picture of a model of the Bahá'í Temple⁶⁶
- the arrival of `Abdu'l-Bahá's endorsed travel teacher Fazel Mazandarani⁶⁷
- progress on the Temple and profile of Louis Bourgeois⁶⁸
- a Florence Terry of Charlotte and a Mrs. Wilson present about the Faith in a Charlotte women's club meeting⁶⁹
- and the passing of `Abdu'l-Bahá⁷⁰

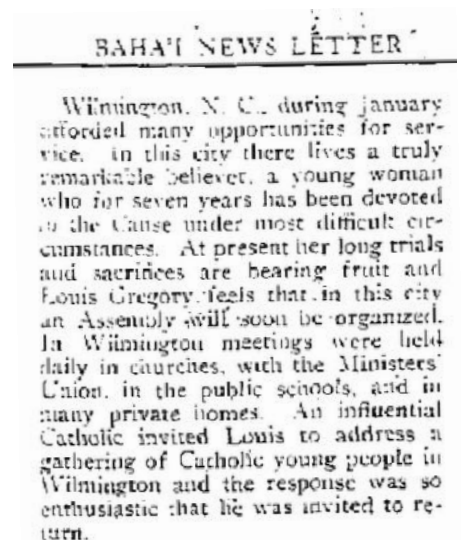
1921 is often considered the close of the heroic age of the Bahá'í Faith. However the Guardian says “With ‘Abdu'l-Bahá's ascension, and more particularly with the passing of His well-beloved and illustrious sister the Most Exalted Leaf—the last survivor of a glorious and heroic age—there draws to a close the first and most moving chapter of Bahá'í history, marking the conclusion of the Primitive, the Apostolic Age of the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh.”⁷¹ So while we are crossing a time of His passing, the last remnant of that age persisted until 1932 when the Greatest Holy Leaf passed.⁷²

Towards the first Bahá'ís in North Carolina

Crossing into the period of the Tablets of the Divine Plan, a PhD dissertation by Arthur Hampson, for the University of Hawaii, analyzed the distribution and spread of Bahá'ís in America in general⁷³ and found that this early period was driven by the disaffection of some populations with the norms of society between 1916 and 1926 who had contact with Bahá'ís. This transitions later to a period driving growth with an intense homefront pioneering of Bahá'ís 1937-1944. In the earlier part the regional society of most Bahá'ís was in the Northeast but towards the end it was much more in the American West. The South in general showed little sign of social strength of a Bahá'í presence. The Guardian noted that the principle reason the Tablets were addressed to the West was to address the effect of materialism on the community,⁷⁴ and they are one of the “Charter” documents of the religion.⁷⁵ This is the era where we cross from the close of the Heroic, Apostolic Age, into the Formative Age.

Stanwood Cobb was the first known Bahá'í to live an extended period in NC while as a Bahá'í. He had joined the religion in 1906 in New England, first visited `Abdu'l-Bahá in 1909, and was one of several people who gave talks on the occasion of Gregory's invitation to go on pilgrimage.⁷⁶ Cobb taught at the Asheville School in 1915-16; at the time it was a single school for all grades. He made another trip into the state and spoke at UNC in 1932 at Gerrard Hall as a guest of faculty member Ernest Groves, a friend of his days at Dartmouth, (and Groves gave a talk at Green Acre in 1925 followed by a reception given by the Cobb family.)⁷⁷

At the national level, the *Star of the West* reported a few times of early teaching committees. In 1916 it reported Joseph Hannen as the person `Abdu'l-Bahá had addressed for the South for the **Tablets of the Divine Plan**.⁷⁸ The existence of a national teaching committee was noted in 1920,⁷⁹ with the committee for “the South” having members all out of Washington DC - Agnes Parsons being elected its national chair. Early records of the Faith mention two sets of early and unnamed Bahá'ís in North Carolina. One was a tally entry on a table listing a Bahá'í in Durham in 1923, one of 99 black respondents of a survey done circa 1935 conducted by the National Assembly asking local assemblies to fill out a “Bahá'í Historical Record Card” per individual.⁸⁰ We do not know the name of this individual recorded in 1935 as joining the Faith in Durham in 1923. The other is a comment of Louis Gregory in *Bahá'í News* speaking of a community of Bahá'ís forming in Wilmington in 1925 and tracing back 8 years earlier.⁸¹ From other work it is clear this Wilmington mention is at least partly the mixed-race **Sadgwar** family



⁶⁵ Bab, *The Charlotte Observer* (Charlotte, NC)22 Apr 1919, p. 6

⁶⁶ The Bahai (sic) Temple, *Charlotte Observer* (Charlotte, NC), July 1, 1920, p. 21

⁶⁷ [Persian scholar visits America](#), *The Charlotte News* (Charlotte, NC)2 Jun 1920, p. 8

⁶⁸ [Gave new idea to world](#), *The Dispatch* (Lexington, NC)20 Aug 1920, Page 7

⁶⁹ [College women to meet](#), *The Charlotte Observer* (Charlotte, NC)7 Nov 1920, p. 8

⁷⁰ Bahai (sic), *Winston-Salem Journal* (Winston-Salem, NC), December 11, 1921, p. 36

• [Chronology of the Year 1921 compiled by E. W. Pickard; Necrology](#), *Polk County News*, January 06, 1922, p. 6

• [Bahai followers honor dead chief](#), *The Twin-City Daily Sentinel* (Winston-Salem, NC)7 Jan 1922, p. 1

• [Beloved prophet dies in orient](#), *The High Point Enterprise* (High Point, NC)12 Jan 1922, p. 7

⁷¹ “[The Dispensation of Bahá'u'lláh](#)”, in *The World Order of Bahá'u'lláh*, by Shoghi Effendi, published by the US Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 1991, p. 98

⁷² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bahiyiyih_Khánúm, Wikipedia, July, 2018

⁷³ [The growth and spread of the Bahá'í Faith](#), by Arthur Hampson, PhD, Department of Geography, University of Hawaii, May, 1980, UMI ID 8022655.

⁷⁴ [The Bahá'ís of America - The growth of a religious movement](#), by Mike McMullen, NYU Press, 2015, p. 194

⁷⁵ [Course: Charters of the Faith: The Table of Carmel, the Will and Testament of `Abdu'l-Bahá and the Tablets of the Divine Plan](#), Wilmette Institute, 2017

⁷⁶ [Stanwood Cobb](#), Wikipedia, Nov, 2016

⁷⁷ https://bahaikipedia.org/The_Bahá'í_Faith_at_the_University_of_North_Carolina_at_Chapel_Hill, Bahaikipedia, July, 2018

⁷⁸ [The teaching campaign - a suggestion](#), *Star of the West*, October 16, 1916, p. 112-113

⁷⁹ “[Plans of the National Teaching Committee](#)”, by Mariam Haney, *Star of the West*, June 1920, pp. 100-104.

⁸⁰ Table, in [To Move the World: Louis G. Gregory and the Advancement of Racial Unity in America](#), by Gayle Morrison, 1 January 1982, published by Bahá'í Pub. Trust, isbn 978-0-87743-171-8, pp. 204-5.

⁸¹ [https://bahaikipedia.org/North_Carolina_in_the_\"Baha'i_News\"](https://bahaikipedia.org/North_Carolina_in_the_\), Bahaikipedia, July, 2018

- beginning with **Felice** and her father **Frederick**. Gregory dates the involvement with the Faith to a woman in Wilmington to about 1918.⁸² Roger Hamrick and Charles Uzzell have some work on their story and the Sadgwar connection with the Faith has been noted publicly.⁸³ Felice was also mentioned in an article in a children's magazine run by Roy Wilhelm in March, 1923.⁸⁴ Alas, the patriarch of the family, Frederick Sadgwar, died in May of 1925. The nationwide Bahá'í community and the developing one in the State remained unaware of the Sadgwars until the 1970s when other Bahá'ís moved to Wilmington. Though listed here under "Transient Bahá'ís" it is really our awareness of the Sadgwars that is transient. Whomever it was that Gregory had in mind, he called this "young woman", "devoted to the Cause under most difficult circumstances."



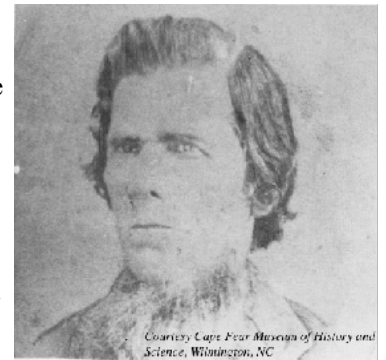
Felice's grandfather, David Sadgwar, Frederick's father, was a baby born out of wedlock to white parents to a prominent Wilmingtonian family and given to slaves to raise - both he and his part-African wife were blue eyed, as were several of the Sadgwar family. A image of him has been published in *Wilmington: A Pictorial History*, by Anne Russell, and *Strength through struggle: the chronological and historical record of the African-American community in Wilmington, North Carolina 1865-1950* by William Reaves. He has a resemblance to Kevin Bacon that more than one has mentioned. Frederick married a half-Cherokee/half-African lineage



woman named Caroline.



Alain Leroy Locke, a Bahá'í since 1918,⁸⁵ gave a talk at Greensboro A&T College in April 1926 about the situation of black lives and seeking to foster a youth movement following Jessie Fausett, Walter White and Roland Hayes.⁸⁶ If there was any mention of the Faith it was not covered in the newspaper. Locke had served on the May 1921 Race Amity Convention of the Bahá'ís in DC chairing one of the day sessions, and had recently finished travels with Louis Gregory shortly before this visit to NC on a Bahá'í teaching tour in February and March speaking at four venues elsewhere.⁸⁷ Locke returned to NC in December 1926 to speak before the Phi Beta Sigma meeting in Greensboro.⁸⁸ Locke had served on race amity committees from 1924-1932, and had a number of essays published in several editions of *The Bahá'í World* and there was public recognition of his talks as a Bahá'í in the *Pittsburgh Courier* and the *Chicago Defender* while in Chicago, major national African-American newspapers, in 1933.⁸⁹



Hubert Astley St. Aubyn Parris was an African-American doctor licensed in North Carolina who had first encountered the Faith decades back at Green Acre in 1902-4 while he was an ordained minister.⁹⁰ Decades later he ended up in Wilmington, possibly among that early community Gregory talked about. He had withdrawn from activity as an ordained minister by 1924 and then later moved to Rich Square, NC. He officially joined the Faith at the first Assembly meeting in North Carolina in Greensboro in April 1943. Though listed here under transient Bahá'ís it is really our awareness of Parris that is transient. John Kolstoe visited Parris at the request of the Area Teaching Committee in 1954 and Parris gave him a friendly tour of his office though he was ill. In his recollection, Kolstoe dwelled on the feeling Parris was an enthusiastic Bahá'í with a noble sense of service to humanity. Parris died the next summer.

⁸² https://bahaikipedia.org/The_Sadgwars,_the_Bahá'í_Faith_and_Wilmington_NC, Bahaikipedia, July 2018

⁸³ [Wilmington, North Carolina's African American Heritage Trail](#), University of North Carolina at Wilmington from North Carolina Humanities Council, 1997, pages 11, 14

⁸⁴ Email communication from Roger Hamrick to Steven Kolins, July 6, 2016

⁸⁵ [Alain Leroy Locke](#), Wikipedia, Jan, 2017

⁸⁶ [Alain Leroy Locke at A&T College](#), *The New York Age* (New York, NY)17 Apr 1926, p. 2

⁸⁷ [The Baha'í 'Race Amity' Movement and the Black Intelligentsia in Jim Crow America: Alain Locke and Robert S. Abbott](#), by Christopher Buck, Bahá'í Studies Review, Volume 17 © Intellect Ltd 2011, doi: 10.1386/bsr.17.3/1

⁸⁸ [Phi Beta Sigma holds confab in North Carolina](#), *The Pittsburgh Courier* (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania)1 Jan 1927, p. 8

⁸⁹ [The Baha'í 'Race Amity' Movement and the Black Intelligentsia in Jim Crow America: Alain Locke and Robert S. Abbott](#), by Christopher Buck, Bahá'í Studies Review, Volume 17 © Intellect Ltd 2011, doi: 10.1386/bsr.17.3/1

⁹⁰ [Hubert Astley St. Aubyn Parris](#), Bahaikipedia, Nov, 2016



In 1925 **Leslie Pinckney Hill** was enthusiastically involved with the Faith out of Pittsburgh, PA. His known connections with Bahá'ís go back to a visit by Louis Gregory in 1912 before his class twice.⁹¹ In 1915 he wrote a paper for the *The Journal of Race Development* citing the progressive integrative views and practices of Bahá'ís,⁹² and by 1924 was taking part in the Bahá'í sponsored Race Amity Conventions.⁹³ In September 1925 *Baha'i News* published a letter from Hill thanking the NSA for sending Keith Ransom-Kehler to speak in Durham for the National Association of Teachers in Colored Schools.⁹⁴ Hill went on to decades of service at what came to be known as the HBCU Cheyney University.⁹⁵



Sarah Martin Pereira was born in Cleveland, Ohio, and followed her mother and family into the Faith (mentioned above.) She is listed first in a tablet of 'Abdu'l-Bahá from 1919.⁹⁶ Sarah would have been 9-10 yrs old. In it 'Abdu'l-Bahá praises the training of children and that each child become "an ignited candle of the world of humanity". Sarah, an African-American, is reported earning a BA from Ohio State in 1931 in Languages, and was listed as a faculty member at Shaw College, as it was named then, in Raleigh in 1933-34. Here we cross out of the Heroic Age and into the Formative Age. She was thus already present when the Seven Year Plan was announced in 1937 that began the coordination of pioneers and traveling teachers. Sarah married a Shaw College professor in 1937 and was mentioned as an isolated believer in Raleigh in 1938. *Baha'i News* notes she was visited/supported by **Terah Cowart Smith** and **Marguerite Reimer** (she married William Sears in 1940).⁹⁷ Mentions in the *Raleigh News and Observer* specify talks in the Sir Walter Hotel and Carolina Pines Hotel.⁹⁸ They also made a trip to Durham for a presentation in March and had been in the area since January.⁹⁹ Smith had joined the Faith only two years previous and was on her second significant trip for the religion.¹⁰⁰ Reimer had also only been visible as a Bahá'í for two years (first in Green Bay, WI).¹⁰¹ They spoke at North Central College, (later NCCU), Shaw College, and had contacts in Durham. Sarah was elected president of the Negro College Women's Association of Raleigh in 1938. About the same time Sarah's sister, Lydia, was a teacher at St. Augustine's.¹⁰² In 1940 Sarah was noted serving on the NC/SC/Southern GA Area Teaching Committee and reported there would be five believers in Raleigh that winter suggesting another early Bahá'í community coalescing. However she had a son born about 1940, finished her PhD from Ohio State in 1942 in Romance Languages and by 1944 was listed as hailing from Washington, DC. Nothing else so far is known of this prospective community forming in Raleigh. She picked up the name Pereira later. Pereira's work and those of her sister Lydia were remembered in the Raleigh Bahá'í history written circa 1970.¹⁰³

Florence Steinbauer and **Muriel Stilson** pioneered to Greensboro from New York City during the Seven Year Plan.¹⁰⁴ Apparently so did **Margaret Atwater**, who wrote a letter to the editor of a Florida newspaper from Asheville;¹⁰⁵ her family was long from Miami, Florida, and she herself was living back there by 1939.¹⁰⁶ This first Seven Year Plan (1937-1944) was established by the Guardian, according to the House of Justice, as part of the process of establishing "small centers of Bahá'í activity and erect the first pillars of the Administrative order."¹⁰⁷ There were about 2,584 identified Bahá'ís in the US and 64 assemblies at the beginning of the Plan in 1937.¹⁰⁸ Hampson's PhD noted 153 Bahá'ís moved from cities having Assemblies to one of 28 goal cities as part of the first organizing Plan of the Bahá'ís - an average of five plus per goal city.¹⁰⁹ Adding previous or new Bahá'ís in those cities, they achieved Assembly status. In 1944 there were about 4,800 Bahá'ís.¹¹⁰ At first what little activity there was in NC just continued. Wilmington and Raleigh had both failed to continue development. There also continued to be sporadic mentions of Bahá'ís in the state's

⁹¹ Binneial report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; Officers and faculty; for colored teachers; Manassas, July 3 to Aug 2, 1912, Virginia. Dept. of Education, 1914, pp. ages=332-3

⁹² Negro Ideals: Their Effect and Their Embarrassments, by Leslie Pinckney Hill, *The Journal of Race Development*, v6n1, July 1915, pages 91-103, jstor = 29738105

⁹³ A convention for amity, by Louis G. Gregory, *Star of the West*, Dec 1924, vol 15, no 9, pp. 262-3, 272-4

⁹⁴ News of the Cause, *Baha'i News*, Sep 1925, No 7, p. 4

⁹⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leslie_Pinckney_Hill (July 2018, note the article needs some serious updating about the Bahá'í connections.)

⁹⁶ [Sarah Elizabeth Martin Eason Pereira](#), Bahaikipedia, Nov, 2016

⁹⁷ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Sears_\(Bahá'í\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Sears_(Bahá'í)), Wikipedia, July 2018

⁹⁸ * [Lectures on Baha'i Faith](#), *News and Observer* Tuesday, February 08, 1938 Raleigh, NC, Page: 6

* [Speakers to offer Baha'i Faith here](#), *News and Observer* Tuesday, February 08, 1938 Raleigh, NC, Page: 2

* [Baha'i Faith](#), *News and Observer* Saturday, February 12, 1938 Raleigh, NC, Page: 6

* [Baha'i Faith lecture to be given tomorrow](#), *News and Observer* Sunday, February 27, 1938 Raleigh, NC, Page: 2

⁹⁹ [Gives lecture here on new Baha'i Temple](#), *News and Observer* Saturday, March 05, 1938 Raleigh, NC, Page: 10

¹⁰⁰ [Terah Cowart Smith](#), Bahaikipedia, July 2018

¹⁰¹ • [Lecture tonight at Hotel Northland](#), *Green Bay Press-Gazette* (Green Bay, WI) 16 Oct 1936, p. 8

• [Baha'i symposium heard last night](#), *Green Bay Press-Gazette* (Green Bay, WI) 17 Oct 1936, p. 10

¹⁰² Family finds new hope, faith after encounter, by Sally Jamir, *The Carolinian*, Nov 15, 1984, p. 18

¹⁰³ Growth of the Bahá'í Faith in Raleigh, North Carolina, 1953-1970, by Frances Falvey, circa 1970 with addendum 1973. Courtesy of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Raleigh, NC, and assistance of Charles Uzzell

¹⁰⁴ [The Seven Year Plan](#), *The Bahá'í World*, vol 9, 1940-1944, see p. 219

¹⁰⁵ ** [Baha'i teaching seeks to bring religious unity](#), by Margaret Atwater, *The Miami News* (Miami, FL) 18 Jul 1937, Page 15

¹⁰⁶ [We regret our error](#), by Margaret H Atwater, *The Miami News* (Miami, FL) 01 Apr 1939, Sat • Page 6

¹⁰⁷ **The Bahá'ís of America - The growth of a religious movement**, by Mike McMullen, NYU Press, 2015, p. 121

¹⁰⁸ **The Bahá'ís of America - The growth of a religious movement**, by Mike McMullen, NYU Press, 2015, p. 38

¹⁰⁹ [The growth and spread of the Baha'i Faith](#), by Arthur Hampson, PhD, Department of Geography, University of Hawaii, May, 1980, UMI ID 8022655.

¹¹⁰ **The Bahá'ís of America - The growth of a religious movement**, by Mike McMullen, NYU Press, 2015, p. 39

newspapers of events far off - at this time there was Associated Press coverage of the murder of Margaret Campbell, aged silent screen star, who had joined the religion.¹¹¹ There were also sporadic mentions of the Faith in Carolina newspapers from the later 20s into the 1930s^{112,113} including the obituary of **Mrs. Hooper Harris**.¹¹⁴

Then National Assembly member and later Hand of the Cause **Dorothy Beecher Baker** made the local newspaper when she spoke at Guilford College in Greensboro in November, 1941.¹¹⁵ This was part of a wider sweep through NC and other states: in rough order her talks were at Mars Hill College, Cherokee Indian School, Brevard College, Western Carolina Teachers College in Cullowhee, Appalachian State Teachers College in Boone, Flora MacDonald College in Red Springs, State College for Negroes, Durham, A&T College in Greensboro, the Alice Freeman Palmer Institute, and then Sedalia, Bennett and Guilford Colleges, Greensboro.¹¹⁶ Carolyn Prévost (Wooten) later recalled meeting Anne Romer(sp?), widow of Harry Romer, reported as head of the British Associated Press, who had lived in Greensboro at a point before the election of its assembly and prayed for the establishment of the community.¹¹⁷

Greensboro - One assembly, plus

Compiled from various sources¹¹⁸

The first Seven Year Plan had intra-and-international goals. The goal inside the US was to have Bahá'ís present in every state - this developed to be a goal of actually raising an Assembly in every state. The first spark of what would continue in the development of the first assembly, the first community we have records of and a heritage connecting to the modern growth of the Faith in NC, would occur the following spring after Baker's trip. The *Baha'i News* reported in August 1942 of **Ruth Moffett** back to March and April having success presenting the religion in Greensboro followed by three pioneers. The *Greensboro Daily News* includes notice of her on March 3rd reporting she was coming next week with a schedule of talks at the Richardson Memorial Center auditorium in the evenings and at the Colonial Inn in the afternoons.¹¹⁹ While she was there, Gregory was traveling through NC southwards and spoke at Shaw University, a high school in Clayton, and the Students National Youth Administration in Rocky Mount.¹²⁰ Moffett had talks in various places, a display of the Bahá'í Temple, and radio broadcasts on what was then station WGBG, (later known as [WKEW](#).) Mention of some of her meetings have been identified in the newspaper.¹²¹ The first found so far is March 3 and notes talks at the Richardson Memorial building (which later became the Greensboro Historical Museum,) and a later one says she had gone to a Naw-Rúz observance in Columbia, SC, returned March 25, and continued her lectures at the Colonial Inn March 26. According to the *Baha'i News* report a study group formed of 17 people and three Bahá'ís. Mary Louise Hogshead Sawyer was one of the study group. Sawyer was born in Salem, moved to Greensboro at an early age, married Joseph Sawyer in 1919, learned of the Faith from newspaper coverage of Ruth Moffett's efforts in Spring 1942 and helped elect the first Assembly in 1943.¹²²

Meanwhile Joy Earl is reported speaking to audiences in Durham and Mrs. Earl spoke at Fisk, and other places. **Adrienne Ellis**, who interrupted college, and **Eva Lee Flack**, were two of the pioneers mentioned - they had planned to move to Asheville but

¹¹¹ [Silent screen star is slain](#), *The Daily Times-News* (Burlington, NC) 28 Jun 1939, p.6

¹¹² American doing her bit for peace and progress, by [Bayard Dodge](#), *Charlotte Observer* (Charlotte, NC), September 20, 1927, p. 8

¹¹³ Building plans indicate large business gains, *Charlotte Observer* (Charlotte, NC), December 14, 1930, p. 42

¹¹⁴ Mrs. Hooper Harris, *News and Observer* (Raleigh, NC), August 11, 1936, p. 3

¹¹⁵ • "Bahá'í leader speaks at Guilford", *Greensboro Daily News*, (Greensboro, NC) November 11, 1941, p. 12

• "Religious movement objectives explained", *The Greensboro Record*, (Greensboro, NC) November 11, 1941, p. 3

¹¹⁶ [Current Bahá'í activities \(1943-1944\)](#), *The Bahá'í World*, vol 9, 1940-1944, see p. 71

¹¹⁷ Conversation with Carolyn Prévost re Early Bahá'ís of this Area, Chapel Hill Assembly Archives, unknown interviewer, undated, (before formation of the Orange County Assembly.)

¹¹⁸ • [https://bahaikipedia.org/North_Carolina_in_the_\"Baha'i_News\"](https://bahaikipedia.org/North_Carolina_in_the_\), Bahaikipedia, July, 2018

• https://bahaikipedia.org/The_Bahá'í_Faith_at_the_University_of_North_Carolina_at_Chapel_Hill, Bahaikipedia, July, 2018

• https://localwiki.org/raleigh/The_Bahá'í_Faith_in_the_Triangle, Localwiki.org, July, 2018

• [Ludmila Ott Bechtold Van Sombeek](#), Bahaikipedia, Nov, 2016

• https://bahaikipedia.org/Coverage_of_the_Bahá'í_Faith_in_the_Carolina_Times, Bahaikipedia, July, 2018

• https://bahaikipedia.org/Coverage_of_the_Bahá'í_Faith_in_Greensboro_NC_newspapers, Bahaikipedia, July, 2018

• [Terah Cowart Smith](#), Bahaikipedia, July, 2018

¹¹⁹ Bahá'í lectures scheduled here, *Greensboro Daily News* (Greensboro, NC), March 3, 1942, p. 3

¹²⁰ [Current Bahá'í activities \(1943-1944\)](#), *The Bahá'í World*, vol 9, 1940-1944, see p. 73

¹²¹ • "Bahá'í lectures scheduled here", *Greensboro Daily News* (Greensboro, NC), March 3, 1942, p. 3

• "Series of lectures will be given here", *Greensboro Record* (Greensboro, NC), March 4, 1942, p. 4

• "Series of talks to begin tonight", *Greensboro News and Record* (Greensboro, NC), March 8, 1942, p. 6

• "Lecture series for Greensboro continues". *The Greensboro Record* (Greensboro, NC), March 11, 1942, p. 13

• "Lectures continue", *Greensboro Daily News* (Greensboro, NC), March 12, 1942, p. 7

• "To continue lectures", *The Greensboro Record* (Greensboro, NC), March 18, 1942, p. 10

• "Continues lectures", *Greensboro Daily News* (Greensboro, NC), March 26, 1942, p. 14

¹²² [Obituaries: Louise H. Sawyer](#), *Greensboro News and Record*, (Greensboro, NC), November 7, 1996

pioneered to Greensboro by November of 1942.¹²³ Ellis discussed some of the background in a *World Order* article.¹²⁴ Ellis had attended the Geyserville Bahá'í school in California (pre-Bosch) in July 1942 and hadn't particularly thought of pioneering. She struck up a conversation with Eva Lee Flack and together they considered the subject generally of pioneering as a main subject of the school that year. Ellis' family was from Missouri, born of slave ancestors, though she was born and raised in Arizona. Flack was from Los Angeles. There was a teaching conference in the Fall of 1942 in Greenville SC and Moffett, Ellis, and Flack were among the attendees,¹²⁵ though in between her activities in the Spring and this Fall conference Moffett squeezed in a period presentations in Wilmington Delaware.¹²⁶ But even at the SC conference Moffett made sure Bahá'ís were in the news.¹²⁷ Though the conference was racially integrated there were differences about how proactive to be in public about integrated meetings - there were comments that Greensboro white society was being estranged because of the integrated meetings. Indeed one SC attendee at the conference is said to have reported the conference to the FBI and that they had replied with warnings of communism about one of the Bahá'ís specifically by name, though the accusation was often used against any integration oriented organization in the South.



Stanwood Cobb came back to NC in November.¹²⁸ Gregory is known to have gone through NC again in the winter of 1942-43. In 1942-43 Eva Lee Flack married another pioneer to Greensboro, **Charles McAllister**, (perhaps the third pioneer mentioned above,) and Adrienne Ellis married William A. Reeves who was not then a Bahá'í.¹²⁹ Meetings in Greensboro were insisted on being integrated too.¹³⁰ In 1943-44 **Marion Little** spoke at Guilford College, and A&T College at Greensboro, during a trip for the national teaching committee before heading south.

Virginia Camelon visited the Greensboro community in earlier April and spoke at the local court rm #2.¹³¹ The Greensboro Spiritual Assembly was elected in later April, 1943,¹³² fulfilling a goal of the Seven Year Plan, where two previous communities had failed to coalesce enough. The members of the Assembly, although pictured, are not named. They probably include pioneers Adrienne Ellis Reeves, Eva Lee Flack McAllister, Florence Steinbauer, Muriel Stilson, and native born Mary Louise Hogshead Sawyer. Three are as yet unknown including one man. It was an integrated Assembly in a segregated South. Hubert Parris, then of Rich Square, was present the day the assembly formed and formally joined the Faith that day.¹³³



Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Greensboro, North Carolina, newly established April 21, 1943.

There were scattered isolated Bahá'ís in a few cities and towns. The regional teaching committee for 1943 is published but doesn't note who is living where - Terah Cowart-Smith, Birdie Cunningham, Esther Segó, Betty Shook, Doris Ebbert, Ludo Dadrowski, Louise Sawyer, Eva McAllister, Christine Bidwell - but Sawyer and McAllister, at least, were from Greensboro. In January-February 1943,

Gregory made another tour through NC and spoke at NC State College in Durham, Bennett and A&T Colleges in Greensboro, then back to the NC State College in Durham and Louisburg College on the way back through a second time.¹³⁴ **Bernice and Roy Williams** are known to have lived in Rocky Mount, about 1943, before moving to Greenville, SC. Decades later Roy Williams was laid to rest in the same cemetery plot as the Sadgwar family. Williams was mentioned as very active as an African-American as early

¹²³ **Lights of the Spirit: Historical Portraits of Black Bahá'ís in North America, 1898-2004** ed by Gwendolyn Etter-Lewis, Richard Walter Thomas, Bahá'í Publishing Trust, 2006; "**Sadie Rebecca Johnson Ellis**", by Adrienne Reeves, see especially p. 273.

¹²⁴ "**You, Too, Can Pioneer**," by Adrienne Ellis, *World Order* Vol 8, issue 12, March, 1943, pp. 415-9

¹²⁵ **Most great reconstruction: The Baha'i faith in Jim Crow South Carolina, 1898-1965**, PhD dissertation by Venters III, Louis E., Colleges of Arts and Sciences University of South Carolina, 2010, isbn through BiblioBazaar as 9781243741752, UMI Number: 3402846, pages = 238, 249, 259-260.

¹²⁶ • **On Oct. 13 Mrs. Robert Lee Moffett**..., *The News Journal* (Wilmington, DE) 21 Sep 1942, p. 8

• **Objectives cited for post-war period**, *The Morning News* (Wilmington, DE) 14 Oct 1942, p. 10

• **Lecture on palestine scheduled for tonight**, *The Morning News* (Wilmington, DE) 17 Oct 1942, p. 8

• **Baha'i Faith lectures to be concluded today**, *The News Journal* (Wilmington, DE) 2 Nov 1942, p. 15

¹²⁷ **Temple's exterior nears completion**, *The Greenville News* (Greenville, SC) 15 Nov 1942, p. 18

¹²⁸ "Baha'i lecturer is heard here; says war insane", *Greensboro Daily News* (Greensboro, NC), November 17, 1942, p. 3

¹²⁹ **Most great reconstruction: The Baha'i faith in Jim Crow South Carolina, 1898-1965**, PhD dissertation by Venters III, Louis E., Colleges of Arts and Sciences University of South Carolina, 2010, isbn through BiblioBazaar as 9781243741752, UMI Number: 3402846, p. 250

¹³⁰ **Most great reconstruction: The Baha'i faith in Jim Crow South Carolina, 1898-1965**, PhD dissertation by Venters III, Louis E., Colleges of Arts and Sciences University of South Carolina, 2010, isbn through BiblioBazaar as 9781243741752, UMI Number: 3402846, p. 260

¹³¹ • "Speaker Announced", *Greensboro Daily News* (Greensboro, NC), April 7, 1943, p. 4

• "Baha'i lecture set", *Greensboro Daily News* (Greensboro, NC), April 7, 1943, p. 5

¹³² **Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Greensboro, North Carolina**..., *Baha'i News*, Nov 1942, n166, p. 3

¹³³ Roger M. Dahl (July 6, 2016), *Correspondence to Steven Kolins*, Wilmette, IL: National Bahá'í Archives, United States

¹³⁴ **Current Bahá'í activities (1943-1944)**, *The Bahá'í World*, vol 9, 1940-1944, see p. 74

as 1918 in New York City and embarked on his own travels for the Faith.¹³⁵ How they arrived in Rocky Mount before this period is not known and according to Venters' PhD dissertation they hadn't been there long.¹³⁶

In 1944 Shoghi Effendi oversaw a census review of the Faith. A "directory" of the locations of Bahá'ís for 1943-4 was published in *Bahá'í World* vol 9 and noted one assembly, no registered groups, and 9 places with isolated Bahá'ís in the state. That's about 20 people - up from around 2-4 over the last decade.¹³⁷ The Guardian also changed the nature of electing delegates for the national convention.¹³⁸ Previous and back to the 1920s and before, delegates were decided upon on the basis of assembly status - now they were regional and at present (and into the 1980s) they were state-wide. A period of activity begins in Greensboro.¹³⁹ From January through February there were almost weekly meetings in the Greensboro area. Names mentioned begin with Marion Little but next **Helen T. Inderlied** is mentioned speaking at a series most of the rest of this period. Others mentioned include then Private John Eichenhauer from Ft. Bragg and visitors Clarence and Mrs. Dahl from Florida and then Eva McAllister and Adrienne Ellis are mentioned. There was a break in coverage of events until mid-April. Then Allen B. McDaniel gave a couple of talks. Stanwood Cobb returned at the end of April. In May it was announced by Inderlied that local Bahá'ís would attend the centenary program in Wilmette at the Bahá'í Temple. After that the next meeting announced was in late December with Glenn Shook of Wheaton College who would speak at the home of Eva McAllister. While Greensboro was certainly a locus of activity there were broadly traveling speakers. WBIG in Greensboro, (now WWBG)¹⁴⁰ carried a broadcast of the proceedings of the Centennial services at the Bahá'í House of Worship.¹⁴¹ The committee gathering for the state convention held in Greensboro was John Goodwin, chair, Adrienne Ellis, and Louise Sawyer.¹⁴² The address - 403 Ridgeway Dr - was the home of John A. and Mrs. Goodwin - and the Piedmont Bird Club meeting - in 1942.¹⁴³ It is believed Louise Sawyer was that year's delegate to the national convention and the Centennial observances but a citation is pending.

Circa 1944-46 the College Speakers Bureau founded by Dorothy Beecher Baker coordinated sending out pamphlets and speakers and some went to NC.¹⁴⁴ Horace Holley reported several talks of the Bureau in NC - Terah Cowart-Smith at Western Carolina Teachers College, Woman's College of UNC; Stanwood Cobb at the same Woman's College of UNC and Greensboro College; and Adrienne Ellis (Reeves) at several sites in Fayetteville - Morris Brown College, State Teachers College and EE Smith high school. And in the same period, specifically 1945-46, lone Bahá'ís were reported in 7 cities - Asheville, Kannapolis, Lenoir, New River, Raleigh, Rich Square (this would have been Mr. Parris), and Winston-Salem.¹⁴⁵ The later directory from 1949-50 listed isolated Bahá'ís in 10 cities - Asheville, Chapel Hill, Charlotte, Durham, Fairview, Hendersonville, High Point, Lenoir, Rich Square, and Salisbury.¹⁴⁶ Pearl D Kent maintained an address in Greensboro in 1951-2.¹⁴⁷ And the list from 1953-54 notes isolated Bahá'ís in 14 cities - Bryson City, Chapel Hill, Charlotte, Fayetteville, Hendersonville, High Point, Kannapolis, Lenoir, Orrum, Raleigh, Rich Square, Salisbury, Washington, and Winston-Salem.¹⁴⁸

Eastman, Adrienne Ellis and Eva McAllister and others gathered in Spring 1945 in Greensboro. Stanwood Cobb returned and Glenn Shook came for a talk too. Eugene Pfaff of the Southern Council of International relations gave a talk for the Bahá'ís at the Guilford county courthouse in mid-April.¹⁴⁹ Adrienne Ellis took a job as a reporter for the Greensboro *The Future Outlook* African-American newspaper. Then there is the first longer article in the *Baha'í News* reviewing Bahá'ís in NC in November 1945. It noted the Assembly of Greensboro hosting special Feasts for Bahá'ís "near Greensboro" and extension work in Durham and Fayetteville. W. Kenneth Christian undertook a speaking tour including Greenville as reported in *Baha'í News* June of 1945, and was a faculty member at East Carolina Teacher's College¹⁵⁰ (later ECU) - he was approached by William (Bill) Tucker, who then joined the Faith in 1946 and graduated 1947.¹⁵¹ 1946 was also when an Air Force picture of the Bahá'í Temple was printed in the *Duplin Times* of Kenansville, NC,¹⁵² right about the close of the first Seven Year Plan. In Greensboro Kay Whitemore took on the role of public events with announcing Margery McCormick coming to town, and then a Center at 235 ½ North Green St. was announced for meetings that

¹³⁵ **To Move the World: Louis G. Gregory and the Advancement of Racial Unity in America**, by Gayle Morrison, 1 January 1982, published by Bahá'í Pub. Trust, isbn 978-0-87743-171-8, pp. 59, 97, 100-110...

¹³⁶ **Most great reconstruction: The Baha'í faith in Jim Crow South Carolina, 1898-1965**, PhD dissertation by Venters III, Louis E., Colleges of Arts and Sciences University of South Carolina, 2010, isbn through BiblioBazaar as 9781243741752, UMI Number: 3402846, p. 250

¹³⁷ **Bahá'í Directory (1943-1944)**, *The Bahá'í World*, vol 9, 1940-1944, see pp. 661, 665, 670

¹³⁸ **NSA calls for universal participation in state conventions**, *Baha'í News US Supplement*, Nov 1964, n81, p. 1

¹³⁹ See https://bahaikipedia.org/Coverage_of_the_Bahá'í_Faith_in_Greensboro_NC_newspapers

¹⁴⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WWBG#History_of_WBIG Wikipedia, July 2018

¹⁴¹ **Baha'í radion broadcasts during centennial week May 19-25, 1944**, *Baha'í News*, Dec 1944, n172, pp 9-10

¹⁴² **Membership of state convention committees**, *Baha'í News*, Dec 1944, n172, pp 15-6

¹⁴³ **After dark dates for: 7 o'clock....**, *Greensboro Record* Tuesday, Jun 9, 1942 Greensboro, NC Page: 6

¹⁴⁴ **International survey of current Baha'í activities in the East and West**; College Teaching, by Horace Holley, *The Bahá'í World*, vol 10, see p. 84

¹⁴⁵ **Bahá'í Directory 1945-46: Cities and postal zones having isolated believers**; North Carolina, *The Bahá'í World*, vol 10, see p. 772

¹⁴⁶ **Bahá'í Directory 1949-50: Localities having isolated believers**; North Carolina, *The Bahá'í World*, vol 11, see p. 538

¹⁴⁷ **"B"'s**, *Hill's Greensboro City Directory* [1951-1952], p. 46

¹⁴⁸ **Isolated Centers**, *The Bahá'í World*, vol 12, p. 741

¹⁴⁹ "Pfaff will speak", *Greensboro Daily News* (Greensboro, NC), April 15, 1945, p. 6

¹⁵⁰ **Faculty and Administration, Tecoan**, East Carolina Teacher's College, Greenville, NC, 1946, p. 16

¹⁵¹ **Senior class, Tecoan**, East Carolina Teacher's College, Greenville, NC, 1947, p. 44

¹⁵² **Landmark for Peace**, *The Duplin Times*, Kenansville, NC, July 12, 1946, p. 1

continued into the 1950s. In December 1945 Joseph Sawyer (Sr) is listed leading the committee for the state convention to elect the delegate to the national convention.¹⁵³ Other committee members were Eva McAllister and David Wark.

The second Seven Year Plan, from 1946 to 1953, and the main goal inside the US was just the consolidation of the achievements won - most of the plan was oriented to South America and Europe. For those that did not go abroad, events continued to develop in NC. Margaret Ullrich was scheduled to talk at the Bahá'í Center, located at 235 1/2 North Green St, just past mid-June, 1946. Today it is a nondescript office building in downtown Greensboro. A month later, the Greensboro Spiritual Assembly was noted contributing to a Fund for milk for children. Another month later the Bahá'ís at the national level were noted in an update on the plans for the Bahá'í Temple. Two months later there was a local notice by Kay Whitmore that Margery McCormick was to spend week in town for talks at the Center, the O. Henry Hotel, and "the Negro YMCA" with the topic "The Holy Land of Many Faiths". The YMCA talk would include slides of her 1938 pilgrimage. With mention already since Oct 18, advertisement was purchased Oct 20 for the upcoming talk on the 23rd. A talk also occurred the previous 22nd. Kay Whitmore was from Minneapolis, MN, a member of *Altrusa*, and worked in the hat department of Meyers Department Store. The 1946 December state convention committee was Catherine Whitmore assisted by Naomi Simmons and John A Goodwin.¹⁵⁴ In January, 1947, Victor Serunian was set to talk about Persia at the Bahá'í Center. Victor was from an Armenian Christian family from Tabriz who had moved there before the 1930s - his father was a UNC graduate in 1926. A few days later Philip Marangella was set to speak at the Bahá'í Center. The talk was summarized briefly the day after. A week later Mary Price gave a talk "citizens in action" at the Center. A remark of hers was reported after the talk - that many Bahá'ís had left the state since 1940. But near a month later George Hall wrote a letter to the editor of the *Daily News* reporting various quotes about the Faith's view of race unity with an extended quote and comparing it with him having heard a Presbyterian program that preserved the segregation of the audience and a limited message of support for a minister in Georgia speaking out against a white supremacist bill. The next day news was announced that Harlan Ober would speak the next weekend at the Center. Ober had been a national leader in the religion since 1917. That talk was not reported on but two weeks later Guilford College professor Carroll Feagins talked at the Center on Islam. Two more weeks later Mrs. Charles Bishop, come from LA and who attended many international Bahá'í conferences, spoke at the Center. A regional conference of Bahá'ís from Georgia, South and North Carolina gathered in Greensboro. Twenty four people are mentioned attending it - presenters included Annie Romer, Margaret Ruhe, (chair of the GA/NC/SC regional teaching committee,) Helen Bishop, Katherine McPhee, and Paul Haney and mentioned in the Greensboro *Daily News*. Adrienne Ellis Reeves was in California by 1947. A brief mention of the Faith appears in the UNC-Chapel Hill *Daily Tar Heel* in July, 1947.

The Canadian community separated into its own National Assembly in 1948.¹⁵⁵ In 1949 the next regional conference was to be held in Asheville but was canceled on account of a polio scare at the time - instead one was later held in Atlanta. Terah Cowart-Smith gave her first talk in Greensboro in mid-January, 1949. Sporadic meetings were held on the UNC-Chapel Hill campus in 1949 - Mildred Danforth and Alice Dudley are mentioned. Danforth was elected as the state delegate to the national convention. Businessman Henry Broadhurst, out of High Point and who had appeared in Bahá'í activities in 1934 in Milwaukee, would give several talks for the Faith in the 1950s in Greensboro. According to *The Robesonian* of Lumberton Mr. and Mrs. L. Paul Harris met locals,¹⁵⁶ and Mara Edmonstone wrote a letter to the editor of the *Asheville Citizen-Times* on the Faith¹⁵⁷ in 1950. Bill Tucker was living in Chicago finishing a study in Optometry at Northern Illinois College of Optometry and married Bernice (Bunny) Buettner,¹⁵⁸ and from there they moved to Rocky Mount, "often in the face of ostracism, criticism and threats to their home, business, and family" for their efforts at integrated meetings and services.¹⁵⁹

The Greensboro community is listed in the 1951-2 phonebook.¹⁶⁰ A. K. Kalantar visited Greensboro and Bill Tucker gave a talk in Greensboro and Alain Locke returned to NC giving the keynote address at a education conference at North Carolina College in Durham in April 1951.¹⁶¹ A regional conference in Greensboro included Mrs. Joseph (Louise) Sawyer, Bill Tucker, Grace von der Heydt, and Martha Fettig in Greensboro. An Asheville newspaper mentioned a coming Holy Year for the religion:¹⁶² that was "The Great Jubilee", October 1952 to October 1953, commemorating the centenary of the birth of the Revelation of Bahá'u'lláh in the Siyáh-Chál.¹⁶³

In 1953 the Ten Year Crusade began - again most of the attention was on international development across South and Central America and Europe but extending into Africa and the South Pacific. Five of the nine national assembly members of the US resigned to go pioneering and overall the US was responsible for about 1/3rd of the steps taken for the world wide Plan.¹⁶⁴ Nevertheless there

¹⁵³ [State and province elections](#), *Baha'i News*, Dec 1945, n173, pp.2-3

¹⁵⁴ [State and province elections election committees](#), *Baha'i News*, Dec 1946, n190, p 8

¹⁵⁵ **The Bahá'ís of America - The growth of a religious movement**, by Mike McMullen, NYU Press, 2015, p. 39

¹⁵⁶ [Travelers enroute to Cuba visit here](#), *The Robesonian* (Lumberton, NC)14 Feb 1950, p. 7

¹⁵⁷ [The Baha'i Program](#), by Mara Edmonstone, *Asheville Citizen-Times* (Asheville, NC)19 Feb 1950, p. 23

¹⁵⁸ [Marriages](#), *Baha'i News*, February, 1951, p. 10

¹⁵⁹ Dr. William Tucker and Bernice Tucker; Workers for the Oneness of Mankind, Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Asheville (Oct. 1999)

¹⁶⁰ [Hill's Greensboro \(Guilford County, N.C.\) City Directory \[1951-1952\]](#), North Carolina Collection, UNC-Chapel Hill (see pages 860, 939, 1043.)

¹⁶¹ [Alaine Locke to address conference on Education](#), *The Pittsburgh Courier* (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania)14 Apr 1951, p. 2

¹⁶² [Baha'i members prepare for their holy year](#), *Asheville Citizen-Times* (Asheville, NC)9 Oct 1952, p. 25

¹⁶³ [The 1950s](#), *Chronology of the Bábí and Bahá'í Faiths and related history*, based on **A Basic Baha'i Chronology** by Glenn Cameron and Wendi Momen, Bahai-library.com

¹⁶⁴ **The Bahá'ís of America - The growth of a religious movement**, by Mike McMullen, NYU Press, 2015, pp. 39-40

was some orientation to intra-national progress as well. In June 1953 Hand of the Cause Shu'á'u'lláh `Alá'í talked at meeting at the Greensboro Center accompanied by T. Samandari and N. M Firoozi who used to work in Greensboro. Unfortunately the local newspaper coverage emphasized the political troubles of the times in Iran and Mr. `Alá'í refused to address those issues and emphasized the need for spiritual values. After the fact, in August, it was announced in the Bahá'í News that then living Persian Hands of the Cause would tour the American communities - Greensboro, NC, was on the list to be visited. A difficulty is that the Greensboro Assembly collapsed that year though it still hosted the state convention at the end of the year. Louise Sawyer pioneered to Durham.¹⁶⁵ Carolyn Prévost (Wootten) encountered Ludmila Van Sombeek at the dedication of the Bahá'í House of Worship in Wilmette.¹⁶⁶ Carolyn had encountered the Faith in her home town of Baltimore in her early twenties.¹⁶⁷

1954; Pioneers with local contacts

Adding another source...¹⁶⁸

Things pick up in 1954, though alas it begins with news of the crash of the jetliner carrying then Hand of the Cause Dorothy Beecher Baker, mentioned in NC news as well.¹⁶⁹ The Greensboro community held its fifth World Religion Day with a talk by Betty Koyle at the Center which dates back to 1946. Edgar Olson is first mentioned hosting meetings at UNC-Chapel Hill starting February. Then Walter R. Wootten and James F. Ginnent are visible there by April. Activity there was reasonably constant into 1956. Edgar Olson turns out to have been chair of the Area Teaching Committee and spoke at a Central Atlantic States conference held in Asheville.¹⁷⁰ In the *Baha'i News* Durham is listed as a goal city for NC for the Central Atlantic States region in March, 1954. Sometime this year John Kolstoe visited Hubert Parris as mentioned above. Homefront pioneers were mentioned arriving in North Carolina in April, 1954: Frances Falvey was pointed out going to Raleigh, Betty Koyle to Winston-Salem, and Ethel Murray in Asheville. Falvey recalls a brief visit with William and Bernie Tucker in Rocky Mount to help settle in in Raleigh.¹⁷¹ Because of being lonely she recalled prayer being especially intense and then finding welcome by a black fellow traveler on the segregated bus named Mrs. Christine Tandy and a "community club" they helped start up.

In July William Tucker, who had an integrated reception for his optometry practice including training his staff to be respectful,¹⁷² was holding public meetings on the religion in Rocky Mount and some were on the radio.¹⁷³

Walter Wootten had served in the Korean War and learned of the Faith in Hawaii and Walter and Carolyn married in August 1954 in Washington DC, she at the age of 25,¹⁷⁴ he one year younger.¹⁷⁵ In an oral interview Carolyn (Wootten) Prévost recalled arriving in Durham in 1954 and mentions other members of the community: Georgia Haithe and Kim Kinney (F. Kimball Kinney) joined the Faith in 1954 in the area and in Raleigh she recalled Frances Falvey was from California and allowed to have black visitors to her apartment by her landlord.¹⁷⁶ She also recalled others - Bill Tolen(sp?), Ralph Wiggins - who to the best of her knowledge remained active but with whom she had lost contact. And she recalled their family held firesides, Louise Sawyer "just being Louise" approached Durham native Carlotta Holmes (image, right). Kinney had just begun work at WFMY-TV in Greensboro after moving from Albuquerque where he worked for station KOAT.¹⁷⁷ On moving to North Carolina Carolyn worked as a secretary at



¹⁶⁵ [https://bahaikipedia.org/North_Carolina_in_the_\"Baha'i_News\"](https://bahaikipedia.org/North_Carolina_in_the_\), Bahaikipedia, July, 2018

¹⁶⁶ Conversation with Carolyn Prévost re Early Baha'is of this Area, Chapel Hill Assembly Archives, unknown interviewer, undated, (before formation of the Orange County Assembly.)

Note the dedication was May 2, 1953 - Bruce W. Whitmore. *The Dawning Place*. Baha'i Publishing Trust. 1984. ISBN 0-87743-193-0, p. 230

¹⁶⁷ Biography of Carolyn Annie Prévost, (Pronounced Pray-voh), by Donna Rabi'a Wootten Samsa her eldest daughter, Compiled for Bahá'í historian Steven Kolins January 8, 2017

¹⁶⁸ Adding https://bahaikipedia.org/Coverage_of_the_Bahá'í_Faith_in_Raleigh_NC_newspapers, Bahaikipedia, July, 2018

¹⁶⁹ [Two Americans listed among missing in jetliner crash](#), *The Robesonian* (Lumberton, NC) 11 Jan 1954, p. 1

¹⁷⁰ [Baha'i meeting scheduled at YWCA Saturday](#), *Asheville Citizen-Times* (Asheville, NC) 28 May 1954, p. 32

¹⁷¹ ¹⁷¹ Growth of the Bahá'í Faith in Raleigh, North Carolina, 1953-1970, by Frances Falvey, circa 1970 with addendum 1973. Courtesy of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'is of Raleigh, NC, and assistance of Charles Uzzell

¹⁷² Dr. William Tucker and Bernice Tucker; *Workers for the Oneness of Mankind*, Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'is of Asheville (Oct. 1999)

¹⁷³ "Dr. William Tucker on Final Program", *The Evening Telegram* (aka *the Rocky Mount Telegram*), Rocky Mount, NC, July 12, 1954, p. 9

¹⁷⁴ Biography of Carolyn Annie Prévost, (Pronounced Pray-voh), by Donna Rabi'a Wootten Samsa her eldest daughter, Compiled for Bahá'í historian Steven Kolins January 8, 2017

¹⁷⁵ [Walter R. Wootten](#), Find-a-grave, by Armantia, Mar 07, 2016

¹⁷⁶ Conversation with Carolyn Prévost re Early Bahá'is of this Area, Chapel Hill Assembly Archives, unknown interviewer, undated, (before formation of the Orange County Assembly.)

¹⁷⁷ [Stations](#), *Broadcasting * Telecasting*, Sep 13, 1954, p. 82

UNC-Chapel Hill,¹⁷⁸ while unable to afford living in Chapel Hill at the time.¹⁷⁹ In Raleigh Falvey was in a mention of the Faith in the *Raleigh News and Observer* about Proclamation Day. Someone, withholding her name, is noted as visiting Shaw University, planning a meeting in Chapel Hill, and being visible in other meetings.

Ludmila, Mrs. George Van Sombeek, in the process of getting married and moving to NC, was reported as a new member of the re-designated national inter-racial committee in September. George and Ludmila Van Sombeek pioneered to Durham having moved from Brooklyn. Ludmila was a nurse who fled Europe during World War I to the United States by marrying Adolph George Bechtold, learned of the Bahá'í Faith from Marie Foote in Brooklyn, New York, and joined the Faith in 1922. Her first appearance in newspapers was supporting a black school for children in 1930 and concerns of African Americans would follow through most of her life. She was active in some Race Amity Conventions and was visible in some African-American newspapers such as *The Pittsburgh Courier*, *The Chicago Defender*, and the *New York Age* before coming to NC. She also became the first guild-licensed female optician in the country and whether in Bahá'í circles or not, served in volunteer associations her whole life. After being a widower some years Ludmila appears as married to George Van Sombeek shortly before moving to NC. George had been working with the Bahá'ís and establishing the first relationships with the UN some years earlier.

In Greensboro in mid-September Annie Romer wrote a letter to editor on the Faith. A few days later it is announced Pearle Easterbrook would talk at the local headquarters of the American Friends Service Committee. Mrs. C. R. Simmons was noted the vice-chair of the community and it held a Birth of Bahá'u'lláh observance in November.

In October 1954 then Auxiliary Board member Sarah Martin Pereira was named attending the (first) Blue Ridge Bahá'í Conference, held outside of Asheville, and that 75 people attended. It was also noted in the local newspaper.¹⁸⁰ The facilities in the picture in *Baha'i News* appears to be the Robert E. Lee Hall of the YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly.¹⁸¹ Faces from the picture would be from this period of activity of Bahá'ís in the state and region.¹⁸²



Believers gathered at Blue Ridge Assembly, North Carolina, for the first major Bahá'í Conference to be held in the South.

Ludmila Van Sombeek is in the far right, dark clothing with a name label on her lapel. Identifying more faces is welcomed.

Frances Falvey and Mrs Harold J Wilson were noted in Raleigh and went to the state convention that elected William Tucker as the delegate to the national convention in December.¹⁸³

1955; Conferences and fundraising

After building activity in 1954, still more activity is visible in newspapers in 1955. After living in Rocky Mount 5 years the Tuckers rented the town courtroom for an integrated meeting and William deForge spoke¹⁸⁴ and he also spoke at the World Religion

¹⁷⁸ Biography of Carolyn Annie Prévost, (Pronounced Pray-voh), by Donna Rabi'a Wootten Samsa her eldest daughter, Compiled for Baha'i historian Steven Kolins January 8, 2017

¹⁷⁹ Conversation with Carolyn Prévost re Early Baha'is of this Area, Chapel Hill Assembly Archives, unknown interviewer, undated, (before formation of the Orange County Assembly.)

¹⁸⁰ [World Faith meet opened at assembly](#), *Asheville Citizen-Times* (Asheville, NC)29 Aug 1954, p. 42

¹⁸¹ [Lee Hall: "If These Walls Could Talk"... Part I](#) December 27, 2010 by YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly

¹⁸² [Believers gathered at Blue Ridge Assembly...](#), *Baha'i News*, Oct 1954, n284, p13

¹⁸³ [Two women report on Baha'i meet](#), *News and Observer* Monday, December 13, 1954 Raleigh, NC, Page: 12

¹⁸⁴ Oral history interviews of William Tucker, produced by Ayla J. Volpe, interviewed by Kathy Lee, January 2012.

Day observance in Greensboro along with Jack (John) M. Davis, Jr, where weekly events extended largely by the work of Kathryn Potter with assistance of others from town and beyond. Bahá'ís, probably including Falvey, presented a slide show at the Richard B. Harrison Library in Raleigh on the Holy Land in January.¹⁸⁵ In February Betty Koysl gave talks at Salem College. The Central Atlantic Youth Committee was announced in March over the region of WV, VA, DC, DE, MD, and NC with members Carolyn Wootten, as chair, out of Durham, Ray Lippitt, Quida Cooper, Richard Parmelee, John R. Nichols and Perry Gawen. There was a two page profile on the religion from an interview with Walter Wooten in the *Daily Tar Heel* in February.¹⁸⁶ Meetings at UNC continued to be advertised through the spring.¹⁸⁷ In March Bahá'ís sponsored a Youth Day panel with students from Chapel Hill, NCState, and Shaw.¹⁸⁸

In April William Tucker was elected as a delegate to the national convention. At the national convention the Tucker family decided to go pioneering and eventually went to Argentina and they lived on the Spanish speaking side of the city rather than the European side of the city.¹⁸⁹

Late in the year Bahá'ís from Durham begin to be noted in *The Carolina Times*, a prominent African-American newspaper published in Durham with a statewide reputation. An early mention is of Bahá'ís going to Greensboro for that state-wide convention that elected Tucker - George and Ludmila Van Sombeek, Margaret Quance, Orpha Daugherty and son Mark; Louise Sawyer was away in Florida and would attend convention there. Carolyn Prévost (Wootten) also recalled some of these people¹⁹⁰ - Orpha Daugherty and her son Mark, and Margaret Quance, moved to Durham initially but later moved to Raleigh, where they were joined by Ruth Meurer, and Frances Falvey and some contacts but who they were was not named. Falvey did have the support of the Tuckers and found a job in Raleigh.¹⁹¹ Falvey also refers to other pioneers that arrived: Charles Somers from Reidsville, and where some others known came from - the Daughterys and Margaret Quance moved from Durham to Raleigh and Ruth Meurer came from North Augusta, SC. Prévost also refers to her daughter Donna, born in 1955,¹⁹² being called the “Virginia Dare” of the Bahá'ís as she was born in the State and raised as a Bahá'í while others might had been born earlier and joined the Faith later.¹⁹³ Sarah Pereira had had a son Carlos born October 9, 1940 however they had moved out of North Carolina many years earlier.¹⁹⁴ Allen B. McDaniel came to speak on UNC campus in May, closing the Spring semester.¹⁹⁵ Bahá'ís in Raleigh observed the Martyrdom of the Báb.¹⁹⁶ In July the NC cities listed as goals for the Ten Year Crusade were Charlotte, Durham, Raleigh, and Winston-Salem. The August (second) Blue Ridge Bahá'í Conference now had 100 Bahá'ís gathered from 12 of the thirteen states of the Central and Southern Atlantic regions plus Ohio and Illinois. A brief article is in the local newspaper as well.¹⁹⁷ Newly appointed a Hand of the Cause Paul Haney gave a talk, and \$531 was donated to Funds of the Faith. Naomi Simmons, F. Kimball Kinney and Elah Cowart were among those of Greensboro to attend.

¹⁸⁵ [Around the City: Color slides of the Holy Land...](#), *News and Observer* Wednesday, January 12, 1955 Raleigh, NC, Page: 24

¹⁸⁶ • ["What hath God wrought?" Bahai \(sic\) - the new faith](#), by Ed Yoder, *The Daily Tar Heel*, February 16, 1955, p. 6

• [After catastrophe, the Millennium: a world embracing vision](#), by Ed Yoder, *The Daily Tar Heel*, February 22, 1955, p. 2

¹⁸⁷ * [Baha'i World Faith](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 26 Feb 1955, Page 1

* [Baha'i World Faith](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 11 Mar 1955, Page 4

* [Baha'i Faith](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 12 Mar 1955, Page 1

* [The Baha'is of the University...](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 26 Mar 1955, Page 4

* [Covering the Campus: The student members...](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 23 Apr 1955, Page 3

* [Student members...](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 24 Apr 1955, Page 4

* [Baha'i meeting](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 30 Apr 1955, Page 4

¹⁸⁸ [World Youth Day](#), *News and Observer* Monday, March 21, 1955 Raleigh, NC, Page: 10

¹⁸⁹ Dr. William Tucker and Bernice Tucker; Workers for the Oneness of Mankind, Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Asheville (Oct. 1999)

¹⁹⁰ Conversation with Carolyn Prévost re Early Baha'ís of this Area, Chapel Hill Assembly Archives, unknown interviewer, undated, (before formation of the Orange County Assembly, and she died February, 1982.)

¹⁹¹ Family finds new hope, faith after encounter, by Sally Jamir, *The Carolinian*, Nov 15, 1984, p. 18

¹⁹² Biography of Carolyn Annie Prévost, (Pronounced Pray-voh), by Donna Rabi'a Wootten Samsa her eldest daughter, Compiled for Bahá'í historian Steven Kolins January 8, 2017

¹⁹³ Conversation with Carolyn Prévost re Early Baha'ís of this Area, Chapel Hill Assembly Archives, unknown interviewer, undated, (before formation of the Orange County Assembly, and she died February, 1982.)

¹⁹⁴ https://bahaikipedia.org/Sarah_Elizabeth_Martin_Eason_Pereira, Bahaikipedia, July 2018

¹⁹⁵ * [Monday...](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 02 May 1955, Page 1

* [Baha'i leader to talk here](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 07 May 1955, Sat • Page 1

* [Baha'i leader to talk here](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 08 May 1955, Sun • Page 1

¹⁹⁶ [Anniversary marked by Raleigh Baha'is](#), *News and Observer* and Tuesday, July 12, 1955 Raleigh, NC, Page: 14

¹⁹⁷ [125 attending Baha'i meet](#), *Asheville Citizen-Times* (Asheville, NC) 28 Aug 1955, p. 10



[Bahá'is and their friends...](#), *Bahá'i News*, December, 1955, p. 14
As you can see, there were clearly more people attending.

Bahá'ís Falvey and Wilson reported on their experience at the Blue Ridge Conference.¹⁹⁸ Also in August there was activity at Shaw University with a panel including an unnamed Bahá'í. Walter Wootten continued holding meetings on UNC campus in the Fall and through the Spring of 1956.¹⁹⁹ George Van Sombeek wrote a letter to the editor of *The Carolina Times* noting the revived persecution of Bahá'ís in Iran in November. The state Bahá'í convention for 1956's national convention was held in December, 1955, and John M. Davis of Greensboro was elected delegate.

1956; Doubling and Challenge

In 1956 though activity on UNC-Chapel Hill was ebbing (and wouldn't rise again until 1969,) overall across the state activity rose beyond what can be summarized in one paragraph.

Ludmila Van Sombeek spoke early in Greensboro, and the Greensboro community is listed having an Assembly again in April. That month Durham's Ludmila Van Sombeek is noted in *The Carolina Times* going on a speaking tour before going to the Bahá'í national convention - her plans listed were Cincinnati, Chicago (for the national convention), Phoenix, Dallas, Fort Worth, Birmingham, Atlanta and other smaller cities, before her expected return in a month. Though delayed until the end of June, a brief story does appear covering her return. After having many trips for the Faith and living in various communities of Binghamton, NY, and Atlanta, GA, and other places,²⁰⁰ Terah Cowart-Smith moved to Greensboro from SC and was joined by her sister, also now a Bahá'í, Elah.²⁰¹ Elah was a teacher and Terah worked in ocular training which eased eye-strain. Terah was also noted now as a certified speaker for the United Nations and was profiled in the local newspaper which also noted she was active in the League of Women Voters and YWCA committees. With Walter's graduation meetings were moved off campus,²⁰² and then there is no mention until the Fall of 1960. Around 1956 the Woottens moved to California until 1960-1.²⁰³

In August the third Blue Ridge Conference was held, this time at the YMCA near Asheville, and was reviewed in *Bahá'i News*. The first year had 75 people, and this third year there was 140; probably the largest conference across the entire South according to *Bahá'i News*. A couple innovations happened this time - youth meetings and a children's program. Carol Varo represented

¹⁹⁸ [Bahá'í delegates back from meeting](#), *News and Observer* Thursday, September 08, 1955 Raleigh, NC, Page: 13

¹⁹⁹ * [Bahá'í Faith](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 25 Sep 1955, Sun • Page 4

* [Gm Calendar includes church, mag meetings](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 07 Oct 1955, Page 1

* [Churches \(continued from page 1\)](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 09 Oct 1955, Page 4

* [11:12:30am](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 20 Oct 1955, Page 4

* [Sunday...](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 01 Nov 1955, Page 4

* [Bahá'í Faith group public meet today](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 08 Dec 1955, Page 4

* [9:30am...](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 11 Dec 1955, Page 1

* [Bahá'í \(sic\)](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 14 Jan 1956, Page 1

* [Bahá'í...](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 26 Feb 1956, Page 1

* [Bahá'í](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 11 Mar 1956, Page 1

* [Bahá'í](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 18 Mar 1956, Page 1

²⁰⁰ [Terah Cowart Smith](#), Bahaikipedia, 2018

²⁰¹ [Terah: Personal reminiscences of teaching, traveling, loving](#), by Terah Cowart-Smith, published in *Bahá'í News*, 262, pages 5-71981-02

²⁰² [Bahá'í](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 28 Mar 1956, Wed • Page 3

²⁰³ Biography of Carolyn Annie Prévost, (Pronounced Pray-voh), by Donna Rabi'a Wootten Samsa her eldest daughter, Compiled for Bahá'í historian Steven Kolins January 8, 2017

the national youth committee. Thelma Allison, Hazel McCulla and Ruth Mourer conducted a children's program. Margaret Gawan worked with the children's group for her program with the adults and lead one of the morning devotions of the school. Adult class leaders included Louise Matthias, Winston Evans, John Inglis, Terah Cowart-Smith and Eruch Munaiff. Evans had long given talks on the Faith and would for many years to come.²⁰⁴ Etta Woodlen represented the national interracial committee and presented aims and activities including a taped talk about reaching African-Americans and Indians by Dorothy Beecher Baker. It encouraged Bahá'ís to plan - where the largest population centers were, visit and determine receptivity of places in them and "send an Ali Nakhjavani", (well known for activities in Africa) to eat, sleep and live with them, then supply inspiring visiting teachers, literature and services, set a goal of establishing an assembly representing a community and work towards it constantly. Hubert Matthias consulted with a group about how the conference should go next year. Paul Haney reviewed activities of the Hands and the world community. Among the 140 that attended reported by *The Carolina Times*, were Ludmila and George Van Sombeek with Elizabeth Snyder, Peter McLaren and Bernard Streets and all were house guests of the Van Sombeeks. Alas no picture was published in the *Baha'i News*. Ludmila Van Sombeek was profiled in Greensboro in September and spoke for Proclamation Day. An oral history interview of Carolyn Prévost (Wootten) underscores Ludmila using her Austrian background as a means of being publicly "unaware" of the norms in the South to have integrated meetings at her home and a means of smoothing over individuals uncomfortable in integrated circumstances - and she extended this sense of being uninformed of means so that people would be more willing to come to her assistance. Prévost also recalled suggestions from the Guardian that people buy homes because then they could hold integrated meetings and not be subject to the authority of landlords who could find the activity too challenging.²⁰⁵ William Tucker also refers to such challenges when living in a rental home in Rocky Mount.²⁰⁶ Falvey met Christine Tandy and a study circle formed and another member was Mary Brown.²⁰⁷

In Raleigh, before about 1957, Marie Brodie had had a vision experience that her family would all be together in some spiritual movement and that something, someone, was coming.^{208,209} James Brodie had wondered growing up having to walk past white churches and not be able to go there if they worshiped the same God.²¹⁰ Between 1954 and 1956, Frances Falvey had contact with James Brodie's sister Mrs. Mary Brown (Austin), perhaps also known as Louise, who was a member of the social club Falvey and friends had established a couple years earlier in Raleigh.^{211,212,213} This sister-in-law was full of enthusiasm on hearing of the Faith and shared her enthusiasm with Marie. She invited Marie to go to a meeting on the Faith in Durham, probably at the Van Sombeek residence. Marie Brodie recalled Falvey was specifically presenting on the religion and had a sort of glow about her.²¹⁴ Marie and daughter Betty Jean Brodie went to others meeting as well. Later in the same week James' sister's home in Raleigh hosted a Bahá'í meeting with a talk by Ellsworth Blackwell.²¹⁵ James Brodie had come to that meeting.²¹⁶ In the same period Jean Brodie, Marie and James' daughter, invited church members to Bahá'í meetings - a church her grandfather, Marie's father, was pastor at.²¹⁷ Other ministers asked Bahá'ís to events as well and faculty at Shaw remembered Sarah Pereira though she had changed names since then.²¹⁸ Falvey also remembers other pioneers to Raleigh - Billie Wilson from Andover, Massachusetts, and Juni Faily, from Ypsilanti, Michigan. Falvey also recalled friendly reception by Marie Brodie's father Reverend Branch, and James Brodie's sister being a staunch friend of the Faith - and that other Bahá'ís even from other states participated in the study classes on the Faith they established from time to time. Because of Reverend Branch Bahá'ís were invited to many social and religious meetings to present on the religion. She also refers generally to the friendly reception given by Shaw University faculty and hosting meetings on campus in classes and they received gifts from the National Assembly in the form of some books.

In November Ludmila returned from another speaking tour, as published in *The Carolina Times*, covering her travels in some detail and reported her visit with the family of Dr. Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. among many others, though the entry was still just part

²⁰⁴ A non-exhaustive collection of newspaper mentions of Evans:

- [Vesper service](#) *The Tennessean* (Nashville, TN)19 Nov 1939, p. 22
- [Bahá'í series to start here Reno](#), *Gazette-Journal* (Reno, NV)18 Jun 1943, p. 11
- [Deeper devotion called World need](#), *The Los Angeles Times* (Los Angeles, CA)23 Sep 1946, p. 7
- [Faculty additions listed by Baha'is](#), *The Portsmouth Herald* (Portsmouth, NH)24 Jul 1953, p. 3
- [A reporter goes to church: 'God the answer for humanity's problems,' Baha'i leader says](#), by James Carty, *The Tennessean* (Nashville, Tennessee)18 Apr 1955, p. 4
- [Bahá'u'lláh... \(advert\)](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC)23 Sep 1962, p. 6
- [Religion in life week starting at university](#), *Tucson Daily Citizen* (Tucson, AZ)26 Feb 1966, p. 15
- [Bahá'ís sponsor 'Religion Day'](#), *El Paso Herald-Post* (El Paso, Texas)7 Jan 1967, p. 3
- [Second coming of Christ has already occurred, claims Baha'i Faith lecturer](#), by Judy Weidman, *The Kokomo Tribune* (Kokomo, Indiana)20 April 1970, p. 5

²⁰⁵ Conversation with Carolyn Prévost re Early Baha'is of this Area, Chapel Hill Assembly Archives, unknown interviewer, undated, (before formation of the Orange County Assembly.)

²⁰⁶ Oral history interviews of William Tucker, produced by Ayla J. Volpe, interviewed by Kathy Lee, January 2012.

²⁰⁷ Family finds new hope, faith after encounter, by Sally Jamir, *The Carolinian*, Nov 15, 1984, p. 18

²⁰⁸ Family finds new hope, faith after encounter, by Sally Jamir, *The Carolinian*, Nov 15, 1984, p. 18

²⁰⁹ Marie, James, and daughter (Betty) Jean Brodie interview and conversation recorded by Sally Jamir (circa 1983).

²¹⁰ Family finds new hope, faith after encounter, by Sally Jamir, *The Carolinian*, Nov 15, 1984, p. 18

²¹¹ Family finds new hope, faith after encounter, by Sally Jamir, *The Carolinian*, Nov 15, 1984, p. 18

²¹² Phone call with (Betty) Jean Brodie, Jan 15, 2017 with Steven Kolins.

²¹³ Growth of the Bahá'í Faith in Raleigh, North Carolina, 1953-1970, by Frances Falvey, circa 1970 with addendum 1973. Courtesy of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Raleigh, NC, and assistance of Charles Uzzell

²¹⁴ Family finds new hope, faith after encounter, by Sally Jamir, *The Carolinian*, Nov 15, 1984, p. 18

²¹⁵ Marie, James, and daughter (Betty) Jean Brodie interview and conversation recorded by Sally Jamir (circa 1983).

²¹⁶ Family finds new hope, faith after encounter, by Sally Jamir, *The Carolinian*, Nov 15, 1984, p. 18

²¹⁷ Family finds new hope, faith after encounter, by Sally Jamir, *The Carolinian*, Nov 15, 1984, p. 18

²¹⁸ Family finds new hope, faith after encounter, by Sally Jamir, *The Carolinian*, Nov 15, 1984, p. 18

of the society page. In December came the first story in *The Carolina Times* to break out of the society page: the visit of Bostonian lawyer Bahá'í Matthew Bullock (Sr), who was a NC native and spoke at the Van Sombeek home, was printed in a short article on the front page. It is worth noting this was an integrated meeting in a white couple's home in the still segregated South. Sarah Pereira was the next to speak at the Van Sombeek home, and Pereira was the first picture of a Bahá'í in the *Carolina Times* found thus far.²¹⁹ There were an estimated almost 7,000 Bahá'ís in the US by the end of 1956.²²⁰ The statewide convention of Bahá'ís was held in Greensboro and Terah Cowart-Smith was profiled in the *Greensboro Daily News*. She and her sister Elah Cowart, had moved to Greensboro. Elah was a teacher and Terah worked in ocular "education" having been trained by a Dr./Mrs. Bates of NY who emphasized "dynamic relaxation" for some eye problems - Terah set up a "sight improvement studio". She worked for the speakers research committee of the UN, and a (Bahá'í) college speakers bureau with a pet topic of "Women in the New Age", Bahá'í institutions, and fund raising for kids' needs. She was born in Georgia near Augusta, went to a state teacher's college and then went to NY teacher's college and studied psychology through her husband. She was active in the League of Women Voters and on YWCA health committees.



Dr. Sarah Martin Pereira.

1957; Raleigh Spiritual Assembly and activities

In Mid-January a public meeting was arranged at the Quaker Friends Meeting House near Duke University called "World Religion for World Peace", a form of the World Religion Day, a holiday observance established by the NSA in 1950.²²¹ It was announced in Greensboro a letter to the editor promoted having a Bahá'í panel for Negro History Week would be held at the Guilford County Courthouse - the panel members would be professors Richard Bardolph, John Withers, and Terah Cowart-Smith, with Jack Davis chairing the panel. The notice in *The Carolina Times* is in the form of an advertisement but is one of a specific meeting with specific people presenting: Thomas Jones of Earlham College and Fisk University and national figure on progressive education and Bahá'í, Stanwood Cobb, gave talks. This is the first notice of meetings at the Friends Meeting House that will host a great many Bahá'í meetings. In addition to an advertisement there was an article reviewing the coming meeting. There was another advertisement the night before, and another afterwards noting the Meeting House was full to capacity. It was also mentioned the speakers were house guests of the Van Sombeeks. It is worth noting that the home of the Sombeeks is not being mentioned in the newspaper because it was physically imposing - it is because at the time a home owned by whites would often not host African-Americans in their homes.

Mid-February 1957, George Van Sombeek wrote a letter to the editor on race unity and an appreciation of Black history. A couple weeks later a story appeared of Ludmila returning from a 10-day speaking tour - but now lifted off the society page and in an article of her own. It reported she gave talks and visited individuals in Chattanooga, Memphis, and at Fisk University, having spoken there in 1934. While the *Carolina Times* would continue to cover Van Sombeek's travels around the US all through her time living in Durham, this coverage will not be a systematic part of this review.

A notice of a Naw-Rúz meeting in Raleigh at a Bahá'í's home is listed in in *Bahá'í News* in 1957. An article in *The Carolina Times* covered the buffet dinner for the Bahá'í New Year observance, (the term Naw-Rúz was not yet used,) served at the Van Sombeek home. Music was provided by two Australian artists, it said. This appears to be the first time a Bahá'í Holy Day was mentioned in the newspaper. Terah was elected VP to the Greensboro League of Women Voters. Also in June Ludmila returned from a three-week speaking tour. There was also an advertisement on the same page of the Bahá'í House of Worship.

The Brodie family - Marie, James and Betty Jean - joined the Faith as well.²²² Jean recalled being pen-pals with Glenford Mitchell of Kingston, Jamaica, and their family going to Bahá'í meetings as early as 1954. So too did Ramon Farro at Shaw University.²²³ The Brodies recalled meeting Glenford Mitchell and that he was on the first Raleigh Spiritual Assembly, elected this year²²⁴ Jean recalls the members were: James Brodie, Marie Brodie, Frances Falvey, Margaret Quance, Orpha Daugherty, Mark Daugherty, Glenford Mitchell, Louise Sawyer, and Ruth Meurer.^{225,226} Assisting in the community via the National Teaching Committee were Corinne Bowman and Jack Davis.²²⁷ Falvey comments that the assembly struggled to maintain its status several years yet to come. Among those that left was Orpha Daugherty who pioneered to the Philippines, Ramon Farro to Cuba, Ruth Meurer back to North Augusta and later others were drafted. Meanwhile others came - Louise and Joe Sawyer (Jr), Luise Jackson, Elah Cowart, the

²¹⁹ [Dr. Sarah Martin Pereira... \(pictured\)](#), *The Carolina Times*. / December 08, 1956 / page 1

²²⁰ **The Bahá'ís of America - The growth of a religious movement**, by Mike McMullen, NYU Press, 2015, p. 40

²²¹ **A Concise Encyclopedia of the Bahá'í Faith**, edited by Peter Smith, published by Oneworld, 2000, ISBN 1-85168-184-1, pp. 198-9, 365.

²²² Marie, James, and daughter Jean Brodie interview and conversation recorded by Sally Jamir (circa 1983).

²²³ Growth of the Bahá'í Faith in Raleigh, North Carolina, 1953-1970, by Frances Falvey, circa 1970 with addendum 1973. Courtesy of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Raleigh, NC, and assistance of Charles Uzzell

²²⁴ Marie, James, and daughter Jean Brodie interview and conversation recorded by Sally Jamir (circa 1983).

²²⁵ Phone call with Jean Brodie, Jan 15, 2017 with Steven Kolins.

²²⁶ Growth of the Bahá'í Faith in Raleigh, North Carolina, 1953-1970, by Frances Falvey, circa 1970 with addendum 1973. Courtesy of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Raleigh, NC, and assistance of Charles Uzzell

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Woottens and Nancy Hockenbury. The official Raleigh Assembly Community Timeline written circa 2008 notes 1957 as the election of the first Assembly,²²⁸ and that there was much activity to see if Shaw University would recognize Bahá'í Holy Days.

A notice of the Bahá'í history of supporting Race Amity meetings was printed June 8 in the *Carolina Times*, though there is no mention of a local event. However at the national level, the NSA established the Race Unity (Amity) Day this year.²²⁹ Greensboro held a meeting, and Durham reported one of the largest Bahá'í Race Amity Day events in the nation according to *Baha'i News*. Slides were shown of the Arizona Indian Reservations and the Wilmette Bahá'í Temple, plus music was performed by Mrs. Van Sombeek herself. A. T. Spaulding was the guest speaker as a US UNESCO delegate to that year's New Delhi conference. Asa T. Spaulding was then a rising executive with North Carolina Mutual Life Insurance Company in Durham, and an activist in civil rights, education, employment, and other work related to minorities' rights.²³⁰ Duke, NCCU and students from various cities made up most of the guests. Special guests from Australia and Iran were recognized. A good group photo was published in *Bahá'í News*:²³¹



Race Amity Day meeting in the home of Mr. and Mrs. George Van Sombeek in Durham, N.C., on June 9. The guests included Mr. A. T. Spaulding, United States delegate of the UNESCO conference in New Delhi, India.

(photo caption) Race Amity Meeting in the home...., Baha'i News, August, 1957, p. 11

15 is Ludmila is on the far right smiling in a light dress with George to her left, #14

The event was also covered in the *Durham Morning Herald*.²³² Among the known attendees, Bahá'ís and not, were: Mrs Ruth C Edwards, Mrs JN Hughley, Mary Bohannon, Orpha Daugherty, Reba Davis, Dr Ruth N Horry, Mrs J Himes, Louise Latham, Helen S Morse, Margaret Quance, Louise Sawyer, Mrs Van Sombeek (all of Durham) and Charlotte Adams, Mary E Bowers, Marian Davis, Mrs Albert L Turner, (all of Chapel Hill) and Frances Falvey of Raleigh.

At the beginning of August a protest was lodged at the Greensboro town council - came in the form of a controversy of if Elah (sister to Terah) Cowart was fired (not re-selected) as a 4th grade teacher from Rankin school for 1957-8 for being a Bahá'í - the complaint was lodged by J. M. Davis Jr for the local assembly - it was observed that comments had been made that the "missionary activity" of Elah distributing materials for Bahá'í meetings on school grounds on her own time, and mimeographing these invitations on school equipment, "would have been ok if it was for Methodists or Baptists but not for Catholics" (confusing the whole situation.) The article noted the community was 16 adults in Greensboro and Davis had been a radio announcer for WPET. In late January 1959 it was announced that Elah was called retired and teaching classes for the Greensboro YWCA. It was also in 1957 when Terah re-thought her understanding of Bahá'í pilgrimage and she began to think on it.

Sarah Pereira was reported giving a presentation at the Blue Ridge Conference School in late August and there were other meetings such as a panel discussion on the fulfillment of prophecy. Hand of the Cause Paul Haney appeared at the school and there was planning to hold a summer school instead of a conference and to last five days or more. There were also non-Bahá'í youth meetings.

²²⁸ Raleigh Bahá'í Community Timeline 1957-2007, courtesy of the Raleigh Spiritual Assembly.

²²⁹ *Race Unity Day*, by Christopher Buck, in *Religious Celebrations: An Encyclopedia of Holidays, Festivals, Solemn Observances, and Spiritual Commemorations*, Volume 1, edited by J. Gordon Melton, published by ABC-CLIO, Sep 13, 2011

²³⁰ *Guide to the Asa and Elna Spaulding Papers, 1909-1997 and undated, bulk 1935-1983*, Duke University Libraries, April, 2013

²³¹ *(photo caption) Race Amity Meeting in the home...., Baha'i News, August, 1957, p. 11*

²³² *Trip abroad described at Tea Party, Durham Morning Herald, Mar 06, 1957 Durham, NC Page: 5*

A picture was also published in the *Baha'i News*:²³³



The Blue Ridge Bahá'í Conference, held at Blue Ridge, N. Car., on August 24-28, 1957.

[The Blue Ridge Baha'i Conference....](#), *Baha'i News*, Oct 1957, n320, p. 7

Tentative identifications include:

#11 James Brodie #43 Marie Brodie #55 Paul Haney #68 Carlotta Holmes #78 Mark Daugherty
 #80 Orpha Daughterty #88 Jean Brodie #90 Glenford Mitchell #96 Thelma Allison #132 Frances Falvey

Several religious leaders gathered for an interfaith meeting at a Presbyterian church in Durham and Ludmila delivered the principal talk of the event. In November visiting professor E. Thomas from Duke and Leonard DeShield talked at the Bahá'í observance of UN Day with Ludmila presiding at a community center. That December Ludmila was among speakers at the *Women's International League for Peace and Freedom's* NCC(U) forum, and Ludmila herself appeared in a picture on the front page of the *Times* alongside several others leaders of the group.

The following October Terah Cowart-Smith was the host of the 12th UN Day observance supported by Bahá'ís meeting at her home. Mrs Raymond Smith moderator and Terah Cowart-Smith, Gomer Lesch of WFMY-TV and former mayor Robert Frazier appeared as a panel. During the year Carlotta R. Holmes joined the religion.^{234, 235} In December Holmes was mentioned in the *Times* hosting Bahá'í guests coming to Durham associated with Ludmila Van Sombeek's efforts. Holmes was among the first Bahá'ís to join the Faith from Durham and with the Brodie family, of the Triangle, that we currently know the name of. She was active in various social and religious clubs in the Durham wider community back to the 1940s and was a leader in the St. Joseph A. M. E. Church Ladies Aid Club, then later in the Phi Delta Kappa professional educators sorority, and had worked as an elementary school teacher from the 1940s at least through the 1970s. We do not have a published record of her process to joining the Bahá'í Faith, nor an oral history account.

²³³ see [The Blue Ridge Bahá'í Conference....](#), *Baha'i News*, October, 1957, p. 7.

²³⁴ "Baha'i school to be named for Durham teacher of 4 decades", by Lynn Jaluvka, *The Herald-Sun*, Durham NC, Feb 27, 1999, pp. C1,4

²³⁵ "Ayyám-i-Há dedication of the Carlotta R. Holmes Family Bahá'í School" (program), published by the Spiritual Assembly of Durham County, NC and the Family Bahá'í School Board, Feb 27, 1999

Ludmila herself appears for the first time in the *Times* in mid-December and does so on the front page as part of an article on WILPF meeting, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.²³⁶



"The Rev. Mrs. Annalee Stewart...". *The Carolina Times*. Durham, NC. December 14, 1957. p. 1.

A notice in late December covered Etta Woodlen, chair of national Inter-Racial Committee of Bahá'ís, who had stayed at the Van Sombeek home and toured several cities in North Carolina. Others noted in the article included various international guests and speakers and that Woodlen had an additional reception at Carlotta Holmes's home. James Helmlund and his mother had arrived at the end of December from NY and participated in a fellowship supper for about 30 students from colleges and universities across a few states. International students addressed the group about their homelands.

1958; Triangle and Triad and local tv

January 1958 opens with additional coverage those those gathered at the Van Sombeek home and a letter to editor was contributed by George Van Sombeek on the Bahá'ís observance of [World Religion Day](#), with some of those same students still around. At the time Ludmila spoke at [Johnson C. Smith University](#) for their observance of World Religion Day. Terah lead a panel for World Religion Day up in Baltimore, MD. A month later [Helen Elsie Austin](#) was a guest of the Van Sombeeks. Terah Cowart Smith from Greensboro left for a panel as part of World Religion Day in Baltimore Md, while Greensboro Bahá'ís held it in Hodgkin Hall of A&T College with speaker Jack Davis.

Though reported weeks after the fact, there was a notice of a Persian dinner held at the Van Sombeek's for the Bahá'í New Year with an audio tape by William Sears played, (he had just recently been appointed as a Hand of the Cause.) The article mentioned Ludmila as a speaker at the [Elizabeth City State Teachers College](#) in the far east of the state during a session on religion at the school. Then a picture of a local group meeting with Rev. Dr. King included Ludmila.²³⁷ The article then noted George Van Sombeek had died a few hours after this meeting. He was buried in Woodlawn Memorial Park, Durham. A month after her husband's death Ludmila and Mrs Joe Sawyer returned from an Intercontinental Conference in Chicago.



On April 13 a youth conference was held in Raleigh and another panel was able to present at a newspaper office.²³⁸ The assembly of Greensboro incorporated after its mid-April election in 1958 and several of the Bahá'ís went to an international conference - Kathryn Potter, Terah Cowart-Smith, Jack Davis, and Kimball Kinney. The Raleigh Assembly was elected with Ophra

²³⁶ See far left, at [The Rev. Mrs. Annalee Stewart...](#), *The Carolina Times*. / December 14, 1957 / page 1

²³⁷ [Scenes from the Summit Ministers Conference and Workshop...](#), *The Carolina Times*. / April 19, 1958 / page 1

²³⁸ [Bahá'í youth activities April 1954 - April 1963](#), *The Bahá'í World*, vol 13, see p. 774

Daughtery, Frances Falvey, Marie Brodie, Louise Sawyer, Glenn Mitchell, Margeret Quance, Ruth Meurer, James Brodie and Louise Jackson.²³⁹ A picture was taken:

Falvey also remembers other pioneers coming in 1958 - Fereydoun Jalali, Farhang Sefidvash, Mulud Jalili, Parviz Moshtael, Dian Rassekh, George and Susan Lii (from Taiwan,) Eleanor Baldwin, Dennis Farr, Larry Miller, Marguerite and Cliff Ellingham, and Nancy Rogers. She also noted some marriages that took place over the next period of time: Bruce and Rachel Barick married at NCState, Ozzie and Jean (Brodie) Tidmore married at the Downtowner Motel, and Guy and Dian (Rassekh) Olson were



married in a Raleigh friend's home, (much later in 1968.) The Raleigh Assembly Community Timeline 1957-2007 noted Mitchell had a regular column in the *Carolinian* called "Just a Thought",²⁴⁰ Mitchell later co-edited and published *The Angry Black South*.²⁴¹ Mitchell was an editor of the campus student newspaper *Shaw Journal*, and was a member of the Intelligence Committee of the Shaw-St Augustine's Student Movement which led to sit-in demonstrations in Raleigh. He went on to the Columbia University school of journalism in 1962. He says the sit-in movement in North Carolina "took me by surprise" even if "something had to give." After the Greensboro Assembly joined the local Interfaith Council it was given the opportunity of presenting six fifteen-minute programs on WFMY-TV in June, where F. Kimball Kinney worked.²⁴² Kinney also joined the committee running the Blue Ridge Summer school. Ludmila's home hosted Indian diplomat and Bahá'í Eruch Munsiff, and her speaking engagements and interviews in July were published in the *Times*. And by May Terah was giving a talk supporting the UN. The Race Amity Day in early June was held at the Hayes-Taylor YMCA with Jack Davis as chair of the Assembly, Thelma Allison, (back from pilgrimage,) W. T. Bidwell, (back from a tour of the Caribbean,) were the speakers and Terah Cowart-Smith presided and it was covered in all the Greensboro newspapers.

²³⁹ 1958 Photo, Raleigh Assembly Archives.

²⁴⁰ Raleigh Bahá'í Community Timeline 1957-2007, courtesy of the Raleigh Spiritual Assembly.

²⁴¹ [The Angry Black South](#) by Glenford E Mitchell and William H Peace, Publisher: New York : Corinth Books, 1962, p. 73

²⁴² • [Stations](#), *Broadcasting * Telecasting*, Sep 13, 1954, p. 82

• [Discussion set](#); Negro News-activities, by Margaretta Evans, *The Daily Times-News* (Burlington, NC)29 Mar 1963, p. 20

• [Speaker named](#), *The Daily Times-News* (Burlington, NC)17 Apr 1964, p. 4

First Summer School of the Southern States held at Blue Ridge in August, by Gail Cubwin, *Baha'i News*, November 1958, pp. 9-10



Attendants at the first Bahá'í Summer School of the Southern States, held at Blue Ridge, N. Car., August 23-28.

A broad summary and picture of the 1958 Blue Ridge Summer School was published in the *Baha'i News* for November after it was held in August. About eighty Bahá'ís and friends attended the integrated event. It was chaired by Jack Davis of Greensboro, and a longer article made the local newspaper again.²⁴³ Teachers for adult classes included Roy Mottahedeh, Lorana Kerfoot, Erma Hayden, Albert James, Zella Scendsen, and Jack Davis. Classes were held for adults and youth separately and together. Children's classes were taught by Thelma Allison, Louise Jackson, Alice Walton and Marion Goldstein. Additional social events featured slides of the Temple and Shrines. The YMCA management originally required a higher number of attendees to renew the contract; however, it was renewed for three years. *The Carolina Times* reported the conference having participants from Durham, Raleigh, and other places in NC. Among the attendees from Greensboro were Daniel Morris, Betty Thompson, Frances Pearce, Jack David and Naomi Simmons.

In mid-September a letter to the editor of the *Times* by Ludmila was about the Golden Rule across religions including the Bahá'í Faith. This inter-faith approach on page 2 of the newspaper was reported a Presbyterian hosted "tea", at which Ludmila was the lead speaker, on page 4. Meanwhile the Tucker family, now with a daughter, moved to Asheville from Argentina and their integrated meetings again attracted racial hate with death threats and threats to his business - ultimately they met with all their neighbors that had blocked all the parking spots on their street to say they were not moving and the next day several homes went up for sale.²⁴⁴ Proclamation Day was held in Greensboro had a panel of Carlotta (Holmes?, from Durham?) Betty Thompson, Jack Davis, and Kimball Kinney held at the YMCA.

In Greensboro the Báb's Birth was held at the home of Naomi Simmos. Shortly thereafter a series of conferences across the nation was called presenting a message from the NSA, explaining the term "spiritual reinvigoration", the ideas of administration vs procedure and examples of recent failings and an aim to "live the life" were themes. Curtis Kelsey was in Raleigh for this Oct 26, 1958. And the Birth of Bahá'u'lláh was observed at another home in Greensboro with Daniel Morris, Kathryn Potter, and Jack Davis lead the presentation while the Durham *Carolina Times* mentioned the Durham observance of Birth of Bahá'u'lláh. Late in November there is a major article on the Faith in Greensboro profiling Jack (John) M Davis with a picture of the Shrine of the Báb. He was going on pilgrimage. The article noted he had been on the waiting list for two years, had lived in Greensboro four years including two as an announcer on WPET. Previously in the Korean War he served as a radio reporter for the Navy in Japan and Korea.

December closed out with coverage of the pending State Bahá'í convention in Greensboro expecting 50 people at the O. Henry Hotel - Frances Pearce was secretary of the assembly and expected attendees included Ludmila Van Sombeek (Durham), Betty Koyl (Winston-Salem), Gerald and Mrs. Curwin (Charlotte), Glenford Mitchell (Raleigh) and Kimball Kinney (Greensboro.) F. Kimball Kinney was elected the NC delegate to the national convention. And a Human Rights Day was held on Duke Campus Dec 12, sponsored by the Intercollegiate Fellowship of NCC(U) and Duke students.²⁴⁵ The event was a panel and one member was a Bahá'í. Four Bahá'ís spoke at a follow-up panel on Dec 14. Bahá'ís from North Carolina were able to attend a weekend conference held by

²⁴³ [Bahá'í ends session at Blue Ridge](#), *Asheville Citizen-Times* (Asheville, NC) 29 Aug 1958, p. 28

²⁴⁴ Oral history interviews of William Tucker, produced by Ayla J. Volpe, interviewed by Kathy Lee, January 2012.

²⁴⁵ [Bahá'í youth activities April 1954 - April 1963](#), *The Bahá'í World*, vol 13, see p. 773

the National Bahá'í College Bureau held on the WV State College Campus.²⁴⁶ This would have been where then Auxiliary Board member Sarah Pereira was a department chair.²⁴⁷

1959; Kinney and Blackwell and Bullock

This year opens with the World Religion Day observance in Greensboro at the O. Henry Hotel with multiple speakers from different local churches and Peter McLaren represented the Bahá'ís. In Durham the observance was held in the Quaker Friends Meeting Room as reported in the *Times* with Paul Sanford, of SC State College at Orangeburg, giving a talk along with a couple of others including Van Sombeek and Carlotta Holmes. In early February an unnamed Bahá'í gave a presentation at a class at a community college in Charlotte.²⁴⁸ And then Van Sombeek's home hosted a conference on race relations sponsored by national Bahá'í Interracial committee with people from North Carolina and Virginia attending. Thirty-four attended, and a picture was published as well.²⁴⁹ The committee running the Blue Ridge summer school was also published in *Bahá'í News* - Corinne Bowman, secretary, Gerald Curwin, Mrs. Vivian Curwin, Jack Davis, and F. Kimball Kinney. The next week Dr. and Mrs. Raymond Piper visited Durham's colleges and Van Sombeek's home on a world tour.

In early March there is a profile of F. Kimball Kinney going on pilgrimage out of Greensboro. The article noted he was continuity director, and copy chief for the previous four years, at WFMY-TV and would see the recently completed Archives Building, while Jack Davis was leaving to pioneer to the South Pacific. It also noted he was a UNC graduate and was planning to visit with Bahá'í communities in Rome, Paris, and London along the way. The Bahá'í new year was observed at Van Sombeek's home in Durham with a talk by a (UNC?) graduate returned from France. Late in May the *Carolina Times* mentioned that A. K. Kalantar talked at the Van Sombeek home during a tour with his wife. Attending were students and faculty from nearby universities. In Greensboro World Youth Day was held at the YMCA with a talk by David Journey. In May a short article on the return of Terah Cowart-Smith noted her pilgrimage and a tour of European capitals, and more in England, visiting Bahá'í communities. Two weeks later there was the obituary for Naomi Simmons, the first known to pass away in Greensboro mentioning the Faith, with the service held at Providence Baptist Church and buried in Piedmont Memorial Park. Carlotta Holmes was reported with a college group discussion on issues of race in July in the Durham *Times*. A few weeks later Van Sombeek returned from Black Mountain for a UN and NC Council of Churches conference. Jean Norris, later Scales, joined the NCC faculty in August of 1959²⁵⁰ and would serve there until 1985²⁵¹ and was soon active in Bahá'í circles. Terah Cowart-Smith went on pilgrimage in April. In May a newspaper article in Greensboro profiled her pilgrimage and tour of European capitals on the way there and back. In the Fall Cowart was asked to tour along the Canadian side of the border with the US.

A series of conferences was called for bringing the pioneering goals of the Ten Year Crusade to regional communities - the one held in Raleigh NC was given by Ellsworth Blackwell in June.

In October the *Times* published a note on the anniversary of introduction of the Faith in the US at the 1893 Columbian Expo at the end of September. Later in October the Van Sombeek home hosted international students and teachers for a party in honor of the UN. Then a little more than a week later, and closing out 1959, Matthew Bullock (Sr), former Dean of Alabama A&M Normal, gave a series of talks in the state, such as at North Carolina College, Durham Business College, A& T College, and Palmer Memorial Institute of Sedalia, etc., as a guest of Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Moffett. Receptions were held by Van Sombeek and Carlotta Holmes at each of their homes. Glenford E. Mitchell was a rising junior at Shaw University this year (and in decades ahead would be elected to the Universal House of Justice.) The observance of Birth of Bahá'u'lláh in Greensboro was set in November at the home of Kathryn Potter and covered on the front page of the *Future Outlook*.

1960; And the first trip to Frogmore, SC

In Greensboro Terah Cowart-Smith was one of the teachers for an adult reading class, in early January, associated with a televised training program. Usually weekly meetings held in the later 1950s in Greensboro extended in the early 1960s. Adolphe Furth and Albert James talked at a meeting at Van Sombeek's home in Durham for the World Religion Day observance and there was a proclamation by Mayor Evans for it. The article in the *Carolina Times* noted other names - Mable Powell, Lola Solice, Mrs. JW Harris, Luna Holman, Henry Holman, Margaret Minor, Miss Perry, Ernest Manasse, Carlotta Holmes, Mrs EM Manasse.

In mid-April there was an article in Greensboro on the marriage of Frank Kimball Kenney and Ingeborg Wirth held at the home of Terah Cowart-Smith and Elah Cowart and officiated by David Journey. Over in Durham national assembly member Ellsworth

²⁴⁶ [Bahá'í youth activities April 1954 - April 1963](#), *The Bahá'í World*, vol 13, see p. 775

²⁴⁷ [Sarah Elizabeth Martin Eason Pereira](#), Bahaikipedia, Dec 2, 2016

²⁴⁸ ["Students hear lecture on Baha'í World Faith"](#), by Nathaniel Alford, *Carver Chronicle*, April, 1959, p.4 - in *A History of CPCC: News Clippings; Second Ward Extension School 1947-1949; Carver College 1949-1960; Mecklenburg College 1961-63*, Central Piedmont Community College, p. 27

²⁴⁹ [Mrs. Van Sombeek home is scene of discussion by Bahá'í from two State on race relation](#), *The Carolina Times*, February 21, 1959, p. 12

²⁵⁰ [NCC Names new English teacher](#), *The Carolina Times*, August 8, 1959, p. 4

²⁵¹ "Excellence in all things", *The American Bahá'í*, Volume 21, No. 9, September, 1990

Blackwell led a local conference, as a guest of Carlotta Holmes, while Van Sombeek had an open house reception. Durham was noted in the *Bahá'í News* among the 26 cities to host regional conferences - theirs on Jan 30. There are about 2 and a half times the mentions of the Faith in *The Carolina Times* in the 1960s compared to the 1950s. That's 146 mentions though that includes 14 advertisements. About 60 involve Ludmila Van Sombeek. It is also fairly apparent that whenever she would go on a tour somewhere there were fewer public events of the Faith held locally. However other events would take place and, whereas since the 50s events would be held at her home, increasingly events were held in area venues - the Friends Meeting House or the Jack Tar Hotel. And indeed in 1969 Van Sombeek moved to Reno at age 73. Before the 1960s there were the occasional engagement of Bahá'ís in other organizations, and Bahá'í activities themselves while open were just of our own work. In the 1960s civic leaders would produce proclamations of the Bahá'ís though not personally appear at events. Other religious leaders would participate in a few cases.

The program committee for the new Bahá'í summer school at Blue Ridge was announced in January - Gail Curwin, Kathryn Potter, C. Newell Atkinson, Gerald Curwin, Corinne Bowman, F. Kimball Kinney, Ronald Knowles, Victoria Richards, William Tucker, and Harvey Wiener.

Jean Norris was inspired by the [Greensboro sit-ins](#) Feb 1 that great things were happening and was explaining Bahá'í ideals when she caught herself saying "we believe". She soon decided she actually *did* believe, wrote her declaration of faith in Bahá'u'lláh Feb 7, 1960, and enrolled officially at Naw-Rúz through the Raleigh Assembly.²⁵² Previously, childhood friend Mary Helen Mickens Brown had joined the religion and asked Norris to read a quote from **The Divine Art of Living** at Brown's father's funeral. Norris was struck at Brown's transfiguration on hearing the quote. Later she helped Brown explain the Faith at a fireside, and then visited the Bahá'í Temple. But it wasn't until she met Ludmila Van Sombeek that she was struck by a balance of "living the life" of deeds and "teaching" via words as a Bahá'í that her conviction rose to suddenly saying "we believe" when explaining Bahá'í ideals. She recorded her experience in a chapter of [The Bright Glass of the Heart: Elder Voices on Faith](#).²⁵³ In late February during the Ayyám-i-Há period there is notice of a pair of meetings in Greensboro - David Jurney was going to host a discussion group at one home, and second that John Goodwin would hold a session on the Faith at Potter's home. Near mid-March there was a notice of a combination meeting of Greensboro and Winston-Salem Bahá'ís at the Airport Restaurant.

Others were inspired by the Greensboro sit-ins. Glenford Mitchell and others at Shaw and St. Augustines despite their rivalry, arranged a sit-in in February and were present at the founding of the Shaw-St Augustine's Student Movement Intelligence Committee which took form immediately after the sit-in.²⁵⁴ They registered warnings from the KKK, support from the ACLU and the NAACP and local lawyers and a divide among white southerners about how to respond and the committee turned to picketing and seeking public support. White southern students joined in other demonstrations in the country and from Wake Forest in particular in North Carolina who, along with white preachers and professors had been victimized by the KKK. White students then arrived from NCState, Duke, Wake Forest, and even Florida State University came and newspaper articles like from UNC's *Daily Tarheel* rose in support. Money arrived from students at the University of Connecticut, individuals from Harvard and Brandeis universities. There were also local associations that were galvanized while specifically not trying to include the administrations of Shaw or St Augustine's and there was fear of "Uncle Toms" as well. The movement progressed and a wide scale meeting was held at Shaw in mid-April where the movement deepened its Christian roots of non-violence.

In March Matthew Bullock(Sr) spoke in four cities in NC - Durham, Raleigh, Greensboro, and Charlotte. In all cities he spoke at African-American colleges and in people's homes - Carlotta Holmes and Van Sombeek, (Durham) and at Margaret Quance, (Raleigh) among other cities. Late in March a story covers the "New Year" observance of Bahá'ís hosted at the Van Sombeek home with music by Henry Markot. A month later Van Sombeek is reported talking at Duke University Women's College on the religion. In late June Van Sombeek held a reception for Dr. and Mrs. R. Piper of Syracuse, NY, with music by Henry Markot. In July Ludmila's daughter's family, Mr and Mrs Bruce von der Heydt and children, visited in Durham and friends with children had a picnic several times; and a presentation slide show by G. Van Busschbach showed Holland and South Africa, all in a context of Christian and Bahá'í ideals as a racially integrated meeting. That summer Norris volunteered at Geyserville Bahá'í School for the first time and Adrienne Reeves, formerly of North Carolina in the early 1940s, was a lead administrator of the school that year.^{255, 256}

Mid-April there was an article on the marriage of Frank Kimball Kenney and Ingeborg Wirth (pictured, potentially the first Bahá'ís to personally appear in the *Daily News*) held at the home of Terah Cowart-Smith and Elah Cowart and officiated by David Jurney. A profile and picture of David Jurney was published in early July as it was announced he was named a partner in an architectural firm. The article noted his academic and professional background but also that he was chair of the Assembly of Greensboro.

In September there was an observance of Bahá'í World Peace Day, originally designated by the NSA in 1959, (in 1985 it

²⁵² Oral history interviews of Jean Scales, produced and interviewed by Ayla J. Volpe, December 2011-January 2012

²⁵³ "Dr. Jean Norris Scales", by Jean Norris Scales, [The Bright Glass of the Heart: Elder Voices on Faith](#) edited by Heather Cardin, published by George Ronald, May 1, 2013, pp. 102-9.

²⁵⁴ [The Angry Black South](#) by Glenford E Mitchell and William H Peace, Publisher: New York : Corinth Books, 1962, p. 73-96

²⁵⁵ • Oral history interviews of Jean Scales, produced and interviewed by Ayla J. Volpe, December 2011-January 2012

• [Geyserville: Geyserville Baha'i school opens July 3](#), Healdsburg Tribune, Enterprise and Scimitar, Number 42, 30 June 1960, p. 7

²⁵⁶ "Dr. Jean Norris Scales", by Jean Norris Scales, [The Bright Glass of the Heart: Elder Voices on Faith](#) edited by Heather Cardin, published by George Ronald, May 1, 2013, pp. 102-9.

became associated with a UN observance of International Peace Day),²⁵⁷ hosted at Van Sombeek's home. There was a brief mention of it at UNC.²⁵⁸ Greensboro advertising on the 4th page of *The Future Outlook* and the 8th of a page of the *Daily News* was bought by the National Assembly entitled "The most challenging issue" in late September. A few weeks later in October a picture was published on page 4 of the *Times* of a Bahá'í meeting held at Wilmette showing participants in a discussion about racism - David Ruhe, Amoz Gibson, Arthur Dahl, Edna True, H. Borrah Kavelin, Charlotte Linfoot, Charles Wolcott, Ellsworth Blackwell, and Florence Mayberry.

November 12th, the date of the Birth of Bahá'u'lláh observed at the time, had an article in the *Times* noting that Van Sombeek returned from a trip where she was guest of Sarah Pereira, entertained by Mrs. Stephen Wright, wife of Fisk President. A little later into November there was a notice in the *Times* that Bahá'u'lláh's Birth was noted by Bahá'ís around the world, though no local event was mentioned. Another week later another International Bahá'í fellowship evening was held at the Van Sombeek's home, and with guests Dr. and Mrs. Peter Tadley showing slides, music by Afrika Hayes and Henry Markot.

In early December the NC state convention had 90.5% of eligible Bahá'ís voting - far above the national average nearer 2/3rds of eligible voters. Late December there was Letter to the editor of the *Times* by Louise Sawyer as secretary of the Durham community noting Human Rights Day, and noting separately that Challoner Chute was talking on the themes in the letter to the editor for Human Rights Day at the Van Sombeek home. A photo of commemorating it in the *Baha'i News* says there four Bahá'ís among the crowd.²⁵⁹ In 1960 the Woottens were back from California in Raleigh and where Walter worked at the NC State Dept of Archives & History,²⁶⁰ and between 1960 and 1963 lived in Burlington and Elon in Alamance County, going to Greensboro or Durham for some Bahá'í events, and Walter worked at the then new Alamance Battleground Historic Site and two more children were born.²⁶¹

Bahá'ís from NC joined other states for this first Frogmore Winter Conference in SC at the end of December 1960 and early January 1961. Paul Pettit, Albert James, and Jack McCants taught classes. McCants was a former minister and also gave a public talk about his conversion and Pettit did the opening keynote. This conference was also covered in the national *Pittsburgh Courier*.²⁶²

1961; Jean Norris, wedding of Journey and Mansoori

Adding sources...²⁶³ and the available *Raleigh News and Observer* is no longer available. Now we have mostly Durham and Greensboro, and Triangle area college student newspapers whose presence has a high turn over rate and gaps of a Bahá'í presence as well as gaps in the available editions of some of them for some days or months. Some of this will surface over time and focus will need to return to these eras for more results. And other parts of the state remain largely untapped in local coverage.

January 1961 starts with Van Sombeek entertaining foreign students from various universities near and far at her home highlighting a Bahá'í quote. The first mention of the Faith in the *NCCU Campus Echo* occurs because of a letter to the editor by Jean Norris, her first visibility as a Bahá'í in newspapers - though only about 2/3rd of the editions are currently online as of the Winter of 2016. In it Norris observes the miraculous for the Christian narrative for Jesus Christ from Bahá'í Writings, while observing the breadth of Manifestations sent by God. A week later a World Religion Day observance at the Van Sombeek home with contact information for Louise Sawyer presented in the *Times*. Two weeks later an article mentioned Van Sombeek was returned from a weekend in DC presidential inauguration ceremonies as a guest of Lillian Evanti. Meanwhile in Greensboro an article profiled the wedding of David Journey and Vedad Mansoori along with a picture of the Bahá'í Temple. The article's profile notes David spent 1956-9 in California, was a former Methodist, and had met Vedad the previous summer. A week and days later another profile, this time of Kathryn Potter's sister, Edith, (Mrs. John McLaren), was published highlighting her service pioneering in Honduras for some 2.5 yrs and returned to the States for the funeral of their father, Joseph Potter. The article notes Edith had been a Bahá'í for 22 years.

A month later, during Ayyám-i-Há, the Van Sombeek home hosted a party for Jean Norris, and Henry Markot, church choir conductor, performed, and there were international guests. This is Jean Norris' first known appearance in the *Carolina Times*. And Terah Cowart-Smith out of Greensboro was noted visiting in South Carolina.²⁶⁴ And the Southeastern Bahá'í School program committee was announced in *Baha'i News Supplement* in February - though not stating where each member is from, one of its members is Carlotta Holmes. A little over a month later, now early April, Van Sombeek hosted Allan Ward who spoke at a NCC(U) "religious emphasis week" and at a luncheon reception. The *Campus Echo* also covered it and the contribution by Ward of Bahá'í books to the campus library. The volumes were: **Hidden Words, Seven Valleys, Bahá'í World Faith, Bahá'í World vol 3, All things made new, Great themes of life, Promise of all ages, and Release the Sun**. Another piece in the *Times* at the end of April profiled

²⁵⁷ **A Concise Encyclopedia of the Bahá'í Faith**, edited by Peter Smith, published by Oneworld, 2000, ISBN 1-85168-184-1, p. 365

²⁵⁸ [You've got a bad schedule? Look at September](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 30 Sep 1960, Fri • Page 3

²⁵⁹ (photo caption) Twenty-four new youth contacts..., *Baha'i News*, February, 1961, p. 9

²⁶⁰ [Hill's Raleigh City Directory](#) [1960], p. 985 - [Hill's Raleigh City Directory](#) [1963], p. 1002

²⁶¹ Biography of Carolyn Annie Prévost, (Pronounced Pray-voh), by Donna Rabi'a Wootten Samsa her eldest daughter, Compiled for Bahá'í historian Steven Kolins January 8, 2017

²⁶² [South Carolina Co-op lends a lesson in race relations](#), by Trezzvant. W. Anderson, *The Pittsburgh Courier* (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania) 10 Dec 1960, p. 29

²⁶³ • https://bahaikipedia.org/The_Bahá'í_Faith_at_Duke_University, Bahaikipedia, July, 2018

• https://bahaikipedia.org/Coverage_of_the_Bahá'í_Faith_at_NCCU_Campus_Echo, Bahaikipedia, July, 2018

• [Carlotta R. Holmes](#), Bahaikipedia, December 20, 2016

²⁶⁴ N.C. visitor. *The Gaffney Ledger*. Gaffney, SC. 28 February 1961. p. 4.

the religion working in Africa noting especially the opening of the Ugandan House of Worship and elected new national assemblies in Africa and South America.

There was another profile article in Greensboro later in April - this time of married David Journey and Vedad with a picture of them. The article notes that Vedad was sister to Mrs. Walter V. Arnold of Roanoke who had married an American colonel stationed in Iran during WWII, and Vedad and her widower mother visited America in the summer of 1956. Since marrying, Vedad had taken up training to be a nurse. In Iran she had worked as a secretary/interpreter/translator for Americans in Iran and the British Council. The article also mentioned Vedad's family had accompanied Bahá'u'lláh on the banishment to Haifa and she herself was born there and the family moved back to Iran amidst the tensions between Jews and Palestinians in 1938. Vedad was visiting in Durham when she heard of and met David and since the wedding she had been seeking citizenship even as the couple was taking French lessons anticipating a trip to France. News that a documentary on ham radio written by F. Kimball Kinney was set to be produced at WFMY-TV came out at the end of April.

In May a short piece reports on Van Sombeek returned from attending the national Bahá'í convention. A bit less than a month later Van Sombeek hosted a picnic party for Jean Norris on her birthday with students from area universities and a talk on intuition based on the Writings.

Allan Ward returned to Durham, guest of Van Sombeek, and spoke at a series of meetings in the area. The next week Van Sombeek hosted Maude Dixon from New York. In later July a notice was posted that the Martyrdom of the Báb was observed at Penn Community Center in Frogmore, St. Helena Island, SC which Bahá'ís from Durham attended. This appears to be the first mention of the Báb in the *Carolina Times*. During that summer Norris volunteered at the Geyserville Bahá'í School a second time.²⁶⁵ The national assembly designated Charlotte and Durham as goal areas to protect assembly status.²⁶⁶ In early September the *Times* reported Van Sombeek returned from a 5-week trip starting at Frogmore, then beyond. Van Sombeek then gave a farewell party for Henry Markot who was a soloist of Duke Chapel, Minister at Trinity Methodist Church, with a party of college students and community, noting it reflected the quote "The earth is but one country...". After that there was a notice of the observance of World Peace Day held at the Van Sombeek residence. A follow-up article noted there was attendance from NCC and Duke and details of the event. Bahá'ís in Greensboro held a World Peace Day panel in later September with Samuel Brodie, Linda Head, Margaret Davis and Kimball Kinney. Then the Greensboro Mayor designated UN Day festivities a week later and Terah Cowart-Smith and Elah Cowart were on the general committee, and in a few days Terah gave a talk on the UN for the Guilford County Home Economics Club. A brief article ends October in Greensboro with note of the dedication of the Australian Bahá'í Temple.

Early October has a notice that Van Sombeek was returned from a tour. She then wrote a letter to the editor noting the observance of UN Day and the Bahá'ís. A week after that a profile of the Faith notes it working for peace, that it has advised revising the UN charter, and announces a meeting of UNA at the Van Sombeek home with talk by Dag Hammarskjöld. A follow-up article on the UN Day observance held notes the assistance of Carlotta Holmes and Jean Norris.

²⁶⁵ Oral history interviews of Jean Scales, produced and interviewed by Ayla J. Volpe, December 2011-January 2012

²⁶⁶ [NSA selects preferred goal groups](#), *Baha'i News US Supplement*, Aug 1961, n42, p. 1

The *Bahá'í News* published a picture of a regional conference at Greensboro at which then Auxiliary Board member Curtis Kelsey talked.



[Believers who came together....](#) *Baha'i News*, Jan 1962, n370, p. 4

While no names are published, crowdsourced identification of faces notes: Bob Berryhill, front and center, Betty Berryhill, top left, Fereydoon Jalali in front of her blinking, then Jean Norris to his left, then Terah Cowart-Smith behind her shoulder, then Ludmila Van Sombeek next to Jean and partially in front of Terah, ... Louise Sawyer, next to back row, center, looking to the left, ... David and Vedad Jurney back row 2nd and 3rd from the right, F. Kimball Kenney is man seated on the 2nd row left with baby and perhaps Frances Falvey with the classes to Kenney and in front of Van Sombeek. Carlotta Holmes might be standing singularly high back center. Bill and Bunny Tucker are seated with children in their laps middle right. That means we have Asheville, Greensboro, Raleigh, and Durham Bahá'ís are verified in the crowd. About 30 people are there plus kids and about 1/3rd identified, more or less.

The Birth of Bahá'u'lláh observance was held at the Van Sombeek home with a slideshow of the Holy Land. Next, Carlotta Holmes, noted as secretary, wrote a letter to editor of the *Times* about Bahá'ís supporting Human Rights Day. 1961 and closes out with a notice that Bahá'í Margery McCormick gave a talk at Duke on the Faith as well as at Carlotta Holmes' home; she was then serving on the Auxiliary Board and spent last year touring the country and in 1959 had been on a world tour. The *Duke Chronicle* had a front page picture and story of her appearance through the Interfaith and Fellowship Committee of the University Religious Council in the Green Room.²⁶⁷ However after this the club would fall silent until the 1970s in the *Chronicle*.



MRS. MARJORIE McCORMICK, presented under the auspices of the Interfaith and Fellowship Committee of the University Religious Council, explained last night the basic tenets of the Bahai religion, which was founded a century ago in Persia.

1962; Durham Local Spiritual Assembly

Adding sources...²⁶⁸

A photograph of a World Religion Day observance in Durham was published in the *Baha'i News*, and a separate picture from the same event picture was used at *Carolina Times* while another event took place in Raleigh. In February the *Baha'i News Supplement* published the members of the Southeastern Bahá'í School Program committee - again though mostly not saying where its members were from, it does list Carlotta Holmes.

²⁶⁷ [Bahai Faith seeks to establish peace by Universal Religion](#), *The Duke Chronicle*, vol. 57, no. 26 (Friday, December 15, 1961), p. 1

²⁶⁸ • https://bahaikipedia.org/The_Bahá'í_Faith_at_North_Carolina_State_University_at_Raleigh, Bahaikipedia, July, 2018

• [Carlotta Robbins Holmes](#), Bahaikipedia, Dec 30, 2016

The first local assembly of Durham was elected,²⁶⁹ and its members were Carlotta Holmes, Jean Norris (later Scales), Kathryn Potter, Pari Rowshan, Norma Sarji, Joe Sawyer (Jr?), Earl Smith, Thelma Stevens, and Ludmila Van Sombeek. The Van Sombeek home hosted a piano recital with an international audience and performers featuring Mr. and Mrs. Head from Ann Arbor, Michigan for the Ridván period. Holmes began to hold meetings in her home regularly for children around 1962-4 and served on the Durham City assembly some 19 yrs, (so until around 1981.) That early children's class Holmes held was assisted by two sisters - Wendy and Terry Blackwell, and sometimes classes were held in a neighborhood center in Few Gardens and then later in Chapel Hill. Holmes also attended the [Bahá'í World Congress](#) held in London, 1963, and then went on to her first pilgrimage.



That summer's regional Bahá'í school was held at Frogmore SC with some Durhamite attendees - Carlotta Holmes, Pari Rowshan, Ludmila Van Sombeek, Kathryn Potter, Joseph Sawyer. It was also the 50th anniversary of 'Abdu'l-Bahá's visit to America and Eulalia Bobo, sister of boxer Joe Lewis, gave the opening address, other speakers included Allan Ward, Mrs. Robert Lee (Ruth) Moffett, and Paul Pettit. That year Norris volunteered at the Bahá'í House of Worship.²⁷⁰ That summer was also the "religious emphasis week" of NCC with Allan Ward speaking again with both *Bahá'í News* and the *NCCU Campus Echo* covering it. Ward continued his visit into Florence SC.²⁷¹ Additionally Hand of the Cause Zikru'lláh Khádem visited Frogmore and Durham speaking at several meetings and response caused further impromptu meetings. And a Bahá'í exhibition display was arranged on campus. Durham Bahá'ís were mentioned invited by the National Council of Negro Women for an international dinner. A long advert with several prayers was published September 25 which was followed a few days later by a second - and the *Times* noted this in conjunction with the provisional Duke Bahá'í club which had traveling Bahá'í speaker Winston Evans return to NC to give a talk series. Advertisements also appeared in the *UNC Daily Tar Heel* with contact information at Duke - sometimes listed as Rusty Ingersoll.²⁷² In the Greensboro from the third week of September advertisements in Greensboro lead up to several talks by Winston Evans, (first in September and two in October).

In October and November advertisements and meetings of Bahá'ís were reported in the NC State *Technician* student newspaper for the first time - all three major campuses of the Triangle now have had Bahá'í content appear. Some of those advertisements were for World Peace Day and an advertisement in the *Times* published the event in Durham commemorating George Washington Carver with talks by Joseph Himes and Stanwood Cobb. That event was held at the Friends Meeting House by the Bahá'ís and the *Times* article commented the chair of the Durham assembly was Kay Potter. This was followed with a gathering of college students from the region at the Van Sombeek home. In November, at events continuing to celebrate George Washington Carver, former ordained minister Jack McCants spoke in Raleigh, Durham and Greensboro. Bahá'ís of Durham closed the year by observing Human Rights Day at the Van Sombeek home, with recorded talks by Dag Hammarskjöld and Eleanor Roosevelt. Finally at the end of November was notice in Greensboro of the



A Bahá'í home was filled to overflowing for the observance held by the Durham, North Carolina, group.

²⁶⁹ "Excellence in all things", *The American Bahá'í*, Volume 21, No. 9, September, 1990

²⁷⁰ Oral history interviews of Jean Scales, produced and interviewed by Ayla J. Volpe, December 2011-January 2012

²⁷¹ [Speech therapist scheduled to make lectures in Florence](#), *Florence Morning News* (Florence, SC) 14 Jul 1962, p. 5

²⁷² * [Bahá'u'lláh...](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 23 Sep 1962, Sun • Page 6

* [Bahá'í World Faith](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 25 Sep 1962, Tue • Page 3

* [Bahá'u'lláh](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 26 Sep 1962, Wed • Page 3

* [Bahá'u'lláh](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 27 Sep 1962, Thu • Page 3

* [Christ's promise fulfilled](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 28 Sep 1962, Fri • Page 4

* [Bahá'u'lláh](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 30 Sep 1962, Sun • Page 3

* [Bahá'u'lláh](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 03 Oct 1962, Wed • Page 5

* [Bahá'u'lláh](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 05 Oct 1962, Fri • Page 3

* [Bahá'u'lláh](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 07 Oct 1962, Sun • Page 4

* [Bahá'u'lláh](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 10 Oct 1962, Wed • Page 3

upcoming statewide convention. About 50 Bahá'ís were expected for electing two delegates.

1963; Jubilee Year, Holy Year

1963 opens in Greensboro with Bahá'ís holding a prayer service for Moroccan Bahá'ís. A couple weeks later World Religion Day in January hosted at the Quaker Meeting House in Durham and in Greensboro both with Matthew Bullock (Sr) speaker. *The Times* noted in February a picture of a regional national assembly in Africa noting the multi-racial makeup of the assembly. There was a notice that Dwight Allen gave a talk in Durham in Flowers building of Duke and a prayer meeting held at the Van Sombeek home to support the Moroccan Bahá'ís during a period of persecution. The situation was referred to again in March when Durham Bahá'ís talked about persecution with several quotes from Jean Norris, and a Bahá'í advertisement in the Times. Then there was a Naw-Rúz celebration held in Durham with diverse religions represented.²⁷³ Mrs. David (Vedad) Jurney talked at the YWCA for the Bahá'í New Year in Greensboro. Another article noted it was during the year of the centenary of the Declaration of Bahá'u'lláh in the Garden of Ridván. Kimball Kinney, Georgia Haith, Jan Smith, David Jurney gave a panel discussion out of Greensboro.²⁷⁴ A week later it was reported that NCC teacher Dwight Harris gave a talk at the Van Sombeek home, which was followed by a few advertisements. The end of March saw Van Sombeek invited to speak to the A and B Circle of Kyls Temple AME Zion Church, and she showed slides of Holy Land and Vienna.

The third Epoch of the Formative Age, and the end of the Crusade, was to culminate with the election of the Universal House of Justice and was marked as the “Jubilee Year” as the Centenary of Bahá'u'lláh's Declaration in the Ridván garden.²⁷⁵ Like 1944's census by Shoghi Effendi, the Hands of the Cause compiled information in 1963 - at that point North Carolina was noted with 4 assemblies, 8 registered group communities, and five isolated believers.²⁷⁶ The statewide list of Assemblies in the Bahá'í directory for 1962-3 listed Charlotte, Durham, Greensboro, and Raleigh; registered groups were in Asheville, Burlington, Cherokee, Elon College, Fayetteville, Hickory, Jacksonville, and Winston-Salem; and isolated Bahá'ís were reported in Chapel Hill, High Point, Kannapolis, New Bern, and Southern Pines.²⁷⁷

Many Bahá'ís from NC went to the first Bahá'í World Congress in London to celebrate its election. Among them Louise Sawyer,²⁷⁸ Jean Norris,²⁷⁹ some five Bahá'ís from Raleigh,²⁸⁰ and later the *Times* mentioned that Van Sombeek had gone for six months in Europe following the World Congress visiting nine countries giving talks including a few behind the Iron Curtain, (apparently supported by the Universal House of Justice directly, following direct support of the Guardian earlier according to comments of Carolyn Prévost.)²⁸¹ Van Sombeek also found the gravesite of Marion Jack during those trips. Bill and Bernie Tucker also attended the World Congress.²⁸² Bahá'ís from Hamlet, NC did as well.²⁸³ However, press coverage of events in the Triangle the rest of 1963 was sparse. It is known that the Woottens had lived in Raleigh and lived in different neighborhoods and the children's classes of F. Jalali were held.²⁸⁴ After this period the Wootten family moved to Shenandoah Valley in Virginia until 1966.

Similar to the opportunities in 1944 of international and nationwide centennial gathering of Bahá'ís, the first Bahá'í World Congress - attendees from South Carolina have been noted - where again the scope of the community was more plain and invigorating to those that attended,²⁸⁵ “Seeing all these people from different ethnic and religious backgrounds, the beauty of these diverse people coming together for one purpose, I knew it could happen all over the world. It wasn't just in Greenville, South Carolina; this was a world community... I already knew that, but at the World Congress I saw it.” A profile with picture of several Bahá'ís about going to London from Greensboro for the “most great festival” followed in later April. The article named several Bahá'ís going - Mrs. Joseph (Louise) Sawyer, David and Mrs. Jurney and 17-month old son Nabil, Vedad's brother and sister - Abe Mansoori and Mrs. Walter Arnold - Robert and Mrs. Berryhill, Terah Cowart-Smith, and Mrs. Robert Haith. The Jurney-Mansoori family expected to meet up with kin Badi and Mrs. Mansoor from Teheran and though they could not travel to Iran they were going take in some of Paris.

²⁷³ [Naw Ruz celebration...](#), *Baha'i News*, June 1963, n387, p. 17

²⁷⁴ [Discussion set](#); Negro News-Activities by Margaretta Evans, *The Daily Times-News* (Burlington, NC)29 Mar 1963, p. 20

²⁷⁵ **The Bahá'ís of America - The growth of a religious movement**, by Mike McMullen, NYU Press, 2015, p. 42, 48, 56

²⁷⁶ [Assemblies, groups, isolated believers and totals by state, Bahá'í Faith, The: 1844-1963: Information Statistical and Comparative](#), Including the Achievements of the Ten Year International Bahá'í Teaching & Consolidation Plan 1953-1963, compiled by Hands of the Cause Residing in the Holy Land, 1963, p. 126

²⁷⁷ [Bahá'í Directory 1962-1963: Assemblies, Groups, Isolated believers](#), *The Bahá'í World*, vol 13, see pp. 1040, 1047, 1055

²⁷⁸ [Obituaries: Louis H. Sawyer](#), *Greensboro News and Record*, (Greensboro, NC), November 7, 1996

²⁷⁹ “Dr. Jean Norris Scales”, by Jean Norris Scales, [The Bright Glass of the Heart: Elder Voices on Faith](#) edited by Heather Cardin, published by George Ronald, May 1, 2013, pp. 102–9.

²⁸⁰ Growth of the Bahá'í Faith in Raleigh, North Carolina, 1953-1970, by Frances Falvey, circa 1970 with addendum 1973. Courtesy of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Raleigh, NC, and assistance of Charles Uzzell

²⁸¹ Conversation with Carolyn Prévost re Early Bahá'ís of this Area, Chapel Hill Assembly Archives, unknown interviewer, undated, (before formation of the Orange County Assembly, and she died February, 1982.)

²⁸² [Dr. W. M. Tucker will conduct special service](#), *Asheville Citizen-Times* (Asheville, NC)26 Mar 1966, p. 7

²⁸³ [Baha'i community members plan to attend Congress](#), *Richmond County Daily Journal*, Rockingham, NC, Nov 13, 1992, p. 6

²⁸⁴ Biography of Carolyn Annie Prévost, (Pronounced Pray-voh), by Donna Rabi'a Wootten Samsa her eldest daughter, Compiled for Bahá'í historian Steven Kolins January 8, 2017

²⁸⁵ Venters, Louis E., III (2010). *Most great reconstruction: The Baha'i Faith in Jim Crow South Carolina, 1898-1965* (Thesis). Colleges of Arts and Sciences University of South Carolina. ISBN 978-1-243-74175-2. UMI Number: 3402846, pp. 313–316

The following May Kimball Kinney was among a list of white businessmen supporting integration in an advert. Raleigh, Charlotte and Greensboro Bahá'ís were each reported having a Race Amity event that summer. An article by Langston Hughes in the *Times* mentioned Bahá'í meetings are not segregated. In July there was notice of the betrothal and pending Bahá'í wedding for (pictured) Betty Thompson and Philip Renshaw Jr. The mid-August wedding took place at the home of Robert Berryhill, witnessed by Kimball Kinney and Frances Pearce. A month later a Bahá'í observance of World Peace Day was held at ED Mickie Community Center in Durham, and noted the recording secretary of the Durham assembly was Ethlynnne Thomas. Terah Cowart-Smith gave a talk at UNCG for a meeting on UN Day of all the clubs involved with the previous year's tours of the UN. In November a piece reported Etta Woodlen of Delaware, of many Bahá'í committees and institutions, talked at a meeting in the Van Sombeek home. A month later the Bahá'ís of Durham offered prayers for President Kennedy at the home of Van Sombeek. The last story of the year noted Walter Wootten gave a Human Rights Day talk.

Unknown to the Bahá'ís, Felice Sadgwar retired from working in the Wilmington school system.²⁸⁶

1964; Shifting patterns and color lines

The first plan under the Universal House of Justice began with the Nine Year Plan - an outline of which was printed in a Greensboro newspaper as well. The major objective of which was to increase the number of Bahá'ís as well as to embark on the twin themes of "expansion and universal participation".²⁸⁷ In developing the plan's goal the House called for a wide variety of developments around the world from establishing headquarters of NSAs and land for future Houses of Worship to collection and translations of documents and new publishing trusts around the world.²⁸⁸ In particular it asked NSAs that had large-scale expansion to acquire a physical facility for teaching institutes to deepen new believers.²⁸⁹ Hampson's PhD dissertation on the distribution of Bahá'ís in America²⁹⁰ characterizes this period as locally driven ("differential adoption rates") contacts of Bahá'ís around 1964-1973. In the earlier phase a significant Bahá'í presence in the Northeast had decreased in favor of the far West, however the South was about to rise significantly in its Bahá'í presence. In the analysis of 1960-1970 Hampson credits a presence in major population centers, economic vibrancy with growth of families, and access via the spread of the highway system as contributors to the spread of the Faith including the South. In particular, he characterizes the South as having a strong rural population (slightly above the average density of Bahá'ís relative to the general population) and cities of relatively less overall density (contrary to the upper mid-West having more cities having higher density relative to the rural population.) In McMullen's **The Bahá'ís of America - The growth of a religious movement**, he develops a perspective of three themes that emerged from the period beginning 1964 - that of growth and numerical goals, institutional maturity, and promotion of racial unity.²⁹¹ The NSA particularized the goals of the Nine Year Plan to include incorporation of Assemblies, dispersal of pioneers where a community reached 15 members, and developing a regular support for the Bahá'í Funds. Additionally a maturing understanding of the administrative structure and various responsibilities and authorities were to be learned - a shift McMullen characterizes as a shift from an allegiance "to a primogeniture-based charismatic leader" to "a more 'rationalized' bureaucratic center of authority."²⁹² However, the NSA was seeking a means of preserving local assemblies as a wave of losses began and asked isolated Bahá'ís who could to consider moving to support existing endangered assemblies - while balancing pioneer goals which had the effect of a "brain drain", as McMullen puts it, as the most active Bahá'ís went overseas.²⁹³ Despite an overall growth of numbers of Bahá'ís, (some 1,750 in one year,) the number of assemblies were dropping below the goal the Guardian had pointed out during the Crusade. Falvey's history of the Raleigh community from circa 1970 recalls activity under the Nine Year Plan and the birth of mass teaching and cooperations of communities.²⁹⁴ She mentions a proclamation from Raleigh Mayor Travis Tomlinson and Governor Dan K. Moore being presented a copy of "The Proclamation of Baha'u'llah". She also remembers many visiting Bahá'ís: Curtis and Mrs Kelsey, Allan Ward, Dr. and Mrs. Rex Parmelee, Albert and Mrs. James, Ruth Moffet, Florence Mayberry, Matthew Bullock, Wayne Hoover, Richard and Mrs. Groger, Harvey Wiener, Bull Allison, Poova Murday, and Dizzy Gillespie.

After a winter trip away Van Sombeek hosted Mr and Mrs Ted Lipitt of West Virginia who gave a talk slide series at a Durham bank meeting room and Van Sombeek's home. In another couple weeks Van Sombeek hosted Aileen Beale, from Bournemouth UK, who gave talks about supporting the UN. A month later there was a notice of Bahá'ís observing New Year (not called Naw Rúz) at Van Sombeek's home with international visitors. In later May, published on the Declaration of the Báb, an article reported Van Sombeek returned after 3 weeks tour inc national Bahá'í convention, and almost a month later in mid-June there is a notice of a birthday party for Jean Norris at Van Sombeek's home and the arrival of Valerie Wilson with friends from Duke and NCC all punctuated with quotes from the Faith. Meanwhile William "Smitty" Smith from Greenville, SC, signed with Wake Forest College

²⁸⁶ "Retiring teachers honored with gifts and their schools were ... Miss Felice Sadgwar, supervisor of Elementary Music..." - from "New Hanover teachers honor retiring members", *The Afro-American* [Baltimore, Md] 01 June 1963: p. 14.

²⁸⁷ **The Bahá'ís of America - The growth of a religious movement**, by Mike McMullen, NYU Press, 2015, p. 50

²⁸⁸ **The Bahá'ís of America - The growth of a religious movement**, by Mike McMullen, NYU Press, 2015, p. 48-49

²⁸⁹ **The Bahá'ís of America - The growth of a religious movement**, by Mike McMullen, NYU Press, 2015, p. 85

²⁹⁰ [The growth and spread of the Baha'i Faith](#), by Arthur Hampson, PhD, Department of Geography, University of Hawaii, May, 1980, UMI ID 8022655.

²⁹¹ **The Bahá'ís of America - The growth of a religious movement**, by Mike McMullen, NYU Press, 2015, p. 129

²⁹² **The Bahá'ís of America - The growth of a religious movement**, by Mike McMullen, NYU Press, 2015, p. 131

²⁹³ **The Bahá'ís of America - The growth of a religious movement**, by Mike McMullen, NYU Press, 2015, pp. 132-4

²⁹⁴ Growth of the Bahá'í Faith in Raleigh, North Carolina, 1953-1970, by Frances Falvey, circa 1970 with addendum 1973. Courtesy of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Raleigh, NC, and assistance of Charles Uzzell

to play football as an incoming freshman, the first year of integration on the team.²⁹⁵ Racial tensions remained high this first season of integration and before playing with Clemson at Greenville, SC, Smith met Bahá'ís who had traveled to see the game and embraced them - the integrated group of them - and was seen doing so.²⁹⁶ The Wake Forest team coach was so upset he didn't let Smith play - and tensions were already high between them because he insisted on calling Smith "Willie" - a nickname Smith refused to answer to.²⁹⁷ Alas, the nickname is still in use in recent years.²⁹⁸ Smith left Wake Forest the end of 1964, and doesn't appear in the yearbook for '64-'65.²⁹⁹ After serving in Vietnam as a medic, Smith would go on in more recent years to produce a documentary on African-American WWII vets,³⁰⁰ and on the "other tradition" in America on racial integration,³⁰¹ and serve as executive director of the Wheelock College National Center for Race Amity.³⁰²

In the summer the Durham Bahá'ís were noted holding a Race Amity Day observance with a talk by Valerie Wilson and youth projects were mentioned associated with the NC Bahá'í summer school near Asheville. Three Bahá'ís from Durham are reported in the *Times* going to that school at Camp Dorothy Walls at Black Mountain - Ethlyne Thomas, Ludmila Van Sombeek, and Jean Norris attending - and the article noted a particular teacher at the school was Hand of the Cause Zikrullah Khadem.

A month later in late August the *Times* commented that Van Sombeek hosted Mary Browne of High Point and Ann Homes of New York - both from the Peace Conference at Climax they had all attended- with a picnic with Bahá'ís and community and reception indoors. A week later in September Jean Norris gave a talk at Van Sombeek's home on Bahá'í views of the age of peace coming as prophesied. The same day it was published in the paper that Van Sombeek hosted Glenford Mitchell who was to speak at the September World Peace Day event with guests from Raleigh, Duke and NCC at the home of Van Sombeek. Coverage in the *Times* speaks of him talking at World Peace Day held at AME Church two weeks later. The *Baha'i News* reported Terah Cowart-Smith then of Durham was a speaker for World Peace Day in Madison Wisconsin.

The singular 1964 mention in the NCCU *Echo* is when Duke researcher came to the second meeting of the NCCU Bahá'í club that year. It also notes the next meeting with be with a talk by a NCCU and electing officers. The article continue reviewing the first meeting of the club which included an introductory talk about the religion by William Allison of American Friends Service Committee of High Point, NC. The was broad commentary about future meetings and a brief synopsis of the religion.

The *Baha'i News* noted youth held a picnic in mid October after assisting pioneer Ethel Murray in the Cherokee Reservation. They came from Greensboro, Asheville, Charlotte, Durham, Greenville, SC, and Atlanta and Augusta, Georgia. Fereydoun Jalali and Jack Perrin were named particularly contributing.

Fall coverage of events in the NC State Technician reported meetings off campus at an early Bahá'í Center on Van Dyke Ave. James Brodie (6 Mar 1912 - 15 Dec 2000) spoke there, and Human Rights Day was observed there in Dec. It was hosted in the News and Observer meeting room and talks were presented by Father Edwin Smith and Fereydoun Jalali on the theme of "The United Nations and Justice for all".

There is a notice in the *Times* after the fact that the Durham Bahá'ís observed Bahá'u'lláh's Birth at the Van Sombeek home. A month later the Human Rights Day observance by Bahá'ís was held at the Van Sombeek home. And then several Bahá'ís from Durham go to the state convention in Greensboro - Early Smith, Carlotta Holmes, Ludmila Van Sombeek, Wiley Allison, Thelma Allison, Andrew Allison, and Jean Norris along with Bahá'ís from 20 other towns in NC.

1965; National news reaching locally

Bahá'ís gathered over winter at the Penn Community Center in Frogmore SC - including Jean Norris, Van Sombeek, and others from 15 states with over 200 people with Hand of the Cause William Sears. Still in January, Bostonian Matthew Bullock was the main speaker at the World Religion Day observance held at NCC. At the national level the NSA asked for Bahá'í lawyers to assist in getting a national registration as a 501(c)(3) as a legally incorporated recognized religion.

The first full article in the NC State *Technician* profiling the religion occurred in January because the observance of *World Religion Day* took place over at the Van Dyke center. Margaret Quance was noted as the chair of the Raleigh assembly. The observance featured Carlotta Holmes' talk "The Oneness of Religion", being held at the Erdahl-Cloyd Union. A similar meeting

²⁹⁵ • [Weathering Wake: The African-American Experience Founders' Day Convocation Address](#), by Mary K. Elkins, *Wake Forest News*, Feb. 26, 2009

• [Against All Odds: The Indomitable Spirit of Wake Forest](#), by Cameron Yow, CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, Sep 3, 2016, p. 255

²⁹⁶ [Returning with pride](#), by Pete Iacobelli for the Associated Press, *The Spokesman-Review*, Spokane Washington, May 22, 2005

²⁹⁷ [Ground Breakers](#), by Alexander Wolff, *Sports Illustrated*, Nov 7, 2005

²⁹⁸ [A lasting legacy](#), by Mark Anderson, *Wake Forest News*, November 27, 2011

²⁹⁹ [The Howler](#) (yearbook), Wake Forest College, 1965, pp. 253

³⁰⁰ [Documentarian to Show 'Invisible Soldiers': African-Americans in WWII](#), by Cassandra Day, *Middletown Patch*, April 9, 2012

³⁰¹ • [Alumni Symposium](#), Save the Date: Saturday, April 22, 2017, Wheelock College

• [Race Amity and The Other Tradition](#), *Towards E Pluribus Unum*, National Center for Race Amity Newsletter, Wheelock College

³⁰² [Smith, William H. \(Smitty\)](#), Executive Director, National Center for Race Amity, Wheelock College, 2016

occurred at the Van Sombeek home and was pictured in *Baha'i News*. Later in February Bullock was hosted by Van Sombeek and gave talks in the area around two weeks.

Durham was advertised holding a Naw-Rúz program at the Jack Tar Hotel with a talk by F. Jalali with music by Jerry Williamson and Kathnel Blair. In Greensboro it was observed with a talk by Fereydoun Jalali. Next came notice that the Bahá'ís were seeking to make their marriages legal standing. In particular Senator Ruffin Bailey of Wake County thought Bahá'ís were legitimate, supported by others, while Claude Hamrick “expressed fear the measure might establish a precedent by extending legal authority to splinter religious groups.” There is general (and sometimes misspelled) information on the Faith in the article. The law was passed and an AP article followed on May 1 of a broad profile of the religion in Haifa by Hal McClure. Falvey remembers Margaret Quance and Terah Cowart Smith working on this.³⁰³

Meanwhile in April Van Sombeek hosted Eugene Byrd and family who spoke at the NCC Bahá'í club meeting. Another visitor was Albert James. And the religion was mentioned in the April 1965 edition of *Ebony Magazine* with an article "BAHÁ'Í: A way of life for millions" which was a broad review of the religion with many pictures and locations.³⁰⁴ It generated seven appreciative letters from Bahá'ís or Bahá'í institutions to the editor in the June 1965 issue.³⁰⁵ It noted Dr. Pereira was then one of the members of the national assembly.



And in the Fall of 1965 early Bahá'í from North Carolina, Mary Brown Martin, had a school in Cleveland named after her. Bruce Barick was reported as secretary of the Raleigh Assembly. William Tucker, having already served on the National Assembly's Interracial Teaching Committee, was appointed to the Auxiliary Board.



In Greensboro Terah Cowart-Smith gave a talk at the YWCA for World Peace Day. In Raleigh the Governor released a proclamation for it, (apparently one of 20 across the US,) and then a similar event in Greensboro secured the presence of the mayor when there was a dedication of a "peace tree". A similar one was planted in Asheville.^{306,307} The idea of addressing governors and civic leaders was repeated by the NSA in 1970.³⁰⁸ In November Kinney wrote a letter to editor about condition of racism and the South.

Falvey remembers Bahá'ís from Raleigh going far and wide including Frogmore, SC, Washington DC, Wilmette Ill, Baltimore, MD, and Atlanta GA and meetings varying from all-night prayer sessions to study classes, visiting hospitals, jails and juvenile halls, and mass mailing campaigns.³⁰⁹ Both the Van Dyke address and the Brodie home were centers of activity and copies of *Christ and Baha'u'llah* being sent to area ministers. Through the State Goals Committee copies of “Why our Cities Burn” was sent to editors of newspapers. And she remembers some individual declarants - Alice and Douglas Lee, Jean High, Mellie Hickman, Rachel Bell, Betty Golding, July Seawell, Judy Rogers, John Allen, Tricia Hillow, Mary Matthews, Sand, Don and Jerry Cott over the next few years. Allen and Matthews, she remarks, were elderly and ill but “wonderful examples of the way age is no barrier to a truly seeking person and the way believers can inspire others to investigate the station of Bahá'u'lláh.” Matthews learned of the Faith through Larry Miller and Allen through Elah Cowart.

An overall decrease in public mention cannot be fully explained by gaps in coverage of sources but the rise of national attention may have decreased the need for locally mentioning events. Certainly there was a rise in recognition of the Faith from political leaders.

³⁰³ Growth of the Bahá'í Faith in Raleigh, North Carolina, 1953-1970, by Frances Falvey, circa 1970 with addendum 1973. Courtesy of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Raleigh, NC, and assistance of Charles Uzzell

³⁰⁴ [BAHÁ'Í: A way of life for millions](#), *Ebony*, ISSN 0012-9011, Vol. 20, No. 6, April 1965, p. 48–52, 55-56.

³⁰⁵ [Letters to the editor: Baha'i](#), *Ebony*, ISSN 0012-9011, Vol. 20, No. 8, June 1965, p. 13–14.

³⁰⁶ [Baha'is present Dawn Redwood to A-B](#), *The Ridgerunner*, University of North Carolina at Asheville, / September 23, 1966 / page 2

³⁰⁷ [The University of North Carolina at Asheville: The First Sixty Years](#), by William Highsmith, 1991, pp.79–80

³⁰⁸ [The Bahá'ís of America - The growth of a religious movement](#), by Mike McMullen, NYU Press, 2015, p. 136

³⁰⁹ Growth of the Bahá'í Faith in Raleigh, North Carolina, 1953-1970, by Frances Falvey, circa 1970 with addendum 1973. Courtesy of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Raleigh, NC, and assistance of Charles Uzzell

1966; Pilgrimage of Triangle firsts and over at A&T

January 1, 1966 begins with a notice that Carlotta Holmes, (the first named Bahá'í from Durham), Margaret Quance, Marie Brodie, (the first named Bahá'í from Raleigh) and Frances Falvey all went on Bahá'í pilgrimage together and on the front page of the *Times*. Marie Brodie recalled it being a most holy place in her life; "like the heat waves" from the sun after it comes out after it rained.³¹⁰ Holmes was noted showing slides of her trip afterwards including to her former church. William Tucker was published as Auxiliary Board member and giving a talk at the Frogmore winter school with slides of the youth program in NC. January has a notice that George Goodman was going to talk at an NCC meeting for World Religion Day. In Greensboro an article quoted Kinney and a panel would be held with Charles Bullock Jr, Evander ("Van") Gilmer Jr, Adrienne Gordan, and Charles George, moderated by Terah Cowart-Smith, and sponsored by the Bahá'í A&T College Club. This is the first known mention of Van Gilmer who would go on to lead Bahá'í choirs.



In March the Bahá'í Club of A&T College of Greensboro held a meeting at A&T and another as a panel at NCC sponsored by the NCC Bahá'í Club. It names Evander M. Gilmer, (president of that year's club,) Charles Bullock and Charmion Gordon from A&T coming with faculty member Fereydoun Jalali and Van Sombeek hosted a picnic for guests from NCC and Duke, and international visitors where G. Hardin offered a paper and Bahá'í quotes. For the first time in many years there is a break in coverage of Van Sombeek's activities the rest of 1966. Betty Jean Brodie graduated from St. Augustine's,³¹¹ and married Ozie Tidmore on May 28, 1966 in Raleigh. The Woottens moved back to NC from VA and settled near Chapel Hill.³¹² Carolyn Prévost (Wootten) refers to this in an oral interview and that there would be a highly changing population of Bahá'ís because of the college town quality. She credits the beginning of a stable Bahá'í community in Chapel Hill to when the city annexed them as well as others - Emma Allen (sp?) and her non-Bahá'í husband retired to the area, along with (William) Bill and Mary Maxwell's rental.³¹³ From 1966 through the later 1970s Carolyn worked as a secretary for the UNC Education Department, at times putting them at poverty levels.³¹⁴



In the end of June to early July the Black Mountain Bahá'í school was held near Asheville at Camp Dorothy Walls with 180 attending. Classes were offered by Sylvia Ioas, a series by students, Hand of the Cause Zikru'llah Khadem, and Mrs. Javidukht Khadem. The registrar was Margaret Quance. The local newspaper covered it with a picture as well, with Mr. Khadem, Mrs. Leroy Ioas, and Mrs. William Maxwell, (noted now living in Chapel Hill), and profiled Mr. Khadem and the Faith.³¹⁵ In September the CBS television show "Lamp unto my feet" called "And his name shall be one" profiled the religion.

Jean Norris (later Scales) was reported going to the Caribbean teaching project, in Jean's case, on St. Vincent Island. Another Auxiliary Board member, William Maxwell was noted giving a talk in Tennessee and being from North Carolina. Maxwell had been active in the Far East as a Bahá'í serving on national assemblies.³¹⁶ In coming years he and his wife would appear several times in the Triangle area. A notice that the Bahá'ís of Durham observed UN Day with Terah Cowart-Smith from Greensboro speaking is followed a month later with notice that the Bahá'ís gathered for state convention at City Hall Club in Greensboro.

In October a registered group formed in Winston-Salem noting David and Vedad Jurney, with

³¹⁰ Marie, James, and daughter Jean Johnson-Brodie interview and conversation recorded by Sally Jamir (circa 1983).

³¹¹ [Seniors, The Falcon](#) [1966], Saint Augustine's College, p. 37

³¹² Biography of Carolyn Annie Prévost, (Pronounced Pray-voh), by Donna Rabi'a Wootten Samsa her eldest daughter, Compiled for Bahá'í historian Steven Kolins January 8, 2017

³¹³ Conversation with Carolyn Prévost re Early Bahá'ís of this Area, Chapel Hill Assembly Archives, unknown interviewer, undated, (before formation of the Orange County Assembly.)

³¹⁴ Biography of Carolyn Annie Prévost, (Pronounced Pray-voh), by Donna Rabi'a Wootten Samsa her eldest daughter, Compiled for Bahá'í historian Steven Kolins January 8, 2017

³¹⁵ [Baha'í summer school set at Black Mountain](#), *Asheville Citizen-Times* (Asheville, NC) 4 Jul 1966, p. 26

³¹⁶ • [Raising the Banner in Korea: An Early Bahá'í History](#), by Barbara R. Sims

• [Unfurling the Divine Flag in Tokyo: An Early Bahá'í History](#), by Barbara R. Sims

• [Macau Bahá'í Community in the Early Years](#), by Barbara R. Sims

Henry Broadhurst and Rafieh Monsour, (the first assembly was formed in 1971.)³¹⁷

In November Rachel A. Bel was listed as the Raleigh Assembly Secretary.

The December state convention had 49% voting in person, 17% voting by mail, and 34% not voting. After the early December state convention the Southeastern region Bahá'í Winter School was held near Covington GA in late December. Those there included Van Sombeek, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Allison, Carlotta Holmes and Jean Norris.

1967; Here and there - wider engagement

Bahá'ís observed World Religion Day with a prelude of a slide show by Jules Lauret and Van Sombeek at her home and then an interfaith presenters that included Jay Scales (as a Moslem, he joined the Bahá'í Faith in a few years), and Jules Lautret at the Allied Arts Center. World Religion Day was also noted in Asheville by Bahá'ís.³¹⁸ A fireside was noted in Durham with Matthew Bullock giving a talk in Durham followed by three Harvard and one MIT faculty traveled among colleges in NC among others. In March A. K. Kalantar returned to Durham, hosted by Van Sombeek, and gave talks at area meetings. In early March a multi-college gathering of Bahá'ís was sponsored by the Bahá'í Club at A&T and among the speakers were Jane McCants and William Maxwell.

Notice of the coming Naw Rúz observance at the Wedgewood room at Jack Tar Hotel in Durham was made a couple days in advance of it with speaker Mrs. William Maxwell. Gregory Dahl gave a talk Winston-Salem State College sponsored by Arthur Blue.³¹⁹ There was a visit and television interview on WGHP of Roy Mottahedeh in April.³²⁰

Sharlene Sharpe married Dr. Fereidoon Rezvani in Charlotte on April 29, 1967. Bahá'í faculty and students from Harvard and MIT held a two day seminar off UNC campus.³²¹ Among those attending were Jeffrey Gruber, Roy Mottahedeh, Chris Filstrup, and Gregory Dahl with contact William Maxwell.

The July Bahá'í school was held at Camp Dorothy Walls with classes and talks by Auxiliary Board members William Tucker, Albert James, Beth McKenty and Jack McCants and others by Beatrice Rinde, and Jane McCants. Terah Cowart-Smith, Nancy Jordan, A. K. Kalantar taught other classes. Among those going from Greensboro were Charmion Gordon, Joseph Sawyer, Van Gilmer, and Avvie Gordon.

In the summer of 1967 Norris did her first travel teaching tour coming down from New Hampshire³²² and Green Acre³²³ down through to North Carolina. In September she was in Greensboro when Robert Allen Berryhill, chair of the Assembly, was interviewed for the community holding World Peace Day at the Bluford Library at A&T with a talk by her.

In the Fall the *Carolina Times* has the Durham Assembly quoting the National Assembly statement on race conflict issues. In October the House of Justice began a process of observing the centenary of Bahá'u'lláh's Tablets to Kings and Rulers.³²⁴ There is notice that 30 North Carolinians attended the international Proclamation Centenary conference as it was called in the *Times*. Speakers there included Firuz Kazemzadeh, Executive director of the Chicago Urban League Edwin Berry, UN NGO Bahá'í representative Mildred Mottahedeh, and Fisk University faculty poet and Bahá'í Robert Hayden. Eight Greensboro Bahá'ís attending: Adrienne Gordon, Mrs. Berryhill, Charles Bullock, Van Gilmer Jr., Kimball Kinney, Terah Cowart-Smith, Robert Berryhill, and Georgia Haith.

In November, a notice that Van Sombeek had returned from a major world tour of talks and a pilgrimage. Durham Bahá'ís then gathered for the Birth observance of Bahá'u'lláh at the Van Sombeek home showing slides of Iran and there was music by Evander Gilmer. The last story of the year in the *Times* was when Bahá'ís and Quakers presented the Human Rights Day observance at the Friends Meeting House. An almost daily series of personal advertisements for "Words for the world" was carried from November into February 1968.

Margaret Quance of Raleigh was the registrar for the 1967-8 Southeastern Bahá'í Winter School.

³¹⁷ Archive Chronology of Significant events as chosen by Max Locher and Winnie Merritt Oct. 2016, courtesy of the Spiritual Assembly of Winston-Salem.

³¹⁸ [Bahá'ís observe religion day](#), *The Ridgerunner*, University of North Carolina at Asheville / January 13, 1967 / page 4

³¹⁹ [Bahá'í \(sic\) beliefs are discussed at open meeting](#), by Mattie Guy, *The News Argus*. Winston-Salem State University / April 01, 1967 / page 4

³²⁰ Archive Chronology of Significant events as chosen by Max Locher and Winnie Merritt Oct. 2016, courtesy of the Spiritual Assembly of Winston-Salem.

³²¹ [Bahá'í Discussion](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 05 Apr 1967, Wed • Page 6

³²² "Dr. Jean Norris Scales", by Jean Norris Scales, [The Bright Glass of the Heart: Elder Voices on Faith](#) edited by Heather Cardin, published by George Ronald, May 1, 2013, pp. 102–9.

³²³ Oral history interviews of Jean Scales, produced and interviewed by Ayla J. Volpe, December 2011-January 2012

³²⁴ [The Bahá'ís of America - The growth of a religious movement](#), by Mike McMullen, NYU Press, 2015, pp. 55–6.

1968; With a booth, impending growth

In January 1968 an AP article by George Cornell echoed locally did a profile and interview of Hand of the Cause Tarazu'llah Samandari. In 1968 the national teaching committee encouraged Bahá'ís to use the *Life magazine* article series "The Negro and the Cities" to organize meetings and discussions to exemplify the effort to "live the life" of Bahá'í teachings and the NSA wrote a letter underscoring that the Bahá'í electoral process cannot have any trace of prejudice be tolerated.³²⁵ Raleigh held a World Religion Day with a proclamation by Mayor Travis Tomlinson,³²⁶ and Durham was reported in the *Baha'i News* hosting a Human Rights Day observance cooperating with the Quaker Community. No assemblies across the state were gained or lost that Spring.

Norris' second travel teaching tour started in June in West Virginia and she traveled south to Texas - she was noted in Tulsa OK local newspaper.³²⁷ After Norris had sent material to *Baha'i News*, a national assembly office asked her if she would be one of three reporters to go to the Palermo conference³²⁸ in August and then the centenary observance of Bahá'u'lláh's arrival at Akka.³²⁹ This was the beginning of a coherence between Norris' training and her writing, being an English teacher at NCCU, "mobilizing life's experiences for serving the Faith." The obits of Nettie J. Asberry from Kansas and Tacoma, WA, but of national reputation was noted in the Greensboro *Future Outlook*, in February and of Andrew Pinkneh Perdue in all three local papers reviewed came in mid-October.

The dates are as yet uncertain by Dizzy Gillespie performed in Raleigh at "The Frog" and "Nightgown Club" in Cameron Village of Raleigh and made appearances on local media and often met with Bahá'ís.³³⁰ Gillespie joined the religion in 1968.³³¹ A booth was pictured at the North Carolina State Fair in Raleigh for the Bahá'ís in the *Baha'i News*,³³² and mentioned in the *Times*.³³³ Governor Dan K. Moore met with Bahá'ís - Andrew Allison, Robert Berryhill, and Cliff Elingham - presenting him a book on May 24. And a regional distribution of conferences broadly about human rights, including relevant minorities in regions, listed NC associated with the Atlanta Conference for June. Before her move to Bakersfield, California, Falvey remembered some youth of Raleigh who undertook service to the religion.³³⁴ Jannell Harrell gave assistance to the State Fair booth. Debbie Bordley was "refound" after attending meetings about a decade earlier. Eddie Sanders was a neighbor who responded to youth presenting the religion to youth and then came to meetings.

One Bahá'í from Raleigh attended the Palermo Conference.³³⁵ At the international level the House of Justice established the Continental Boards of Counselors.³³⁶ At the national level a booklet "Why our cities burn" was produced in the summer and shared widely the rest of the year - it was given to members of congress and the supreme court and assemblies were asked to share it with local civic leaders and media.³³⁷ In the summer the Durham and Raleigh Assemblies held a picnic at Umstead State Park with Mr. and Mrs. William Shoemaker of Elizabeth City giving a talk. In September at the national level a human rights conference was held in Chicago and an awards banquet was held in Washington in December.³³⁸



Bahá'í display at booth at the North Carolina State Fair.

Seventeen cities in the US hosted conferences promoting the religion - the NC region conferences were held in Richmond, VA and Atlanta, GA.

³²⁵ *The Bahá'ís of America - The growth of a religious movement*, by Mike McMullen, NYU Press, 2015, p. 143

³²⁶ Raleigh Bahá'í Community Timeline 1957-2007, courtesy of the Raleigh Spiritual Assembly.

³²⁷ Oral history interviews of Jean Scales, produced and interviewed by Ayla J. Volpe, December 2011-January 2012

³²⁸ Oral history interviews of Jean Scales, produced and interviewed by Ayla J. Volpe, December 2011-January 2012

³²⁹ "Dr. Jean Norris Scales", by Jean Norris Scales, *The Bright Glass of the Heart: Elder Voices on Faith* edited by Heather Cardin, published by George Ronald, May 1, 2013, pp. 102-9.

³³⁰ Raleigh Bahá'í Community Timeline 1957-2007, courtesy of the Raleigh Spiritual Assembly.

³³¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dizzy_Gillespie, Wikipedia, July 2018

³³² *State Fairs provide avenue for proclamation*, *Baha'i News*, January, 1969, n454, p. 13

³³³ *Why Baha'í?*, *The Carolina Times*. / October 12, 1968 / page 8A

³³⁴ Growth of the Bahá'í Faith in Raleigh, North Carolina, 1953-1970, by Frances Falvey, circa 1970 with addendum 1973. Courtesy of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Raleigh, NC, and assistance of Charles Uzzell

³³⁵ Growth of the Bahá'í Faith in Raleigh, North Carolina, 1953-1970, by Frances Falvey, circa 1970 with addendum 1973. Courtesy of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Raleigh, NC, and assistance of Charles Uzzell

³³⁶ *The Bahá'ís of America - The growth of a religious movement*, by Mike McMullen, NYU Press, 2015, p. 137

³³⁷ *The Bahá'ís of America - The growth of a religious movement*, by Mike McMullen, NYU Press, 2015, p. 144

³³⁸ *The Bahá'ís of America - The growth of a religious movement*, by Mike McMullen, NYU Press, 2015, p. 137

In November a by-election at the national level elected Franklin Kahn, a member of the Navajo nation, to the national assembly, and the first obituary and funeral of the Bahá'ís was published in the *Times* upon the death of Theodore Minor of Durham in Raleigh Crossroads Church Cemetery - it would be not until March of 1972 that it would be noted in the *Baha'i News*. Things were certainly in flux already. A Bahá'í attending Meredith College wrote a letter to the editor of "The Twig" about the religion.³³⁹ In early December Bahá'ís offered a Human Rights Day observance at Friends Meeting House with speaker Teresita Myers, and Ellen Parmelee.

It is possible that the significant centenary conferences were the focus of many Bahá'ís such that general public knowledge of their activities was low. Additionally the assassinations of Martin Luther King and Bobby Kennedy may have had an effect. It is possible many unadvertised events were taking place considering the widespread social activity and the near extreme rising of interest in the Faith. Nationally the religion was growing too - from 1963 to 1968 it grew by 1/3rd to 18,000.³⁴⁰ Where North Carolina might have had few lasting populations of Bahá'ís before 1942, there were about 20 Bahá'ís in 1944 and around 70 in 1963. It may have been approaching over 100 people in 1968. According to the recollection of Carolyn Prévost (Wootten), Ludmila Van Sombeek was the official representative of the National Spiritual Assembly of the US to the funeral of Dr. Rev. Martin Luther King Jr and she traveled with the delegation of Black community NC leaders who attended.³⁴¹ Evander (Van) Melvin Gilmer Jr. married Charlayna Crawford in later December in Greensboro.

1969; Comings and goings and a wedding

In January 1969 Bahá'í quotes are printed in the UNC *Daily Tar Heel* frequently into the Spring albeit with no meeting place or names of Bahá'ís are mentioned,³⁴² until April when there is an interview with Mac Ezzell along with a small picture of the Shrine of the Báb.³⁴³ In March John A Goodwin, who had aided several of the state conventions in the 1940s, died in Greensboro.³⁴⁴ A couple of scattered mentions follow into the summer with a contact address in Chapel Hill³⁴⁵ and then another series runs from November 1969 through 1970 holding meetings usually at the Student Union.³⁴⁶ However it is known that Evelyn Aabel, having just finished a Masters in Public Health 1967 at UNC and began working at the Research Associate at the Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center when she encountered Carolyn Prévost (Wootten) who was then hosting Elizabeth Clark, an elder Bahá'í from Colorado who had met 'Abdu'l-Bahá, who, as Evelyn tells the story, told her she would soon go to Denver and become a Bahá'í - within days her academic supervisor asked her to go to Denver for a new degree program in nursing and there she in fact joined the Faith at Naw Rúz, 1969.³⁴⁷ Evelyn finished her training as a Colorado Child Care Associate with a Certificate as a Pediatric Nurse Practitioner - one of the earliest in the country. On return to North Carolina she was the lone Bahá'í pioneer in Alamance County and was one of the first eight Family Nurse Practitioners (FNP) in NC to go through a program at UNC in 1971 and would be an active member of the cluster area to the west from the 1980s after returning from living in New York areas. The *Carolina Times* had an obituary and funeral notice of the community in January for Cashius Mosby Thomas - though held at a church Bahá'í quotes were used extensively in the newspaper coverage, and his burial was at Glenview Memorial Park. This was soon followed by the *Times* coverage of James T. Taylor of Durham and Fred Myers of Columbia, Maryland, speaking at the World Religion Day observance at the Friends Meeting House in Durham. There was also coverage that African-Americans served on local, national administration of the Bahá'ís and the Universal House of Justice as well as a Navajo on the national assembly. After the brief mention in January there is a rising pace of general advertising on UNC-Chapel Hill campus visible through *Daily Tar Heel* notices all through the spring. In March it was noted

³³⁹ "An Invitation", by Betty Golding, *The Twig*, Nov 21, 1968, p. 2

³⁴⁰ Venters, Louis E., III (2010). *Most great reconstruction: The Baha'i Faith in Jim Crow South Carolina, 1898-1965* (Thesis). Colleges of Arts and Sciences University of South Carolina. ISBN 978-1-243-74175-2. UMI Number: 3402846, p.379

³⁴¹ Conversation with Carolyn Prévost re Early Baha'is of this Area, Chapel Hill Assembly Archives, unknown interviewer, undated, (before formation of the Orange County Assembly, and she died February, 1982.)

³⁴² * [Baha'u'llah....](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 16 Jan 1969, Thu • Page 6

* [Bahauallah](#) (sic), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 06 Feb 1969, Thu • Page 6

* [Bahauallah](#) (sic) *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 07 Feb 1969, Fri • Page 6

* [Bahauallah](#) (sic), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 08 Feb 1969, Sat • Page 6

* [Bahauallah](#), (sic) *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 09 Feb 1969, Sun • Page 4

* [Thirty-three....](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 25 Feb 1969, Tue • Page 5

* [Thirty-three students....](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 26 Feb 1969, Wed • Page 4

* [Thirty-three students....](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 27 Feb 1969, Thu • Page 6

* [Thirty-three students....](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 28 Feb 1969, Fri • Page 5

* [Thirty-three students....](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 02 Mar 1969, Sun • Page 6

* [Thirty-three students](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 04 Mar 1969, Tue • Page 5

* [Thirty-three students....](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 05 Mar 1969, Wed • Page 6

* [Thirty-three students....](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 07 Mar 1969, Fri • Page 5

* [Thirty-three students....](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 08 Mar 1969, Sat • Page 4

³⁴³ [Baha'i Faith desires universal peace](#), by Mary Burch, *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 02 Apr 1969, Wed • Page 3

³⁴⁴ [Deaths and funerals: John A Goodwin](#), *Greensboro Record* Tuesday, Mar 04, 1969 Greensboro, NC Page: 10

³⁴⁵ * [Bahai](#) (sic), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 22 Apr 1969, Tue • Page 6

* ["Close your eyes...."](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 03 Jul 1969, Thu • Page 6

³⁴⁶ * [Baha'i Faith](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 01 Nov 1969, Sat • Page 4

* [Baha'i Faith....](#), *The Daily Tar Heel* (Chapel Hill, NC) 08 Nov 1969, Sat • Page 4

³⁴⁷ Research notes and interview of Evelyn Aabel, by Steven Kolins, January, 2016 - much of this is also referred to in the Conversation with Carolyn Prévost re Early Bahá'ís of this Area, Chapel Hill Assembly Archives, unknown interviewer, undated, (before formation of the Orange County Assembly.)

in the *Times* that the Durham Bahá'ís gathered at the Wedgewood room at Jack Tar Durham Hotel with talks by William Allison and Fereydoun Jalali. The obit of James Goodwin was published in early March in Greensboro.

Jean Kennedy Norris married Jay Scales April 4, the one year anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Rev. Martin Luther King Jr, and Jay joined the Bahá'í Faith in October.³⁴⁸ And the *Times* noted that Van Sombeek returned from Chicago attending Naw Rúz at the House of Worship and a wedding followed by an invitation of area groups to hear her speak. The Norris-Scales wedding made the *Times* as well and noted that Van Sombeek had read the at the wedding. Though not mentioning the Faith, the Sadgwar-Manly private garden was among those opened in a city-wide effort to the public in Wilmington.³⁴⁹ It would be about a few years yet before Bahá'ís reconnected with the Sadgwar family.

Durhamites Van Sombeek, Mr and Mrs Andrew Allison and Wylie Allison had gone to the national convention - highlights reported in the *Times* included that Van Sombeek gave talks to area meetings, there was comment that there was a 35% increase in adult enrollments in the Faith and 89% of youth across the nation, and also announced were eight conferences to be held over the next few years. Nationally there was a report of 443 new local assemblies out of a goal of 600, and 2517 homefront pioneers out of a goal of 3000 and the House of Justice increased the goal of pioneers that Ridvan.³⁵⁰

In June there was a Race Unity Day observed in Durham with a picnic at Umstead Park with a talk by Henry Ginn of Augusta GA. In September there was news that Van Sombeek was moving to Reno Nevada, after living in Durham 14 years, to live with her daughter and nearby family. The Van Sombeeks had moved here from New York to support the "Bahá'í Peace Plan" and George had passed in 1958. And Mr. and Mrs. Reuben Budby had moved from Bowie, Maryland, presented slides and narration at a Bahá'í Fireside at their new home. Busby was a former ordained minister.

Among the last recollections Falvey had of Raleigh before her move to California was the marriage of Carol Pritchard and Larry Miller.³⁵¹

The National Assembly established a Southern Teaching Conference in Chattanooga, Tennessee in September, 1969 which was later pointed to as one of the incubators of the progressive wave of growth that ran across many states.³⁵² Directly from that conference a Deep South Committee formed which coordinated efforts. Though featured in South Carolina, (see the [wikipedia article](#).) there was also some growth in North Carolina. At the conference, a summary of the North Carolina community reported there were 30 localities with Bahá'ís, 6 assemblies, and High Point was a goal with 5 Bahá'ís in the city.

In November, and closing out the year coverage in the *Times*, "A New Wind" film by George C. Stoney was to be shown at a home.

After a four year hiatus in appearances, there was a profile in November on 'A New Wind', a film about the religion, (note the article was contributed by Fereydoun Jalali.) There were cycles of showing the film on campus at the Union Center for the first two weeks of so of November. Addressing a societal concern, the NSA released a statement appealing to Bahá'ís about protests over the Vietnam war - to overcome short-lived passions that could forget spiritual priorities in favor of pointing out to society the Bahá'í truths as an alternative to war.³⁵³

North Carolinians were among those attending the Southern Teaching Conference in Chattanooga, TN, in September. At the conference a summary of the North Carolina community specified there were 30 localities with Bahá'ís, 6 assemblies, and High Point was a goal with 5 Bahá'ís in the city. Overall goal cities listed were - Ahoskie, Asheboro, Boone Clinton, Concord, Cullowhee, Dodson, Eden, Elizabeth City, Gastonia, Goldsboro, Henderson, Hendersonville, Hickory, Jacksonville, Kinston, Laurenburg, Lumberton, Marion, Monroe, Morehead City, Murphy, Roanoke Rapids, Salisbury, Smithfield, Washington, Wilmington, Wilson - and three of these already had at least one new Bahá'í since Ridvan 1969 - Gastonia, Morehead City, and Roanoke Rapids. Not neglecting international goals, Walter Wootten in Chapel Hill Mr. and Mrs. Jack Sander (location unstated) were listed as representatives of the international goals committee who would make local presentations.

Hand of the Cause Mr. Furutan went to the Black Mountain Bahá'í School near Asheville in late December to early January, 1970. Frances Falvey, longtime pioneer in the Raleigh area, moved to Bakersfield, California, where she was soon an assembly secretary.³⁵⁴

Work proceeds on information after 1969. Jumping many decades third party data from 2010³⁵⁵ indicates there are 3 organized communities of [Bahá'ís in Wake County](#) covering some 554 people while [Durham](#) with 280 and [Orange County](#) at about

³⁴⁸ Oral history interviews of Jean Scales, produced and interviewed by Ayla J. Volpe, December 2011-January 2012

³⁴⁹ [Wilmington Azalea Gardens open free to public on this weekend](#), *The Robesonian* (Lumberton, NC)18 Apr 1969, Fri • Page 4

³⁵⁰ **The Bahá'ís of America - The growth of a religious movement**, by Mike McMullen, NYU Press, 2015, p. 139

³⁵¹ Growth of the Bahá'í Faith in Raleigh, North Carolina, 1953-1970, by Frances Falvey, circa 1970 with addendum 1973. Courtesy of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Raleigh, NC, and assistance of Charles Uzzell

³⁵² [International survey of activities](#), *The Bahá'í World*, vol 15, see p. 228

³⁵³ **The Bahá'ís of America - The growth of a religious movement**, by Mike McMullen, NYU Press, 2015, pp. 148-9

³⁵⁴ [Bahá'í directory changes: Assembly secretaries](#), *National Bahá'í Review*, Dec 1970, n36, p 8

³⁵⁵ ARDA State Membership Report - [North Carolina, 2010](#).

300 (with Durham County having 2 organized communities and Orange County 4) rounding out a total approaching 1,100 Bahá'ís in the Triangle. According to the same source all the surrounding counties combined - [Alamance](#) [39], [Caswell](#) [0], [Chatham](#) [44], [Edgecombe](#) [18], [Franklin](#) [7], [Granville](#) [11], [Harnett](#) [25], [Johnston](#) [45], and [Person](#) [6] - have just over 190, a little more than the statewide population might have been about 1968. Some Bahá'í communities were ranked the largest minority religion in some counties of NC from that same 2010 data set.³⁵⁶

The entire state had 24 Assemblies in 2010 and just over 5,800 adherents of the religion according to the same source. The Triangle area has the largest density of Bahá'ís in NC with Charlotte (Mecklenburg) noted at over 800 Bahá'ís and the Triad with about 530 Bahá'ís.

³⁵⁶ "Religion Census Newsletter" (PDF). *RCMS2010.org*. Association of Statisticians of American Religious Bodies. March 2017

GROWTH OF THE BAHÁ'Í FAITH IN RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA, 1953 - 1970
Frances Falvey

Years before I went to Raleigh to live during the Ten-Year Crusade which began in 1953 the Martin sisters, Lydia and Sarah (Dr. Pereira) were teaching in St. Augustine and Shaw Universities and were doing a great deal to spread the Teachings of Baha'u'llah. I feel the ground-work they laid was in a great measure responsible for so many of the favorable reactions met with in later years in both of these schools. In 1936 there was a series of meetings and study classes conducted by Sarah Pereira, Terah Cowart-Smith and Margeurite Sears.

Having arrived in the city after a short visit with Bunny and Dr. Bill Tucker in Rocky Mount (who counselled me to approach the "southerner" with the station of Baha'u'llah rather than the oneness of mankind), I soon found a place to live and a job. My loneliness in the completely strange surroundings resulted in more and intensified prayer, which soon led to the meeting in a segregated bus of a lovely black lady by the name of Mrs. Christine Tandy who invited me to spend Christmas day with her and her husband. This visit led to the formation of a Sunday afternoon "Community Club" which met, sang and prayed together. I was free to read Baha'i prayers and share some of the Teachings with these warm and friendly women. As time hurried along, one member of the club, Mrs. Mary Brown (Austin) began telling some of her friends about this new Religion - "Baha'i" and that it was the "truth" and asked if a study class could be held in the home of one of her tenants, Mr. and Mrs. William Brodie (brother and sister-in-law of James Brodie).

By this time Billie Wilson had moved to Raleigh from Andover, Mass. and Juni Faily had come from Ypsilanti, Mich. to help for several months and the classes started with great joy and fervor. All four of the Brodies (Marie, James, Jean and Sam) as well as the William Brodie family and Mrs. Brown attended these classes which continued for several years with Baha'i friends from different parts of North Carolina and from other states participating from time to time.

During this period many other activities also took place. Marie Brodie's father, Reverend Branch, invited the Baha'is to use his country church for Sunday afternoon meetings, other ministers with whom the Brodies were acquainted asked the Baha'is to participate in their activities, picnics were held, conferences attended, study continued, personal visits to other Baha'i communities made, schools visited, books placed in libraries and a general introduction of the Faith was made. Mrs. Brown remained a staunch friend of the Faith through all the years I lived in Raleigh but never became a declared believer and Mrs. Tandy left the area, joined the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, returned to Raleigh a year or so before I left and continued contact on a friendly basis. The William Brodies moved to Fayetteville. Baha'u'llah surely used these fine people in a very beautiful way to find some of His sincere seekers.

Parviz Moshtael and Dian Rassekh joined the forces and gave us more from their eastern backgrounds. Then, from another part of the world, Taiwan, came George and Susan Lii, adding still more to our universality. Eleanor Baldwin, Dennis Farr, Larry Miller, Margeurite and Cliff Ellingham and Nancy Rogers were also among those who came and added much to the growth of the Faith in Raleigh.

Several Baha'i marriages were performed and attracted attention. Bruce and Rachel Barich had a garden ceremony on the campus of North Carolina State College, Ozzie and Jean (Brodie) Tidmore were married in the Downtowner Motel and Guy and Dian (Rassekh) Olson were married in the home of friends. All these weddings were well attended and proclaimed the Baha'i Message to many friends.

As the Faith grew in North Carolina the State Goals Committees were formed and Raleigh became very busy helping carry out the goals of the Nine-Year Plan. Mass proclamation was born and mass teaching began. The Baha'i communities cooperated more and more in inter-community teaching and socializing. The State Fair was used as a means of proclamation with excellent results and state-wide participation.

One of the Mayors of Raleigh, Travis Tomlinson, was made aware of the Faith and signed a proclamation for one of the promotional activities and Governor Dan K. Moore was presented a copy of "The Proclamation of Baha'u'llah."

Many Baha'is visited our community to conduct classes, public meetings, conferences and the like. Among them I remember Mr. and Mrs. Curtis Kelsey, Dr. Allan Ward, Dr. and Mrs. Rex Parmelee, Mr. and Mrs. Albert James and family, Ruth Moffatt, Florence Mayberry, Matthew Bullock, Wayne Hoover, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Groger, Harvey Wiener, Bill Allison, Poova Murday, youth groups from M.I.T. and Harvard, youth groups from several cities in North Carolina, plus all the North Carolina Baha'is - from the mountains to the sea, young and old (may Baha'u'llah bless them), and many came more than once. Dizzie Gillespie made several visits to Raleigh playing night club engagements at the Frog and Nightgown and on each trip he met with the Baha'is and told many people about Baha'u'llah, visiting radio stations and talking with individuals.

The community was united and loving, observing all the Feasts, the Holy Days and Anniversaries plus many special events. There were local and state-wide conferences and conventions, summer and winter schools at Blue Ridge, Black Mountain, Frogmore, and Atlanta, to which we would endeavor to go as a group as often as possible. Local programs and those in other cities (including Washington, D. C., Wilmette, Ill., Baltimore, Md., and Atlanta, Ga.) were well attended. All night prayer sessions were held periodically; study classes were conducted; advertising and mailing campaigns carried out (not only to ministers, but to the general public); weekly public meetings, visits to hospitals, jails and juvenile hall; much information was given to students studying religion; and many impromptu activities were thought up. Meetings were held in public places such as the News and Observer Building, Richard B. Harrison Library, on the campuses of State College, Shaw University and St. Augustine College and in the homes of the

believers. 2402 Van Dyke and the home of Marie and James Brodie became centers of activity. Picnics in the backyards, with music, singing and sharing the Message, entertained not only the Baha'is and their friends, but the neighbors, also. The young people (and some of the older ones, too) visited Sunday schools and evening youth meetings in the churches, sometimes conducting the meetings. A lot of dedicated effort went into the promotion of the Faith in Raleigh. During one of the proclamation campaigns copies of Christ and Baha'u'llah were sent to several of the ministers in the city and books were given to libraries in high schools, junior colleges, colleges and churches as well as to the public libraries. Working through the State Goals Committee, copies of "Why our Cities Burn" were sent to the editors of the papers throughout the state - including the school newspapers.

New believers are bound to be found through sustained effort. As I remember, the believers who declared themselves during these embryonic years were: Alice and Douglas Lee, Jean High, Mellie Hickman (who left the Faith later), Rachel Bell, Bruce Barick (who later married and went to Puerto Rico to settle during the end of the Nine-Year Plan), Betty Golding, who also went to Puerto Rico after graduation from St. Mary's College, Judy Seawell, Judy Rogers, John Allen, Tricia Hillow, Mary Matthews, and Sandy, Don and Jerry Cott. Mr. Allen and Mrs. Matthews were both elderly and very ill, but were wonderful examples of the way age is no barrier to a truly seeking person and the way believers can inspire others to investigate the station of Baha'u'llah. Mrs. Matthews saw "the light of day" through a young and new Baha'i, Larry Miller, who had recently arrived in Raleigh to assist, and Mr. Allen was "discovered" by Elah Cowart when she spent about a year helping. Several young people declared themselves shortly before I left. Jannell Harrell was one of these and gave so much assistance at the State Fair that year. Debbie Bordley had come to meetings nine years earlier and was re-discovered during mass proclamation when Marie Brodie and Margaret Quance found her while a group of us was visiting a part of Raleigh we had neglected before. This time we just started talking to people gathered around on the streets talking. Then, there was a young neighbor of 2402 Van Dyke by the name of Eddie Sanders who declared himself after attending about three firesides. He had been approached in a drug store by several of the young Baha'is and told about Baha'u'llah. This new approach is reaching so many of the "new breed" that the old approach might never reach.

Some of the great Baha'i events during these years in Raleigh were experienced by some of the local believers. The World Congress in London in 1963, witnessing the beginning of the Universal House of Justice and World Order, was attended by five members of the community and in 1965 three Raleigh believers and one Durham Baha'i made their pilgrimages to Haifa. The Palermo Conference was attended by one member of the community and two of his companions on that trip later came to live in Raleigh for a time. Many of the National Conventions were attended by one or more of the friends.

In the last few weeks I was there other young Baha'is were moving in and the flow had accelerated. Carol Pritchard came to marry Larry Miller and Margaret Quance was making preparations to go to the Philippines. Changes were coming fast, and I know that as time goes on Raleigh is becoming a beautiful garden for Baha'u'llah.

Over the next few years the community continued to grow with newly declared Baha'is as well as Baha'is from all over the world moving to Raleigh for various reasons. Some of the first Baha'i weddings in Raleigh happened during this period including the wedding of Jean Brodie at the Downtowner Motel.

This very diverse community was united and loving and continued to conduct classes along with holding regular Baha'i administrative meetings and attending various conferences, conventions, winter and summer schools at Black Mountain, NC, Frogmore, SC, and in Atlanta, GA. Advertising campaigns were launched to help spread the teachings of the Baha'i Faith and public meetings were held on the campuses of not only Shaw and St. Augustines but at North Carolina State College. Meetings were also held at the News and Observer Building and in homes.

In 1963 the first Baha'i World Congress was held in London, England and several area Bahai's attended. This was the year the Universal House of Justice, the nine member supreme legislative body for the Baha'I world, was first elected and in later years, Raleigh's own Glenford Mitchell was elected to serve and through successive elections, he remains a member to this day.

In the late 60's, community member Margaret Quance was very instrumental in getting Baha'i marriage recognized by the State of North Carolina through working with Attorney General Harry McGalliard.

Observance of World Peace Day was first proclaimed by Governor Dan Moore in 1967 then in 1974 by Gov. James Holshouser Jr., and in 1977 and 1982 by Gov. James Hunt.

World Religion Day was proclaimed in 1968 by Mayor Travis Tomlinson, in 1970 by Mayor Seby B. Jones, and in 1974 by Mayor Clarence E. Lightner. Articles appeared in The News and Observer, The Technician, And The Carolinian.

With race unity being highlighted as the "Most Challenging Issue" facing America by the Baha'i World Community, race unity events were sponsored by the community beginning in the early '60's and continuing into current times.

The Raleigh Baha'I Community was visited several times in the late 60's through the 70's by one of it's more well known members, Mr. Dizzy Gillespie who came to play at the Frog and Nightgown club in Cameron Village. Each time he was in town, he met with the local Baha'is, talked to many of his fans about the Baha'i Faith and made guest appearances on local radio stations and appeared in local newspaper articles.

In 1968, Glenford Mitchell was elected to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is of the United States and served for many years as its' Chief Executive Officer.

In the early to mid 70's, many became familiar with the Baha'i Faith through the music of the very popular group Seal and Crofts. Hearing of the Faith from them prompted one

Raleigh community resident to write to The Raleigh Times to enquire about the Baha'i Faith.

The NCSU Baha'i Club was particularly active during the 70's continuing to hold public events on campus. In February of 1977, Dr. William Maxwell was a guest speaker of the club. Dr. Maxwell had served as Associate Dean of Education at NCSU from 1972-1975 and in 1977 he was the Dean of Education at California State University in Fresno.

In 1979, the political and religious turmoil in Iran began to negatively impact the Baha'i community there and several articles appeared in local and national newspapers regarding the worsening situation there. In 1983, President Ronald Reagan spoke of the plight of the Iranian Baha'is as he signed proclamations for Bill of rights Day and Human Rights Day.

In 1981, the Baha'i International Community was dealt a blow as several members of the Iranian community were summarily put to death including the husband/father of an Iranian Baha'i family in Raleigh. During the early 80's, many articles appeared in local papers regarding the persecution of Baha'is in Iran.

In 1983 the television program The Spiritual Revolution aired on Sunday afternoons on local station WPTF 28.

In the early 80's the NC State Baha'i club became very active promoting the Baha'i Faith on campus and doing service projects in the community.

In January of 1985, Mayor Avery Upchurch proclaimed World Religion Day and a large performing arts program was help on the campus of NC State University.

Also in 1985, the Universal House of Justice drafted the document The Promise of World Peace. This was presented to leaders throughout the world as well as several area dignitaries including Congressman James Broyhill, Congressman Bill Cobey, Congressman James McMillian, and Senator Jesse Helms, Senator David Price, and Senator Helms provided assistance and support to many area Iranian Baha'is as they dealt with the persecution of the Iranian government.

In the early 90's the Raleigh Baha'i Community sponsored Institute for the Healing of Racism dialogue sessions. The goal was to have meaningful discussion on the issue of racism in a safe environment.

In 1992 many Raleigh Baha'is attended the second Baha'i World Congress in New York City.

In 1993, a memorial concert was held in memory of Dizzy Gillespie who passed away in January of that year. Many of Raleigh greatest jazz musicians performed at the event which was held at Stewart Theater on the NCSU campus.

ADDENDA

June 19, 1973

"... as I was typing the last page I remembered Zelmer and JC (or CJ - whatever) - and I ~~know~~ before I had forgotten to mention the young man who came from Atlanta about 19... and lived with Marie and James - and for the life of me his name didn't come back..."

June 24, 1973

"Margaret Quance was very instrumental through Harry McGalliard (attorney for state) in getting the Bahai Marriage law recognized in N.C. She and Terah worked on it - 'long about '68 or '69. Margaret Quance could give you the details.

Also the children's classes held for Wootter's children and neighbors most definitely should be included - they were great and ~~included~~ lasted until the youngsters left, didn't they? Fereydown Jalali knows all about this."

Frances Falvey

Appendix 2 - Raleigh Baha'i Community Timeline 1957-2007³⁵⁸

Raleigh Baha'i Community Timeline 1957-2007

Sisters Lydia Martin and Sarah Martin (Pereira) taught at St. Augustine and Shaw University. As early as 1936 there was a series of meetings and study classes conducted by Dr. Sara Pereira and other Baha'is who in later years became very prominent members of the global Baha'i community.

Frances Falvey moved to Raleigh in the early to mid 50's from California with the goal of helping the community to grow. Frances found receptivity within the African American community and began to hold "Community Club" meetings which were attended by many including members of the Brodie family Mr. and Mrs. William Brodie, James and Marie Brodie and their children Jean and Sam.

During this time many other Baha'is moved to or visited Raleigh from across North Carolina and the United States to help in the growth and development of the Raleigh Baha'i Community. Marie's father, Reverend Branch, invited the Baha'is to use his country church to hold Sunday afternoon meetings.

Shaw University continued to be the scene of many Baha'i meetings. The relationship was so strong and open that in addition to holding public meetings on the campus, Baha'is were asked to speak to classes at Shaw. Several Baha'i books were presented to the Shaw University Library.

1957 was a pivotal year for the Raleigh Baha'i Community. With several Baha'is moving in to Raleigh and with the declaration of several new members including the Brodie family, the community was finally large enough to form its' first Local Spiritual Assembly on April 21, 1957. During this year, a young man by the name of Glenford Mitchell moved to Raleigh from Kingston Jamaica to attend Shaw University.

Also in 1957, the LSA worked hard to get Baha'i holy days recognized by Shaw University.

In 1958, the Raleigh Baha'i Community sponsored Human Rights Day to commemorate the United Nation's Declaration of Human Rights and United Nations Week. Many local groups participated as well.

During this period, Glenford Mitchell worked for the Carolinian Newspaper and wrote a regular column called "Just A Thought".

Ads and articles about the Baha'i Faith appeared regularly in the Carolinian, The News and Observer, The Raleigh Times, and N.C. States newspaper the Technician.

³⁵⁸ Courtesy of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'is of Raleigh, NC, and assistance of Charles Uzzell

In 1996, the Raleigh Baha'i community purchased its first Baha'i center that is located at 212 Linden Avenue. The Center in recent years has been the site of regular devotional gatherings, children's and adult classes, and several events open to the public.

In 2001 immediately following the tragic event of September 11th, Raleigh area Baha'is participated with members of many other religions in a prayer service held at the BTI Center.

In recent years the Raleigh Baha'i Community has been focused on conducting study circles, and classes for children and junior youth. The children's and junior programs are sponsored by the Baha'i community but focus on principles and virtues that are universal and have a goal of serving the general population. These classes and study circles are held at the center as well as in the homes of area Baha'is.

Appendix 3 - Chosen Events in Winston-Salem done Oct. 2016³⁵⁹

Date	Event
10/12/66	Bahá'í Group. 4 adults (Henry Broadhurst, Rafieh Monsour, David and Vedad Journey and 2 children age 5 and 2, Nabil and Riaz. H Pt Enterprise. Bahá'í youth from Cambridge, Mass. Speaking at college campuses. Jeff Gruber, Roy Mottahedeh, Chris Filstrup, and Greg Dahl. More info Vedad
3/27/67	Journey, Cedrow Drive, H Pt.
4/7/67	Students spoke at Sophist Club at High Point college. 36 students and faculty of religion department.
4/8/67	TV Channel 8 of WGHP. Roy Mottahedeh interview on Faith.
6/1/68	H Pt News article
4/20/71	First Spiritual Assembly, Mary McCoy, Rafieh Monsour, Shirley Bethea, David Journey, Vedad Journey, William Dixon, Herman Respass, Anne Respass. Parviz Moshtad
1/1/73	Mrs. Allan Poe from library books read (moved soon/ daughters declared later)
1/1/73	George and Julie Hyatt (transferred to American Embassy in Tehran)
10/2/77	High Point Hosts Central North Carolina District Convention in Thomasville...first Bahá'í Activity in Thomasville.
10/23/77	UN Day at Journey Home Potluck from 10 countries
1/1/78	Brenda Williams Visits Vedad as a Jehovah's Witness
8/1/78	International Dinner Astor Dowdy Towers, East Green St. 4 member Bahá'í Group 115 attendees
9/9/78	High Point Enterprise Article on World Peace Day in Journey Home. Terab C. Smith Spoke.
2/5/82	Letter from David Journey to Representative Eugene Johnston about hearing on religious persecution
2/5/82	Letter from David Journey to Representative John East about hearing on religious persecution
2/10/82	Letter from David Journey to High Point Enterprise about religious persecution of the Baha'is
3/23/83	Full Cover page Life in the Piedmont a section of the High Point Enterprise
8/21/83	Full Cover page Life in the Piedmont a section of the High Point Enterprise
2/20/84	Letter from Raleigh Baha'í Public Affairs Committee coordinating efforts to generate NC State resolution condemning persecutions in Iran
11/20/84	Triad Bahá'í Public Affairs Committee
11/8/85	Letter from NSA requesting delegations to present The Promise of World Peace to Governors and Congressmen.
2/11/86	Presentation of Peace statement and info about Faith to Howard Coble, US Representative, 6th Congressional District of NC
4/28/86	Presentation of Peace statement and info about Faith to Judy Mendenhall, Mayor, High Point
6/23/86	Presentation of Peace statement and info about Faith to James Pettiford, Executive Director,
10/2/86	Presentation of Peace statement and info about Faith to Joe Brown, Editor, High Point Enterprise
11/18/86	Presentation of Peace statement and info about Faith to Neal Austin, Director, High Point Public Library
11/18/86	Presentation of Peace statement and info about Faith to Mr. Ganghan, Librarian, High Point College Smith Library
12/15/86	Neal Austin writes letter stating that the Promise of World Peace is a 'fine addition to our collection'.
1/20/90	MLK Celebration
1/20/90	Vedad corresponds with Maya Angelou and sends her Promise of World Peace
1/1/91	Brenda Williams returns to Visit Vedad having now become a Baha'i.
1/20/91	MLK Celebration
1/20/92	MLK Celebration
2/20/92	Peace Statement and Vision of Race Unity to School Boards of Anderson, Central and Ledford
3/11/92	Speeches on Faith at Ledford High, YWCA Kindergarten
3/20/92	Peace Statement and Vision of Race Unity to Human Relations Commission, CTCC, DCCC and the Lexington Public Library
6/20/93	Vedad Presents dozens of copies of David Journey's book to officials, libraries, etc.
1/22/00	Thomasville Jeopardized. \$50 for magazines to Thomasville
1/22/00	Decision to begin Study Circle in February
5/14/00	Assembly Creates Community Storehouse Fund and allocates 19 % of monthly contributions
8/28/00	Agree to purchase new books for library
8/28/00	Agree to teach Huquq to children
12/18/00	Archives Moved from Journey to LSA for safekeeping
4/1/01	To Christian Science and Presbyterian Churches between April 20, 2001 and April 20, 2002
6/20/01	Teaching Plans 156 BE
1/20/02	Participated in MLK Celebration
4/20/02	23 Adults, 2 youth, 7 Children
9/10/02	LSA Sends 50 Letters to religious leaders in response to Universal House of Justice Statement
11/10/02	Hosting Second Cluster Gathering in Greensboro
1/11/03	LSA Hosts first Cluster Children's Class/Party in Winston-Salem
10/10/03	NC Fall Bahá'í School
7/9/04	Triad Inter Institutional Meeting
9/18/04	Triad Cluster Advances toward A Cluster

³⁵⁹ Courtesy of the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'is of Winston-Salem, NC, and assistance of Maximillian Locher

4/18/05 David Journey's Book 'God Speaks Again' donated to High Point Library in Memory of David and Vedad Journey
 6/24/05 RTI Training Process at TOP of LSA Agenda
 11/29/05 Journey Baha'i Library donated to LSA. LSA Asks National if they want Journey Artifacts for their Archives
 1/26/06 Book 1 Study Circle
 1/26/06 Regular Devotionals in 2 homes
 1/26/06 Children's Classes mentioned in Ass'y Minutes
 1/26/06 World Religion Club at Central High School
 1/28/06 Letter on Iran's Denial of Education to Many Local Thought and Education Leaders
 4/18/06 Greensboro LSA sends letter of Appreciation for the fact that High Point LSA proposed Quarterly Meetings of Triad Institutions
 2/23/07 Book 5 Study Circle - 6 people
 2/23/07 Book 4 Study Circle - Non Baha'is
 2/23/07 Devotional
 3/21/07 Book 1 Study Circle for 3 Persians
 4/14/07 Devotional
 4/20/07 26 Adults, 4 youth, 3 Children
 4/20/07 Piedmont Interfaith Council
 6/7/07 ABM names Triad a Priority Cluster
 6/7/07 Launch Intensive Program of Growth
 8/26/07 Children's Classes mentioned in Ass'y Minutes
 9/23/08 Breakfast at Shiloh Baptist Church for the purpose of Funeral Directors becoming acquainted with Needs of religious members
 1/2/09 Cluster Website and List serve offered to Triad by LSA
 2/22/09 Ad in HPE inviting public to prayers for "Friends in Iran"
 2/20/10 Children's Classes with 1 Bahá'í Child and 6-7 neighbors aged 7-14
 4/20/10 Presentation to 20 members of Emmanuel Lutheran Youth Group
 12/21/10 Book 2 for Persians
 2/21/11 Book 1 in Spanish
 4/21/11 Book 2 in Spanish
 9/1/11 6 Home Visits, 6 Devotional Gatherings, 1 Children's Class, 1 Junior youth group, 7 Ruhi Institute Study Circles
 6/20/11 8 tutors, 4 on LSA
 8/20/11 Children's class
 10/20/11 Children's class transitions to Jr. Youth Class
 12/20/11 Jr. Youth Group engages in many activities
 2/20/12 4 devotionals per month
 4/20/12 Education Under Fire' Presentation to faculty and administration of High Point University
 5/20/12 8 tutors, 5 on LSA
 6/20/12 4 Children's classes
 8/20/12 Jr. Youth Group engages in many service projects
 10/20/12 3 regular devotionals
 12/20/12 High Point Selected for Intensive Program of Growth
 2/20/13 2 Articles in High Point Enterprise
 4/20/13 2 Bahá'ís Liaise with Human Relations Council
 10/2/13 Assembly Plans Unit Convention
 6/20/13 6 tutors, 4 on LSA
 8/20/13 3 Children's classes
 12/20/13 Jr. Youth Group engages in many service projects
 2/20/14 2 regular devotionals
 4/20/14 2 Articles in High Point Enterprise
 11/15/14 Jr. Youth Attend World Religions Forum at City Hall
 5/5/14 8 tutors, 5 on LSA
 5/20/14 1 Children's classes
 7/20/14 2 Jr. Youth Group engages in many service projects
 9/20/14 Facebook page for Baha'is of High Point
 1/20/15 Panel Discussion at World Religions Forum
 3/20/15 2 LSA members attend High Point Ministerial Conference
 4/31/2015 Youth Meeting