WILMINGTON N.C.
IN COLOR

Historical Buildings Coloring Book
For the Community, By the Community
Acknowledgements

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Greetings from Wilmington, N.C.
Bellamy Mansion

Location: 503 Market Street

Built: 1859 – 1861

Although it is a beautiful part of downtown Wilmington, many do not know about the full history of the Bellamy Mansion. Built for John D. Bellamy by free and enslaved African Americans from 1859-1861, the mansion also included a carriage house and “Negro House” for slave quarters that the family owned at the time. The slaves were able to have more interaction with the freed population, which allowed some to learn to read and write, as well as blacksmithing, carpentry and midwifery. The mansion and its slave quarters remain one of the most intact structures in the South, showcasing a specific period of African American history for Wilmington.
St. Stephen African Methodist Episcopal Church

Location: 501 North 5th Avenue

Built: 1867

St. Stephen A.M.E. was organized in 1865. African Americans made up the majority of the Methodist population in early Wilmington. During this time, African American worshipers at Front Street Methodist Episcopal Church were forced to sit in balconies while Whites could sit in the pews below as well as hold the leadership positions.

Reverend W.H. Hunter, a former slave who had come to Wilmington as a chaplain to the U.S. Colored Troops, led 642 African Americans to form their own church. In May 1867, the new congregation bought a piece of land on Red Cross Street between Fifth and Sixth, which is St. Stephen’s location to this day, and constructed a wood frame church. The brick Gothic Revival style church was designed by former slave Lewis Hollingsworth, and Daniel Lee, another member of the church, provided bricks for the project. The building was built entirely by members of the congregation who donated their time to its construction. In 1894, Hollingsworth added the spire and bell tower from plans by architect J.K. Vaughn. The church hosted many inspirational speakers, including Booker T. Washington in 1898 and President Taft in 1909. In 1913, St. Stephen’s Annex was the epicenter of serving the community by providing services for the elderly, a library, swimming pool, physician’s office and classrooms. The church continues to maintain its history while also continuing to build up the future by their involvement with the community.
St. Stephen African Methodist Episcopal Church
Thalian Hall

Location: 102 North 3rd Street and 310 Chestnut Street

Built: 1855-1858

Constructed from 1855-1858 by 19th century architect John Montague Trimble, Thalian Hall was designed to be a political and cultural center. The building was built by free and enslaved African Americans, and housed the town government, the library, as well as an "Opera House", seating 1,000 people, which was 10% of the population of the town at the time.

Life in Wilmington changed dramatically after the Civil War, and African Americans gained greater access to Thalian Hall. African American notables Frederick Douglas, Booker T. Washington, Marian Anderson and Caterina Jarboro, who was a Wilmington native and renowned opera singer, all appeared at Thalian Hall.

Thalian Hall changed dramatically over the years, but continues to be a cultural epicenter for Wilmington.
Thalian Hall
Williston High School

Location: 410 10th Street

Built: 1954

Founded by the abolitionist group American Missionary Association, Williston began as a school for freed slaves, and was named in honor of the Massachusetts button maker and philanthropist, Samuel Williston. The original building was on Seventh Street, a new building was constructed in 1916 on Tenth Street and Church Street, called Williston Industrial School. In 1923, Williston became the first accredited high school for African Americans in North Carolina. The school moved to the new building at 410 Tenth Street in 1954 after a lawsuit from Dr. Hubert A. Eaton and Dr. Daniel C. Roane, who fought for equality of education. At the time, they demonstrated that Williston High School was deprived of resources, as compared to the other New Hanover high schools. When the high school was constructed in 1954, the olderl school became today’s Gregory Elementary School. Williston, the top secondary educational institution for Wilmington African Americans, was no longer a high school in 1969, when the school board desegregated the school system. Williston is now a middle school. Some notable Williston High School graduates include, architect Robert Robinson Taylor, basketball player Meadowlark Lemon, tennis champion Althea Gibson, and many other business, political and professional leaders.