

A Record of Our County's Past

The Harnett County Register of Deeds office holds a treasure trove of information on our county's history. Whenever somebody is born or dies in Harnett County, gets married or buys land, it's recorded by the Harnett County Register of Deeds.

Many residents use the Register of Deeds office for genealogical research, searching for records of family members who lived, married and died in Harnett County.

Harnett County was established in 1855, but many records weren't officially kept until decades later. Until 1913, most families kept records of births, deaths and marriages in the fam-

ily Bible.

A pair of fires in 1892 and 1894 destroyed many of the records the Harnett County Register of Deeds had at the time. Still, today the office maintains more than a million records.

The oldest records housed in the Harnett County Register of Deeds office are real estate records, the oldest of which date back to March 21, 1855, little more than a month after Harnett County was established. On that date, Wiley Holder claimed 22 acres of land on the south side of the Upper Little River.

Initially, residents claimed tracts of land in certain parts of the county. Rec-

ords show some of these claims were later disputed by other residents.

The first deed was recorded Oct. 18, 1877 when John Maxwell purchased a tract of land from A.C. Maxwell and his wife, Margaret Ann, along with three others, for \$140.

Determining the first recorded birth in Harnett County is a bit more complicated. The birth certificate designated No. 1 belongs to Catherine Isabel Shaw, who was born July 15, 1914 in Anderson Creek Township to 47-year-old Malcom Shaw, who worked as a laborer, and his wife, 34-year-old Flora Catherine Shaw, who worked as a housekeeper. The birth certificate was filed Aug. 28, 1914 by Midwife Ester McNeill of "Bunn Levill."

While Catherine Shaw's birth certificate is the first one listed in Harnett County's books, there are others which were filed weeks and even months earlier.

Making things even more complicated, after Harnett County began recording births in 1913, people could still register births from before that date.

The earliest birth recorded in the Harnett County Register of Deeds office is that of Cornelia Frances Pearson, who was born Nov. 19, 1865 in Neills Creek Township to William and Jane Lanier Pearson. A Delayed Certificate of Birth Registration was filed with the Harnett County Register of Deeds on July 25, 1946.

The earliest death recorded in Harnett County was that of Hugh McLean,



The Harnett County Register of Deeds houses more than a million records including birth, death and marriage certificates, and real estate transactions.

Keep up with Harnett County on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, and go to www.harnett.org/publicinfo for news releases, important updates, a community calendar and other information.



who died in Summerville on Feb. 9, 1899, seven days before his 89th birthday. According to the death certificate, McLean wasn't buried until August 1923. His death certificate was filed a month later.

The first marriage recorded in Har-

nett County was between Archie Hayes and Claracy Murchison on May 11, 1892, in Stewart Creek Township. They were married by the Rev. Richard Smith, a Free Will Baptist minister.

The Harnett County Register of Deeds also houses past minutes from

Harnett County Board of Commissioners meetings. Minutes date back to Monday, Sept. 4, 1876, when the then-three member board held its first meeting. The first order of business was appointing V. Prince chairman of the board.

Emergency Services Memorial Dedication is Sept. 11

Harnett County Emergency Services will hold a dedication ceremony for the Emergency Services Memorial Friday, Sept. 11 at 2 p.m. at Veterans Memorial Park at the Harnett County Governmental Complex.

The ceremony will recognize four emergency responders whose names are on the monument, along with their families.

Harnett County Emergency Management Coordinator Larry Smith designed the memorial and credited the Harnett County Fire Chiefs Association with wanting to do something to remember emergency responders who have given their lives in the line of duty.

More than \$15,000 was collected to pay for the memorial through various fundraisers.

The ceremony is open to the public and will include comments from County Commissioners Chairman Jim Burgin, Emergency Services Director Gary Pope and Fire Chiefs Association President Justin Riewestahl.



Still Time to Sign Up for Employee & Family 5k

The deadline to register for the *Strong Roots, Growing Stronger!* 5k Run/Walk for county employees and their families has been extended to Friday, Sept. 4.

The 5k will be held Saturday, Sept. 19 in Lillington, and will start and end in the Governmental Complex parking lot with registration beginning at 8 a.m. and the run/walk beginning at 9. The 5k is non-competitive and open to all Harnett County employees and their families for free.

To register, email Margie House at mhouse@harnett.org or Brian Haney at bhaney@harnett.org for a registration form and waiver. A separate form must be completed for each participant. Completed registration forms

should be taken to Harnett County Human Resources at 102 E. Front St., Lillington, or you can fax forms to (910) 814-0350 or scan and email forms to Margie or Brian. You may also email with any questions about the event.

All employees who register by the deadline will receive a free event T-shirt. Family members can purchase shirts for \$8 (for sizes up to XL) or \$10 (for sizes XXL and up).

Everyone who registers for the 5k will also be entered into a drawing for door prizes, which are being provided by local businesses and other organizations. You must be present to win a prize. There will also be other giveaways during the 5k event.

County Employees Eligible for Deals through Lenovo

Did you know Harnett County employees are eligible for discounts on computers and other items from Lenovo through the employee purchase site?

To view the deals, go to https://shop.lenovo.com/lenovousepp/us/en/landingpage/promotions/affinity-epp-flash-sale/?cid=EDM_20150526_NA_US_AFF_TI_MayFlash_EPP_JJ&RRID=215362620&esrc=EPPHR.

Once there, you will be required to type in a Serial Number and Last Name to view the deals. To get this information, send an email to support@harnett.org.

Department Spotlight

Harnett County Register of Deeds

The Harnett County Register of Deeds maintains the county's public records, which include vital records like births, deaths and marriages, and real estate records like deeds, maps and other documents.

The Harnett County Register of Deeds office is home to more than a million documents with around 30,000 new documents recorded each year.

In addition to vital records and real estate documents, the Register of Deeds also keeps documentation for all notaries in the county, as well as past Harnett County Commissioners minutes.

Kimberly Hargrove is the current Register of Deeds for Harnett County. She worked for the department for 12 and a half years before she was appointed Register of Deeds in 1997, replacing Gayle Holder. She has been reelected four times since then.

One of the biggest changes Hargrove has seen since coming to the office has been the switch from keeping paper copies of records to electronic filing. The Harnett County Register of Deeds was the first county department to go paperless in 2003.

"Years ago, when you wanted a copy of your birth certificate, we had to pull it from the vault and certify it," said Hargrove. "Now, you can just come to the front desk and we can print it on the computer."

The only paper records the office still keeps are military discharge records, because they are not public records and are stored in a vault in the office.

Some records can also be submitted electronically. Today, birth certificates can be submitted from the hospital to the Health Department to the Register of Deeds office through computers. Hargrove hopes to do the same with death certificates in the future.

On the real estate side, the office has started electronically recording (or e-recording) documents. The practice began several years ago.



Harnett County Assistant Register of Deeds Matthew Willis and Register of Deeds Kim Hargrove in the room that houses the county's real estate records.

"You can scan real estate documents and submit them electronically without ever coming into our office," said Hargrove.

She said about 40 percent of real estate documents are now e-recorded. The office also works with Harnett County GIS to record real estate documents and enter them into the county's tax system.

The changes have meant Register of Deeds staff receive more email and less foot traffic, though many attorneys still come in to pull real estate records and residents use the office to conduct genealogical research.

Though only records of residents who are born or die in Harnett County are housed in the Harnett County Register of Deeds office, residents are now able to walk into the office and get certified birth certificates that were filed anywhere in North Carolina from 1970 to the present day.

The office's technological improvements have inevitably meant less employees are needed to process the records. The office has gone from a staff of

13 to just eight, however Hargrove said this has been done through natural attrition as people have left or retired rather than through layoffs.

Even with automation, there is still plenty for Register of Deeds employees to do. The office has made efforts to put all of its records prior to 2003 online, which has meant scanning books in the vault and even going to Raleigh to make sure county records and state records match.

"People have no clue how much work we had to do to put these records into the system," said Hargrove.

Staff are also working on preserving the county's earliest real estate records, which have shown some deterioration over the years.

One of Hargrove's proudest accomplishments is that the Harnett County Register of Deeds office has become self-sufficient, with the fees collected by issuing records equaling the cost of staffing the office.

For more information on the Harnett County Register of Deeds, go to www.harnett.org/deeds.

Human Resources Corner

Know the 5 C's of Credit Before Applying for a Loan

Have you ever wondered what lenders look for when deciding whether or not to lend you money? They look at five key factors — character, capital, capacity, conditions and collateral — to determine your credit worthiness. Know the five C's of credit before you apply for your next loan. It could mean the difference between 'yes' and 'no.'

Capacity

Capacity is what lenders see as your ability to repay the loan. A lender must determine whether or not you can afford to repay your loan. To do so, they will likely consider factors such as your past and present debt payments as indicators of future payment ability in relation to how much money you bring home. The lender wants to make sure you have enough extra income to be financially secure after all of your bills are paid.

Capital

Capital refers to your net worth — the value of your assets (car, real estate, cash, and investments) minus your liabilities (debt). A lender needs to gain a clear picture of your personal financial situation. A higher net worth suggests you are able to remain financially secure in the event of a negative life event.

Character

It is important for the lender to have a general idea of your character. Factors such as your credit rating and borrowing history are weighed against more subjective considerations such as honesty and integrity. Lenders review all of the fac-

tors to form an assessment of your ability and willingness to repay your debt.

Collateral

Collateral refers to any asset (e.g. a home or cash) you promise as security against a line of credit. The lender will use this asset to cover the debt if you default on the loan. In some cases, lenders require a second signature in addition to collateral. This means the co-signer agrees to pay the loan if you can't. This gives the lender an extra level of security that the loan will be repaid.

Conditions

The lender will consider how outside market forces such as the state of the local economy will influence the conditions under which they lend you money. The lender may evaluate the financial health of your employer to try to gauge whether or not you will lose your job and become unable to repay the loan.

If approving your request, lenders will likely establish certain conditions by which they will lend you money such as the loan's purpose, the terms of the loan, interest rate and payment schedule, for example.

Lenders weigh all five factors carefully to create a more holistic picture of you and your financial habits before deciding to give you a loan. Keep this information in mind to be better prepared for the questions you may be asked the next time you apply for credit. To learn more about what lenders look for in a candidate, contact your financial advisor.

Upcoming Events

- The next Lillington Community Blood Drive will be held Thursday, Sept. 10 from 1 to 5:30 p.m. in the Harnett County Governmental Complex Commons. Organizers are encouraging donors to give blood in honor of the Sept. 11 commemoration. The blood drive is sponsored by Harnett County Public Health and Harnett County RSVP. To make an appointment, call 893-7578.
- The Harnett County Division on Aging will host a free workshop on "Aging in Place, Safely" Sept. 17 from 10 a.m. to noon in the Governmental Complex Commons Area. For more information or to register, call 893-7578.
- Harnett County Economic Development's annual Industry Appreciation Golf Tournament will be held Thursday, Oct. 8 at Chicora Country Club. The tournament, which recognizes industry and business in Harnett County, will begin at 1 p.m. and is followed by dinner in the clubhouse.
- Human Resources has added an informative brochure about Driver License renewal to the Public (P) Drive in the "Safety Information" folder.

If you know of any important events for October or future months that should be included in this newsletter, email bhaney@harnett.org.

Employee Health Fair is Oct. 8

Harnett County Human Resources will host its annual Harnett County Health Fair Thursday, Oct. 8 from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. in the Governmental Complex Commons Area.

The health fair is free for all employees and offers an opportunity to meet local health care providers and learn about some of the many services available in Harnett County.



Employees with the Harnett County Regional Water Treatment Plant in Lillington show off the Partnership for Safe Drinking Water's 10-Year Director's Award, which the plant received for maintaining higher than normal water filtration requirements for more than a decade. From left are Allen Messenger, Water Treatment Plant Supervisor Allan O'Briant, Aaron Thomas, Tracy Tant, Brian Watson and Brian Keas.

Harnett Water Treatment Plant Earns Award

Employees of the Harnett County Regional Water Treatment Plant in Lillington have been recognized for more than a decade of providing high quality water to the citizens of Harnett County.

Harnett County Public Utilities has been recognized by the Partnership for Safe Drinking Water with the 10-Year

Director's Award of recognition.

The recognition means that for the last 10 years, Harnett County Public Utilities has gone above and beyond normal water filtration requirements to provide customers with a higher quality product.

Water Treatment Plant Supervisor

Allan O'Briant said he is proud of his staff for their commitment.

"It's an honor to know we've been able to maintain these goals for 10 years," he said. "This is something all of our operators and employees have been striving for. Not many water utilities in North Carolina have achieved it."

Second Wings Over Harnett Fly-in Set for Oct. 17

Harnett County will host the second annual Wings Over Harnett fly-in Saturday, Oct. 17, 2015, at Harnett Regional Jetport at 615 Airport Road, Erwin.

Organizers hope to surpass last year's event, which saw more than 5,000 people converge on the jetport to watch the Golden Knights jump onto the airport runway, and to see a wide array of attractions including historic aircraft and military vehicles.

This year, Wings Over Harnett will feature a jump by the All Veteran Group, a group of active and retired

military veterans that uses parachute demonstrations and tandem jump experiences to bring positive attention to the military and veterans.

This year's event will honor veterans of the Vietnam War on the 50th anniversary commemoration of the war.

Other activities will include a classic car cruise-in, military displays, helicopter rides, activities for the kids, information booths and plenty of food vendors.

Another exciting element of this year's event is the Wings Over Harnett

5k, a unique 5k experience that will take place on the airport runway prior to the event. All proceeds from the 5k will go to support outreach by Harnett County Teens As Parents.

Wings Over Harnett is a free event for the public. Gates will open at 11 a.m. with the event running from noon until 5 p.m.

Stay up-to-date on event details at www.harnett.org/wings/.

For more information on the 5k or to register, go to www.runtheeast.com/calendardetail.php?id=493.



Cooperative Extension Builds Team With CrossFit

Employees with Harnett County Cooperative Extension took part in a unique teambuilding exercise last month at Crossfit 007 in Lillington.

During the one-hour introductory session, employees warmed up before completing circuits of sit-ups, push-ups and ring exercises, finishing with a 200-meter jog before beginning the exercises over again.

Employees were encouraged to participate while those who opted out gave their support as cheerleaders, cheering their co-workers on as they completed the exercises.

Harnett County Extension Direc-

tor Tyrone Fisher said the goal of the exercise was to “get to know each other better — including our strengths, weaknesses, character, personality and anything else that may create a better work environment and get the job done as we work to meet the needs of the citizens of Harnett County.”

He said he was pleased with the effort his employees put into the team building event.

Employees with the Harnett County Finance Officer and the County Manager’s Office were also invited to participate.



Warren Receives Employee of the Year Award

Child Support Supervisor Angela Warren with the Harnett County Department of Social Services was selected as “Employee of the Year” at the N.C. Child Support Conference in Asheville.

Social Services Director Paul Polinski announced the award and expressed gratitude to Warren for her hard work.

“I am very pleased to have employees like Angela working for Harnett County Social Services,” he said. “She is very deserving of this award, which is a reflection of the dedication and commitment she has for her work, for her coworkers and for the citizens of Harnett County. We are very proud of what this recognition means for her and for our Child Support office.”

Keep Up With What’s Happening In Harnett

Want to know about events taking place in Harnett County each month? Check out the Harnett County Community Calendar at www.harnett.org/publicinfo.

Harnett Employees Take Part in State of the County



Harnett County Deputy Manager Paula Stewart and Economic Development Director Nick Dula spoke to guests at the second annual State of the County event, hosted by the Lillington Chamber of Commerce. The event was held Aug. 20 at the Lillington Community Center. Harnett County Schools Superintendent Stan Williams also spoke at the event. Numerous Harnett County departments were also represented with booths displaying information on services they offer residents. Above are the event speakers — Williams, Stewart and Dula. Above right are Amanda Bader and Beth Blinson with Harnett County Engineering & Facility Maintenance. At right is Lynn Lambert with the Harnett County Soil & Water Conservation District.



Commissioners Welcome New Campbell President

Members of the Harnett County Board of Commissioners, along with Deputy County Manager Paula Stewart and County Attorney Dwight Snow, had breakfast Sept. 1 with Campbell University senior administration and new Campbell President Dr. J. Bradley Creed. During the breakfast, Dr. Creed shared his vision for the university and welcomed opportunities to partner with Harnett County to improve the lives of residents and educational outcomes for students. Commissioners Chairman Jim Burgin said he looks forward to working with Dr. Creed and Campbell. 'He is going to be an excellent president and a great partner for Harnett County,' Chairman Burgin said. 'We're excited about working with him and his senior staff, not only to move Campbell University forward, but to move Harnett County forward.'

