

2024 Programs

- **January 22, 2024 - The Launching of the *SS Chapel Hill Victory* - and an Unexpected Encounter with the *SS Buncombe County*** - On December 4, 1944, the *SS Chapel Hill Victory* was launched at the Bethlehem-Fairchild Shipyard in Baltimore, Maryland, when Chapel Hill Native and UNC student Betsy Bowman christened the ship by breaking a bottle of champagne against the bow. Few today remember that a ship was named after the town of Chapel Hill during World War II, and even fewer remember that the ship had an encounter in the English Channel with another ship with a North Carolina connection – the *SS Buncombe County*. Chapel Hill Historical Society Treasurer Tom Jepsen talked about the ships, their role in World War II, and their “afterlives” as commercial vessels. You can view the recording of this program at <https://youtu.be/CDQnNyFdS0E>
- **February 10, 2024 – Lincoln High School and Its Closing – A Video Presentation by David Mason, Jr.** David Mason, Jr. is a lifetime resident of Chapel Hill, one of the leaders of the Lincoln High Alumni Association, an active member of St. Joseph CME, and a community historian. He is also a member of the "Chapel Hill Nine," a group of high school students who participated in demonstrations in support of civil rights and desegregation in the 1960s. Mr. Mason presented a video on the history of Lincoln High School, the effects of school desegregation, and the impact on the Northside community. There was a discussion of this powerful film afterwards.
- **March 9, 2024 – Orange County Cotton Mills & Generations of Mill Families -** Sarah Whitley Carrier, North Carolina Research and Instruction Librarian at the Wilson Special Collections Library used archival sources to discuss the history and impact of the Eno and Bellevue cotton mills in Hillsborough and the Durham Hosiery Mill (now known as Carr Mill) in Carrboro. She noted that the mills were transformative in the lives of their communities in the early 1900s. As evidence of their impact, in 1960 25% of Hillsborough workers were employed in textiles, with Eno and Bellevue employing 566 individuals. Ms. Carrier discussed the families that founded and ran the mills, the economic structure and the workers at the mills. Mill workers were overwhelmingly white due to segregation; Blacks made up only about 2% of the workforce and were limited to janitorial and other menial jobs. A copy of Ms. Carrier’s presentation with links to various archival materials is available here: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OGVzXLIEEPbLTZ8ThbUera5V3oq7qyz-/view?usp=sharing>. The YouTube recording of Ms. Carrier’s presentation is available here: <https://youtu.be/85knfjioQLU>.
- **April 13, 2024 - In Search of the Missing Steeple: Uncovering Chapel Hill’s Antebellum Past** - Amateur history historian Gordon Johnson discussed what he learned about 1850s Chapel Hill during a two-year search for the church steeple that was supposed to be there, but wasn’t. He discussed the history of the original University Methodist Church that was located on Rosemary Street, and how he and artist Michael

Brown researched aspects of the church and Chapel Hill life for Mr. Brown's painting of the original church. YouTube recording available here: <https://youtu.be/kGvSCGhZj4>.

- **August 20, 2024 - King's Mill Millstone/Oldham Family Celebration** - This program was held at the North Carolina Botanical Garden. We were able to combine a program on the history of the King's Mill, and the Morgan Creek flood of August 3, 1924 that washed it away, with a celebration of the Oldham family, the last owners of the mill, that drew family members from across the country. The millstone was recovered from the creek in 1998 by a group of Cub Scouts, and placed at the entry to the herb garden. The NC Botanical Garden has relocated the millstone to a new location. The millstone in its new location was dedicated to the memory of the Oldham family by Edith Williams Oldham, a poet and historian from Summerville, South Carolina. You can view photos of the event on our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/chapelhillhistoricalsociety>, and a video of the event at <https://youtu.be/aXf7iCKPkvw>).
- **September 15, 2024** - Presentation on Chapel Hill sports by Art Chansky. Chansky is a veteran sportswriter and author of several books on UNC basketball, including *Light Blue Reign* and *Blue Blood*. He has been writing and reporting in Chapel Hill for almost 50 years. Chansky has his own daily radio show on WCHL called Art Chansky's Sport Notebook, where he discusses recent sports topics that typically relate to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC) or local professional teams. His talk focused on his earlier book, *Game Changers*, and how coaches John Lotz and Dean Smith broke racial barriers by recruiting basketball star athlete Charlie Scott.
- **October 19, 2024** - Local radio enthusiast Ken Samuelson presented "The Golden Age of Radio," from the 1920s to the 1950s, and highlighted the inventors who made radio possible, and the performers who provided entertainment and news to millions over the airwaves. He focused on the use of radio in both World Wars to provide not only communications, but also propaganda. His presentation included a display of radios from ten decades, and a demonstration of two early phonographs. You can view a video recording of the event at <https://youtu.be/vM5Z5MH8x60>