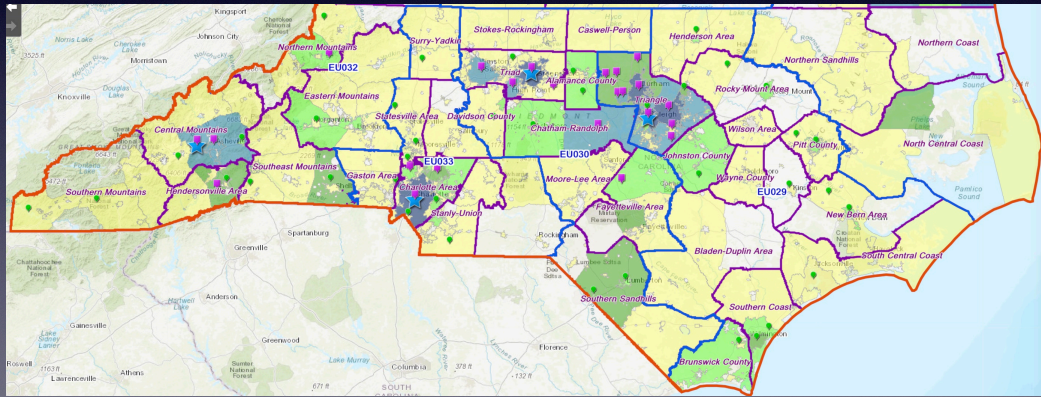


A North Carolina Bahá'í history 1850 - 2021

by Steven Kolins
for the Wilmette Institute, May 16, 2021



Preface

- Problems remembering with an institutionally led survey of NC history, October 2016-February 2017
- First geographical-geological maps of states

The vast majority of what has been gathered per source and region has been collected at

https://bahaipedia.org/Category:North_Carolina

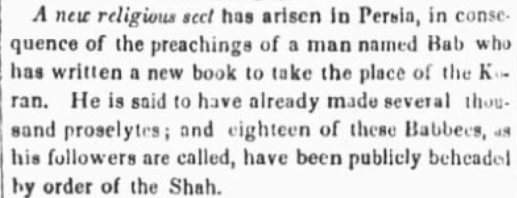
beginning November 2016 online some editions of *Baha'i News* and *Bahá'i World* were accessed as a digitized source available only in 2009 to me and there have been attempts to merge these individual data sets and this presentation is one more example of this ongoing process, along with a few archival materials and interviews.

Timelines

- Newspaper coverage in the state mentions Bábí/Bahá'í history (1850...)
- Migrants from North Carolina find the religion elsewhere (1870s/1906...)
- Bahá'ís travel to North Carolina (Winter of 1902-3...)
- Bahá'ís lived in North Carolina occasionally (1915...)
- Nascent Bahá'í communities become sustained ones (1925...1943...)
- Schools, Centers and regions and districts (1954...)

Newspapers...

- While the earliest in the world date from November 1, 1845 in the London *Times*, the first in NC would be a few years later.



A new religious sect has arisen in Persia, in consequence of the preachings of a man named Bab who has written a new book to take the place of the Koran. He is said to have already made several thousand proselytes; and eighteen of these Babbees, as his followers are called, have been publicly beheaded by order of the Shah.

- *The Tri-Weekly Commercial* (Wilmington, North Carolina), 20 Aug 1850, p. 2, also in *The Biblical Recorder* (Raleigh, North Carolina) 15 Sep 1850, p. 3

Migrants find the Faith elsewhere...

- **Mary Elizabeth (Brown) Martin** (May 31, 1877, Raleigh - Nov 19, 1939, Cleveland) The family found the Faith by 1913 after Abdu'l-Bahá's visit through the area in 1912 and a talk by Louis Gregory in 1913. Her daughter Sarah Martin Pereira lived and worked in Raleigh from 1931 through 1944 and to whom Bahá'í traveling teachers came to support. Cleveland was also a point in the life of Roy Williams who joined Louis Gregory in travels to the South and the connection with the Sadgwar family.
-> https://bahaipedia.org/Sarah_Pereira
- **Knobloch** family immigrated from Germany about 1866. Pauline was born 1874 in DC, and the family moved to Wilmington in the early 1880s and left by 1889 or so to live in DC. Pauline found the Faith in DC in 1902 after encounters brought her into contact with Mirza Abu Fadl. Pauline initiated outreach to the black community including Pocahontas Pope and Louis Gregory. The family did undertake travels to NC and aided connections of Louis Gregory in NC most of whom were through other contacts.
-> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4voTm9d5G04> by Judy Hannen Moe, Dec 15, 2019 with the Wilmette Institute.
- **Pocahontas (Kay) Pope** (~1864 in Halifax County - Nov 11, 1938, DC) married John W. Pope in Dec 1894 in Halifax County. Between May and September 1898 they moved to DC. She joined the Faith in DC from Pauline Knobloch Hannen and family in 1906. The family connections to the Halifax area are likely behind Louis Gregory's many visits to the area in the coming decades.
-> https://bahaipedia.org/Pocahontas_Kay_Grizzard_Pope
- **Sadie (Shankle) Oglesby** (April 10, 1881, Concord - Feb 1956, Boston) came from a wealthy black family near Concord, was a nurse in the Pinehurst/Southern Pines in 1897-1900, married in DC and moved to Boston by 1902. In 1913 they encountered the Faith through Harlan and Grace Ober and especially from WWI was particularly more active in the Faith. Sadie went on pilgrimage - the first black woman pilgrim, and the first African American to visit Shoghi Effendi.
-> https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sadie_and_Mabry_Oglesby
- **Matthew Washington Bullock** (September 11, 1881 in Dabney - December 17, 1972, Detroit) Parents were born slaves and left NC in 1889 to Boston. After many "firsts" in his life Bullock found the Faith in the 1930s and joined in 1940.
-> https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matthew_W_Bullock

Migrants find the Faith elsewhere...



Pocahontas (Grizzard) Pope's childhood home, former Halifax Clerk office circa 1974*

private residence of the Kay-Grizzard family; circa 1880s - 1909

* *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, 1974

it's still there - <https://www.google.com/maps/place/Historic+Halifax+Clerk's+Office/@36.3304136,-77.5902121,17z/data=!3m1!1e3!1m5!3m4!1!0x8829e151454b4081:0x1b33f57112afac8m2!3d36.3304093!4d-77.5880234>

Bahá'ís travel to North Carolina

- Sarah Farmer trip winter 1902-3.
- 1908 Hannens trip to Raleigh, Carters move to Washington
- 1910 - Gregory trip including Durham, Enfield(Halifax County), and Wilmington
- August 1917 - trips of the Hannens and Sarah Gertrude Rawls Harris, wife of Hooper Harris, sister of Lula Rawls Carter, (Mrs. W. H. Carter) of Washington, NC.
 - - A book was donated to the Duke Library during the school year 1916-1917 out of the Washington DC Bahá'í community.
- 1919 - in both cases Baha'is were in contact with the Carters of Washington
 - - March- Charles Mason Remy and Charles Bassett took a trip through Washington, home of Mrs. Lula Rawls Carter, Greenville at Mrs. Bechwith's East Carolina Teacher's School Principal, and Raleigh with newspaper coverage, before going south.
 - - April Gregory letter from the Sadgwar home in Wilmington, then in Asheville in September
- 1926 - Leslie Pinckney Hill and Keith Ransom-Kehler visited the Durham/Raleigh
- 1928 - including Durham, Gregory spoke to at least one high school class of over 500 students.
- 1931 - In April, in Bricks(Halifax County), Gregory spoke to a black high school-college twice and a white college president and select students attended.(possibly Mrs. Katie R. Beckwith from Greenville.)
- 1931 Musicians and Bahá'ís Philip Marangella and Chauncey Northern also stopped in Enfield, near Bricks. (BN)
- Stanwood Cobb came through after living in Asheville on a talking tour in 1934 through UNC-Chapel Hill
- Terah Cowart Smith and Marguerite Reimer undertook many meetings in Raleigh and Durham in support of Sarah Martin-Eason's (Pereira) nascent community in 1938 for several weeks
- Dorothy Beecher Baker came through in 1941 from the Appalachians to the Lumberton coastal plain speaking to more than a dozen colleges
- Ruth Moffett came to the Triad area in 1942

Bahá'ís travel to North Carolina

- Still in the era of firsts... the first Bahá'í to visit NC was... Sarah Jane Farmer!
Probably the first mention from a Bahá'í in North Carolina.

Miss Sarah J. Farmer, with her aunt, Mrs. Charles C. Coffin, is sojourning in North Carolina for the benefit of the latter's health.

Miss Sarah J. Farmer of Greenacre, Eliot, is to pass the winter in North Carolina.



- Miss Sarah J. Farmer...
The Portsmouth Herald, (Portsmouth, New Hampshire), 1 Dec 1902, Mon • Page 1 (found thanks to Dr. Duane Troxel) and 8.

9
 (Letter head) Louis G. Gregory
 Attorney-at-Law

(handwritten address)

15 N. 8th St,
 Wilmington, NC, 7/4/19

(stamped "Answered Apr 11, 1919 J H H")

My beloved Brother:

Thanks for your good letters and enclosures of mail. I appreciate your kind service and hope our Generous Lord will reward all your goodness as I cannot.

Expect to leave for points in SC Friday morning next. So it will hardly be well to send mail to this address after Wed. from Washington. My next address point will be 75 President St, Charleston, SC, c/o Mrs. Noisette.

Here had an interesting and varied experience since I last wrote you, the places being Washington NC where Dr. & Mrs. H. W. Carter, the brother in law & sister of Mrs. Hooper Harris are quite active in the Cause. Thru their assistance a number of meetings were held, the last one of which they attended with one of their (pg2) friends, all showing great happiness.

It was necessary to pass thru New Bern & stay overnight to reach Wilmington. Here a miracle occurred. Arriving their about 5pm without knowing a living soul, I soon found an auto at my disposal and the leading people being rounded up for a meeting, one which Prof.

Louis Gregory wrote a 6 page letter.*

Key points:

- from the Sadgwar family home address in April 1919.
- Carter family & events in Washington
- Roy Williams connecting to Parris & Sadgwars, groups
- good and bad racial relations in NC: New Bern vs Wilmington

* Email from Edward Sevcik Archivist U.S. National Bahá'í Archives, RE: Gregory letters and North Carolina, to Steven Kolins, Jul 25, 2019

• Bahá'ís lived in North Carolina

While Bahá'ís had visited the state living in areas in periods of days to months, **Stanwood Cobb** was the first Bahá'í to live in the state at least a year when he worked at the Asheville School in 1915-6. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stanwood_Cobb

- **Felice Leroy Sadgwar** joined the Faith by 1919 and was visible with the Faith through 1925 when her father **Frederick Sadgwar**, also recognized as a Bahá'í, died. She reconnected with the Bahá'ís in earlier 1970s along with her sister Mabel. The family is connected in several ways with the events and people of the Wilmington Insurrection of 1898. <https://bahaipedia.org/>

[The_Sadgwar_s_the_Bahá'í_Faith_and_Wilmington_NC](https://bahaipedia.org/)

- **Hubert Parris** was born in Barbados in 1874 and moved to the US about 1902 and made his way eventually to Wilmington by 1915 where he withdrew from Christian ministry as he advanced his medical service. Then he left Wilmington and lived in Rich Square and on the first day of the first Spiritual Assembly of the state was recognized as a Bahá'í (1943.) https://bahaipedia.org/Hubert_Parris

- **Mary Arch**, probably born in 1870 in Orange County, found the Faith in 1923 in Durham somehow and in 1927 moved to DC where she lived out her days and died by late 1937. https://bahaipedia.org/African-Americans_identified_from_the_Bahá'í_Historical_Record_Survey

- **Amy Bailey** moved to Greensboro area in 1928 and found the Faith in 1936 and helped Ruth Moffett in Greensboro in 1942 before moving away. https://bahaipedia.org/Amy_Bailey

- **Sarah Martin** (later Pereira) moved to Raleigh to teach at Shaw University 1931-1944. https://bahaipedia.org/Sarah_Pereira

Bahá'ís lived in North Carolina



Courtesy Cape Fear Museum of History and Science, Wilmington, NC

Felice Sadwar may be the first North Carolinian Bahá'í to join the Faith. We have references to her from 1918-1919, 1919, 1923, 1925.

We have references to Frederick in Baha'i circles in 1919 and 1925.

Felice's father
Frederick Cutlar Sadgwar
maybe the second Bahá'í known of NC



Courtesy Cape Fear Museum of History and Science, Wilmington, NC

Wilmington

- https://bahaikipedia.org/The_Sadgwar,_the_Baha'i_Faith_and_Wilmington,_NC (July 2018)

"News of the Cause", *Baha'i News*, April 1925, p 4

the best single source on the Sadgwar family is probably

Wilmington, A pictorial history

by Anne Russell, 1981,

published through the

Greater Wilmington Chamber of Commerce

by the Donning Publishing Co

the next best source is probably

"Strength through struggle" -

the chronological and historical record of the

African-American community in

Wilmington, North Carolina 1865-1950.

by William Reaves, edited by Tabith Hutaff McEarchern, 1998,

published by the New Hanover Public Library

BAHA'I NEWS LETTER

Wilmington, N. C. during January afforded many opportunities for service. In this city there lives a truly remarkable believer, a young woman who for seven years has been devoted to the Cause under most difficult circumstances. At present her long trials and sacrifices are bearing fruit and Louis Gregory feels that in this city an Assembly will soon be organized. In Wilmington meetings were held daily in churches, with the Ministers' Union, in the public schools, and in many private homes. An influential Catholic invited Louis to address a gathering of Catholic young people in Wilmington and the response was so enthusiastic that he was invited to return.

Nascent Bahá'í communities become sustained ones (1925...)

Initial attempts to form communities of Bahá'ís were reported in 1925 in Wilmington,* and the 1930s in Bricks(Halifax County)** and early 1930s-40s in Raleigh.*** All of these were centered in the black community and each were supported with visiting Bahá'ís at least occasionally but none of them were sustained.

* "News of the Cause", *Bahá'í News*, April 1925, n4, p4. <http://bahai-news.info/viewer.erb?vol=01&page=19>

** "Bahá'í News - Forty years ago", *Bahá'í News*, January, 1972, n490, p23. <http://bahai-news.info/viewer.erb?vol=07&page=1007>

*** "Teaching activities, North America", *Bahá'í News*, December 1940, n140, pp3-4. <http://bahai-news.info/viewer.erb?vol=02&page=326>

While there must be idiosyncratic aspects to this, and the dynamics of individuals vs groups, but is there a general influence that is taking place? A PhD in Geography was done in 1980 analyzing the growth of the religion had a few conclusions including:

- * The rate of growth of the Faith in the South (and Great Plains) underperforms the rest of the country
- * Where it succeeded most in the South was in the black communities mostly in regions along the coastal states of the South
- * And North, South or West, the response of the black community was several times as large as the white community, but the white community's small response numerically was still much larger than the black.

I'd like to translate these measures to sociological qualities of the traditions of the South - segregation and oppression and reactions to Yankees - among the white population and the yearning for amity - friendship and respect - in the black community.

-> https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bahá'í_Historical_Record_Survey

Nascent Bahá'í communities become sustained ones (1925...)

The first Seven Year Plan (1937-1944) had intra-and-international goals. The initial stated 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.

There were about 2584 identified Bahá'ís in the US and 64 assemblies at the beginning of the Plan in 1937.& 153 Bahá'ís moved from cities having Assemblies to one of 28 goal cities as part of the first organizing plan - an average of five plus per goal city.&& Adding previous or new Bahá'ís in most of those cities, they achieved Assembly status. In addition to pioneers there was a system of traveling speakers on the Faith.

In Feb 1942 Ruth Moffett initiated a campaign in Greensboro and had some success which came to the attention of pioneers by the late summer of 1942:

- **Adrienne Ellis** and **Eva Lee Flack** to assist raising the Assembly with **Louise Sawyer**, the **Goodwins**, **Naomi Simmons** and a few others.

- **Florence Steinbauer** and **Muriel Stilson** pioneered to Greensboro from New York City from early 1943.

This led to the election of the first spiritual assembly of North Carolina in 1943 at which Hubert Parris and others were present.

There was also a project in Asheville. **Margaret Atwater** moved to Asheville NC from Florida** to assist Amelie Bodmer who had been on a multi-month effort in Asheville from June 1942. *** Note Adrienne and Eva were initially headed to Asheville where Eva grew up and her family was from. ****

& The Baha'is of America - The growth of a religious movement, by Mike McMullen, NYU Press, 2015, p. 38

&& The growth and spread of the Baha'i Faith, by Arthur Hampson, PhD, Department of Geography, University of Hawaii, May, 1980, UMI ID 8022655.

* The Seven Year Plan, *The Bahá'í World*, vol 9, 1940-1944, see p. 219

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

*** "Teaching activities, North America", *Baha'i News*, December 1940, n140, pp3-4. <http://bahai-news.info/viewer.erb?vol=02&page=326>

**** pending article on Eva Lee Flack McAllister in consultation with her daughter Ellen.



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

A photo Greensboro Assembly was published in November with no names listed but there are 3 black ladies, 5 white ladies, and one white man in the picture.* We've been able to figure out most of the faces to names. Standing on the far left is Naomi Simmons. Pioneers Eva Lee Flack (later McAllister, seated far right) and Adrienne Ellis (later Reeves, standing near far right) are the other black ladies. Louise Sawyer is seated on the far left in front of Simmons. The man is John Goodwin and Alise Goodwin is on the back right behind Eva Flack. It was an integrated Assembly in a segregated South.

Others present were travel teacher Virginia Camelon&& and Hubert Parris, then of Rich Square, NC.^

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

&& "Speaker Announced", *Greensboro Daily News*, April 7, 1943, p. 4

"Bahá'í lecture set", *Greensboro Daily News*, April 7, 1943, p. 5

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



The eldest still living Bahá'í in North Carolina today is William (Bill) Tucker who is now over 90 yrs old. He joined the Faith in 1946 in Greenville after meeting William Kenneth Christian who was then a teacher at the university there. Tucker undertook a lifetime of service to the Faith including as a well beloved Auxiliary Board member for many years.

<https://www.raceunity.us/bill-tucker/> Bill Tucker, *Race Unity in America: an Oral History*, produced by Journalism for Change, Inc, 2021

Assemblies become Schools, Centers and regions and districts (1954...)

Where North Carolina might have had about no lasting populations of Bahá'ís before 1942, there were about 20 Bahá'ís in 1944 including the one assembly* and around 70 in 1963, with four assemblies** it may have grown by 30% or more in the 1960s.*** It may have been approaching over 100 people by 1970.

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

** Assemblies, groups, isolated believers and totals by state, *Bahá'í Faith, The: 1844-1963: Information Statistical and Comparative, . . .*, compiled by Hands of the Cause Residing in the Holy Land, 1963, p. 126

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

*** Vinters, 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

- Raleigh Spiritual Assembly was founded in 1957 ("Baha'i anniversary". *News and Observer*, Raleigh, NC. May 21, 1957. p. 19)
- Charlotte by 1958 (Baha'is plan for Holy Day, *The Charlotte News* Charlotte, North Carolina 20 May 1958, Tue • Page 8)
- Durham 1962 ("First Durham Baha'i Assembly established", *The Carolina Times*, June 16, 1962, p10)
- Asheville 1964 (Baha'i group plans commemorate observance to recognize members, *Asheville Citizen-Times*, Asheville, North Carolina, 11 Jun 1964, Sat • Page 31)
- Chapel Hill in 1971 (Chapel Hill Baha'is elect their first Local Spiritual Assembly, *The Carolina Times*, Durham, N.C., May 15, 1971, p3)

Schools, Centers and regions and districts (1954...)

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.** The facilities in the picture in *Baha'i News* appears to be the Robert E. Lee Hall of the YMCA Blue Ridge Assembly. Faces from the picture would be from this period of activity of Bahá'ís in the state and the Triangle.



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

Believers gathered at Blue Ridge Assembly, North Carolina..., *Baha'i News*, Oct 1954, n284, p. 13

* Baha'i Faith, *News and Observer* Wednesday, September 22, 1954 Raleigh, NC, Page: 5

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

Schools, Centers and regions and districts (1954...)

1955 Blue Ridge is called a Summer School



Where 75 had attended the 1954 meeting*, 100 attended the 1955 meeting.** Hand of the Cause Paul Haney gave a talk and some \$531 was donated to Funds of the Faith.***

*Teaching Missions by members of the auxiliary board, *Baha'i News*, October, 1954, p. 1 and (photo caption) Believers gathered at Blue Ridge Assembly...., *Baha'i News*, October, 1954, p. 13

** Second Southern Conference, *Baha'i News*, November, 1955, p. 12 and (picture caption) Baha'is and their friends...., *Baha'i News*, December, 1955, p. 14

*** Second Southern Conference, *Baha'i News*, November, 1955, p. 12

Schools, Centers and regions and districts (1954...)



The first documented pilgrims from North Carolina identified to date left December 11, 1965, (left to right) Carlotta Holmes, (the first named Bahá'í from Durham from the time of a sustained presence,) Margaret Quance,(pioneer) Marie Brodie, (the first named Bahá'í from Raleigh from the time of a sustained presence,) and Frances Falvey (pioneer) went on Bahá'í pilgrimage to the Holy land together. 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. "Quartet to visit Holy Land", *The Carolina Times*. Durham, N.C.,

Jan. 1, 1966, p1

Up to 1970 North Carolina had held one statewide convention to elect its delegate(s). In 1971 it was broken into three regions: East(2 delegates), Central(3 delegates), and West(2 delegates) "State Conventions", *The American Bahá'í*, Oct 1971, p5

In 1991, what had been a statewide convention of Bahá'ís to elect a delegate to the national convention had evolved to 6 districts each to elect their own delegate:

Unit 79. Central-A centered in Durham

Unit 80. Eastern-A centered in Wilmington

Unit 81. Central-B centered in Cary

Unit 82. Eastern-B centered in Rocky Mount

Unit 83. Western-A centered in Asheville

Unit 84. Western-B centered in Charlotte

"Conventions: Unit 79...", *The American Bahá'í*. Aug 1991, p29

Schools, Centers and regions and districts (1954...)

In 1971-2 Sandra Kahn found the Bahá'ís of Raleigh amidst their excitement about the developments in South Carolina about which she wrote in her PhD finished in 1977. She writes:

“I spent six months in Raleigh, North Carolina in 1971-1972, observing the last stages of the initial mass conversion,...”(in South Carolina.)...There had been an outdoor teaching project in Goldsboro.... Every weekend Baha'is went out on teaching trips. Social gatherings to affirm the unity of Baha'is was often held. They did everything together and the teaching effort was a focus of their lives.... Blacks and whites were often touching in their sometime awkward gestures of new-found brotherhood towards each other.... One night at midnight, after a late meeting, two cars full of racially mixed Baha'is and friends, were dropping people off at their homes, and we pulled into a gas station in Smithfield, North Carolina, where billboards say ‘This is Klan country, Love it or leave it.’ ... Two white Baha'i girls moved into Pikerville, population 200, all white, making friends. I accompanied them for two weeks. After a couple of months the Baha'is decided to break the prejudice barrier and bring some black friends home. After doing so they were forced to move out of town.... The Raleigh community associated constantly with Baha'is from a nearby Air Force Base and from other small towns, bringing the total community to thirty.... A Baha'i center was maintained, at which I lived, for meetings and as a community center for all activities.”

Encountering of Two Myths - Baha'i and Christian in the Rural American South - a study in transmythicization, PhD in Religious Studies by Sandra Santolucito Kahn, University of California at Santa Barbara, June 1977

In 1987 the Bahá'í Black Men's Gathering in Greensboro and initiated.

• *The story of the Bahá'í Black Men's Gathering: celebrating twenty-five years, 1987-2011* by Frederick Landry, Harvey McMurray and Richard W Thomas, 2011. ISBN: 9780877433606 OCLC

Number: 854879783

• *Done Made My Yow to the Lord: The Baha'i Black Men's Gathering 1987 - 2011* , 2013, National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States

Schools, Centers and regions and districts (1954...)

16 Assemblies registered with the NC Department of State by 2016:

Greensboro 1958

Charlotte, April, & Raleigh, October, 1971

Chapel Hill 1996

Durham, March, & Winston-Salem, April, 1973

Kernersville, July, & Hamlet, November, 1997

Asheville 1979

Carrboro 1994

Buncombe County 1986

Huntersville 2001

Wake County 1988

Hillsborough 2009

Orange County 1993

Cary 2016

And the Regional Bahá'í Council of the Southern States first registered in 2008 (it has since evolved into a few orgs with the Regional Council of the Atlantic States being the present one for North Carolina.)

• https://www.sosnc.gov/online_services/search/by_title/Business_Registration (search for "Bahai")

Academic commentary on the religion in the state advances...

North Carolina portraits of faith: a pictorial history of religions, by Anne Russell, 1986, ISBN: 9780898654547 OCLC 12974966

Beginnings of the Faith in a mountain community, by Audrey Mike Parker 1988, university paper. https://bahai-library.com/parker_beginnings_bahai_watauga

Carolbeth Miller. *A perspective on the Baha'i Faith in the Piedmont Triad area of North Carolina*, 1992 MA thesis, Department of Anthropology, Wake Forest University, OCLC: 30121622

Religious traditions of North Carolina: histories, tenets and leaders, by William Glenn Jonas, 2018, ISBN: 9781476676463 OCLC: 1056154044



Felice Sadgwar in 1985,
with Ciara Rhodes, left,
and Richard Lee Hamrick, right

Used by permission of Anne Russell; from *North Carolina portraits of faith: a pictorial history of religions* (1986), OCLC 12974966



Dr. Jean Norris Scales, NCCU professor, a Bahá'í since 1960 in Durham, gave a talk at the 2017 Bicentennial anniversary of the Birth of Bahá'u'lláh which was recorded telling some of her story of finding faith. She served the religion many years including as a well beloved Auxiliary Board Member for the state for many years.

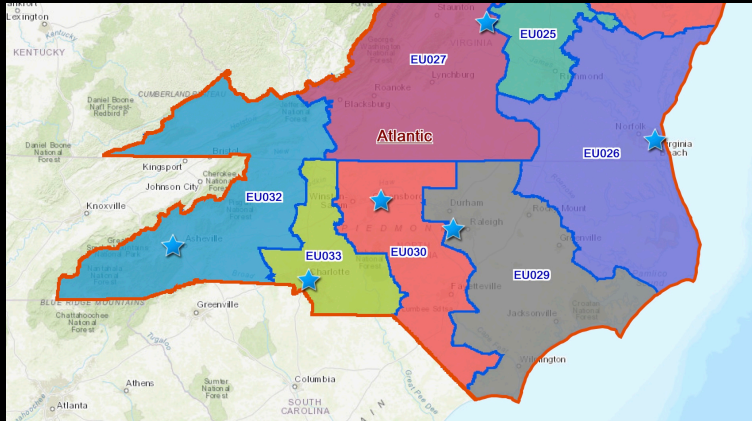
She wrote a large article on her story in *American Bahá'í** and another did a profile of her own life.** She died in 2019 and her gravesite has a virtual marker too.***

* Ludmila Van SombEEK: *Tireless worker for Cause*, by Jean Norris Scales, *The American Bahá'í*, Feb 1980, p17

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

*** Jean Kennedy Norris Scales, Created by: Naomi Snider (Yocom) McFadden, Findagrave.com, 8 Nov 2019

Regions and districts of NC

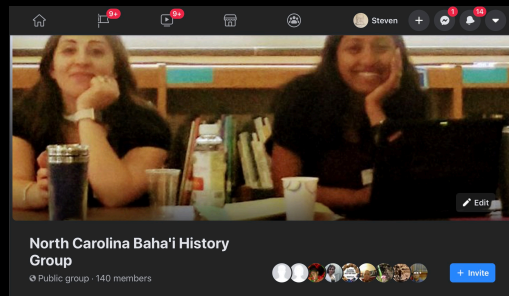


- [USBNC.org](https://usbnc.org) login, © M. Vargha, GIS Office, IT Dept, BNO, Evanston, IL | IT Dept, Unity Data/BNC GIS, US Bahá'í National Center, Evanston, IL

The recent assignment of electoral units for electing delegates to the annual National Bahá'í Convention across North Carolina has five electoral units for the election of delegates to the national convention as of April 2021. There are presently, 22 Assemblies, 34 registered groups, and 24 counties with approximately no Bahá'ís. According to ARDA there are about 5000 Bahá'ís in North Carolina with population centers of the Triangle, Triad, Charlotte and Asheville areas.

Presentations at the first Summer Seminar on the history of the Bahá'í Faith in North Carolina, organized by Steven Kolins, sponsored by the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Orange County NC, Aug 3-5 2018, at the Efland Bahá'í Center and has been posted to https://bahai-library.com/kolins_history_north_carolina (though it now needs updating)

A Facebook group on NC Bahá'í history was founded in later 2018



Of all the Bahá'ís that have ever lived in the state and served in international leadership of the religion, three were black men and one was a black woman - without quotas or electioneering: Sarah Pereira, Glenford Mitchell, William Maxwell, and Kiser Barnes, (and special mention of Matthew Bullock who served on the National Assembly and as a Knight of Bahá'u'lláh, and Van Gilmer who led one of the World Congress Choirs which then toured the world and then the Bahá'í House of Worship Choir.)

Triangle regional email list mentions:

- Topic: Soulful Sunday: New Black Power: Constructive Resilience and the Efforts of African American Bahai's
- Topic: Soulful Sunday: In Conversation with Eric Dozier

There was a profile of the Triad area of the state posted May 2020 on the US Bahá'í website:
<https://www.bahai.us/north-carolinas-triad-is-thriving-as-streams-of-learning-converge/> North Carolina's Triad is thriving as streams of learning converge May 7, 2020

In March 2021 the Regional Bahá'í Council and the US National Assembly announced the purchase of a Center:

“With great joy and gratitude to the Blessed Beauty, we can now announce the purchase of a magnificent 28 acre property, previously known as the Aqueduct Conference Center,... This is the first property of its kind in the United States.... This property was purchased fully furnished for \$2.6 million. We estimate that essential repairs and deferred maintenance will cost an additional \$400 thousand. Our beloved National Spiritual Assembly has graciously financed this initial cost with the expectation that the Atlantic Region will raise this sum in relatively short order. We, therefore, announce to you the goal of raising \$3 million by Ridván 2023....”

- Secretariat@rbcatlantic.org email of March 30, 2021, "Regional Announcement: Purchase of Permanent Training Institute Facility"

Communities with webpages:

<https://www.pittcountybahais.org/>

<http://www.garnerbahai.org>

<http://www.durhambahai.us>

<https://raleighbahai.org>

<http://www.hillsboroughncbahais.com>

<https://chathambahai.wordpress.com>

<http://www.bahaicharlotte.org>

<http://wncbahai.org>

https://localwiki.org/raleigh/The_Bahá'í_Faith_in_the_Triangle