

OUR MAYORS

Mayors of Chapel Hill

H.B. Guthrie	1869-72
John W. Carr	1873-74
John White	1874
Andrew Mickel	1874-76
John H. Watson	1872, 1876-79
Merritt Cheek	1879-82
Jones Watson	1882-83
John H. Watson	1883-84
A.J. McDade	1884-85
John H. Watson	1885-87
William N. Pritchard	1887-88
A. J. McDade	1888-91
John H. Watson	1891-95
Algernon S. Barbee	1895-1901
James C. MacRae, Jr.	1901-03
William S. Roberson	1903-07
Algernon S. Barbee	1907-11
William S. Roberson	1911-13, 1914-27
L.P. McLendon	1913-14
Zebulon Council	1927-33
John M. Foushee	1933-42
R.W. Madry	1942-49
Edwin S. Lanier	1949-54
Oliver K. Cornwell	1954-61
Roland McClamroch	1961-69
Howard Lee	1969-75
James Wallace	1975-79
Joseph L. Nassif	1979-85
James Wallace	1985-87
Jonathan Howes	1987-91
Kenneth Broun	1991-1995
Rosemary Waldorf	1995-2001
Kevin Foy	2001-present

In 1969, Howard Lee became the first African American mayor elected in a predominantly white southern town since Reconstruction. Lee was mayor of Chapel Hill from 1969 to 1975, during which, among other things, he helped to create a useful city busing system. His election was considered a step forward for the ongoing American civil rights movement, as it helped to set the stage for higher African American positions in government.



MORE ABOUT OUR HISTORY

BOOKS ON CHAPEL HILL

A Backward Glance: Facts of Life in Chapel Hill
by the Chapel Hill Bicentennial Commission

Chapel Hill 200 Years: "Close to Magic"
by the Chapel Hill Bicentennial Commission

Chapel Hill: A Pictorial History by Steven Stolpen

Chapel Hill: An Illustrated History by James Vickers

Orange County Trio: Histories and Tour Guides of Hillsborough, Chapel Hill and the University of North Carolina, and Carrboro
by Elizabeth Shreve Ryan

These Old Stone Walls by Philips Russell

The Southern Part of Heaven by William M. Prince

The Town and Gown Architecture of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1795-1975 by M. Ruth Little

RESOURCES FOR PRESERVATION

Historic District Commission

This commission of the Town of Chapel Hill serves to guide physical change within the historic districts of Chapel Hill in such a way as to promote, enhance, and preserve the character of the districts.

Information: (919) 968-2743

Preservation Society of Chapel Hill

610 East Rosemary Street
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
Phone (919) 942-7818
chpreservation@mindspring.com

Historic Districts

Chapel Hill's rich historic resources include four National Register Districts (UNC Campus, Rocky Ridge, West Chapel Hill, and Gimghoul); three local historic districts (Franklin/Rosemary, Cameron/McCauley, and Gimghoul); and numerous individual properties and structures listed on the National Register.

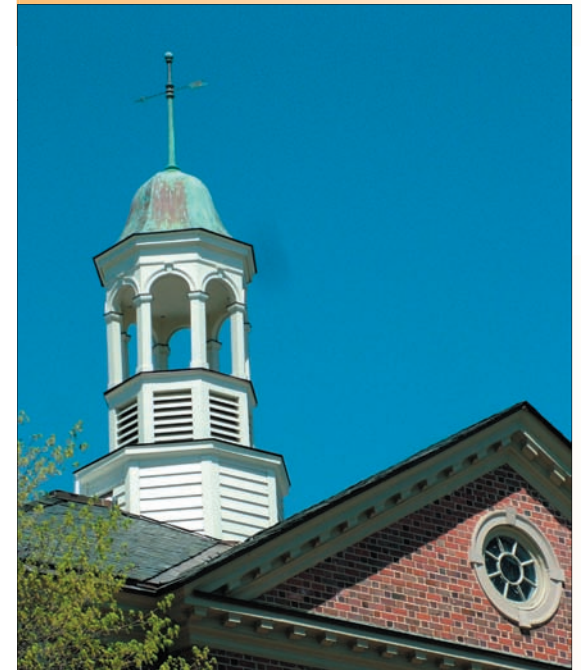
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HISTORY OF YOUR TOWN GOVERNMENT



“A PLACE OF GROWING AND PERMANENT IMPORTANCE”

This town, being the only seat of learning immediately under the patronage of the public, possessing the advantages of a central situation on some of the most public roads in the State, in a plentiful country, and excelled by few places in the world, either for beauty of situation or salubrity of air, promises, with all moral certainty, to be a place of growing and permanent importance.” – excerpt from letter by Gen. W.R. Davie in 1793

Chapel Hill and the University of North Carolina share a joint birthday – October 12, 1793. On that day the first lots were sold for the town that became Chapel Hill and the cornerstone was laid for the first building of the university, subsequently known as Old East. The histories of the town and university have been intertwined for more than two centuries.

The original map of the town, drawn in 1798, shows 24 two-acre lots and six four-acre lots wrapping around the fringes of campus. By 1859, the Town covered 820 acres forming a rectangle bounded roughly by Sunset Drive, Penwick Lane, Tenney Circle and Gimghoul Road. The Town retained these boundaries for almost a century with the first modern annexation taking place in 1950. The Town now encompasses about 21 square miles.

An 1879 charter amendment formally established a mayor position and invested it with police power, but it was not until 1895 that the modern Mayor/Council structure began to evolve. Over the next decades, the village also evolved in many ways. In 1940, it had the highest per capita standard of education in the United States with 2,155 Chapel Hillians over 25 possessing an average of 13.7 years of schooling.

Civic involvement is a valued tradition in our community. The 1930s were years of political turmoil in Chapel Hill which came to be recognized as the center of left wing activity in North Carolina. From the mid- to late-1960s, students at UNC became increasingly vocal in their protests of local (especially racial segregation) and national events. Students used marches, sit-ins, and strikes to express their opposition to what they perceived to be unjust policies. In protest of the Vietnam War, a weekly peace vigil in front of the Franklin Street Post Office began on Jan. 4, 1967, by Charlotte Adams and other members of the local chapter of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. The weekly vigils continued every Wednesday until 1973.

The Town Council in 2006 named the plaza the Peace and Freedom Plaza in honor of the energy and spirit of the thousands who have stood in the shadow of the Courthouse and exercised their rights to assembly and speech and have spoken out on issues as diverse as world peace, women's rights, gay rights, and racial justice.



Town Hall embodies the community forum where people come together to consider the pressing issues of the day, and work to find understanding, consensus and cooperation.

TOWN GOVERNMENT HISTORY

1793: Town lots auctioned (and cornerstone laid for first UNC building).

1819: The General Assembly authorizes a municipal government for Chapel Hill.

1851: Chapel Hill is incorporated.

1879: Charter amendment provides for a Mayor.

1889: Town makes it a misdemeanor punishable by a \$20 fine to cut a tree in town.

(And in the 1920-1950 era, several streets wound around trees).

1895: First elected Mayor, John H. Watson.

1921: First pavement laid along Franklin Street.

1922: First Town Manager, Eddie Knox.

1938: First Town Hall built on Rosemary Street.

1940: Population: 3,654

1943: Hargraves Recreation Center built.

1950: Town limits expanded for first time.

1963: Recreation tax levied.

1963-64: Chapel Hill Committee for Open Business is created for the purpose of integrating restaurants; later, name is changed to Citizens United for Racial Equality. Segregation ended with the Civil Rights Bill of 1964.

1971: New Town Hall built at 405 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

1974: Municipal bus service begins.

1979: Governing board is called Town Council.

1984: Town observes Martin Luther King Jr. Day as municipal holiday (federal holiday not observed until 1986)

1993: Entrance markers erected to mark the bicentennial.

2007: Population: 54,000

