West End & Lyon Park Neighborhood History Coloring Book

CARROLL STREET BLOCK FESTIVAL
Durham, North Carolina

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Presented by West End/Lyon Park Neighbors
Pauli Murray Center for History and Social Justice
Duke Durham Neighborhood Partnership and Community Development
West End & Lyon Park Neighborhood History

The West End extended north to Smith Warehouse and south to Morehead Avenue. In the 1910s, African Americans began moving to the area south of Morehead and this became the Lyon Park neighborhood. Small business people, tobacco and domestic workers, teachers, ministers, and tradesmen made the community home. Many people who grew up “on the West End” remember it as a village, a tight knit community where “your parents would know what you did in school before you made it home.”

Across town from the larger African American Hayti neighborhood, west side parents joined together to create educational opportunities for their children. The West End graded school was built in the shadow of Liggett Tobacco Company’s Smith warehouse. A wooden structure that was hard to heat and susceptible to fire, it was replaced by the Lyon Park Elementary School, built on Halley Street and originally constructed with the help of Rosenwald funds. The rapid growth of the community required a larger school, built on the former brick yard in 1929. Closed after school desegregation in the 1970s, the building was reclaimed and renovated in the 1990s. It is again a hub of activity as the Center for Family, Recreation & Community Life at Lyon Park.

Neighbors joined together to advocate for street paving and other municipal amenities beginning in the 1930s and 1940s. They supported sports teams, community Easter egg hunts, social and garden clubs and many strong churches. They raised children to be activists, attorneys, business owners, artists and athletes.

Many current and former residents express deep pride of place when they claim their West End/Lyon Park roots.

The construction of the Durham Freeway, Highway 147, resulted in the demolition of homes in the northern section of the West End. The neighborhood now names West Chapel Hill Street as its northern border. The demise of the tobacco industry and Durham’s economic decline took its toll on the neighborhoods in the 1990s but it has experienced tremendous revival due to the resident led Southwest Central Durham Quality of Life Project. Investments in affordable housing, economic development, non-profit organizational stability and community celebrations and traditions over the past 20 years have again fostered tremendous pride of place among residents new and old.

The people whose stories fill the following pages are a part of that West End-Lyon Park pride. Their contributions and the contributions of so many other neighborhood residents are significant to Durham history. date to the 1880s when Durham was growing exponentially in response to the booming tobacco industry. Richard B. Fitzgerald--brickmaker, banker and real estate developer—purchased land on the western outskirts of town and established his brickyard on Chapel Hill Road (now Kent Street). He later subdivided much of his property between Kent and Maplewood Cemetery for single family homes.
West End Neighborhood Map
Yusuf Salim (1929-2008) lived & breathed jazz music. He arrived in Durham in 1974 from his native Baltimore, and almost single-handedly transformed this area into a thriving, vibrant jazz community. He lived on Carroll Street.
The West End and Lyon Park neighborhoods are traditionally African American enclaves that

William Marsh, Jr. (1927-2018) was a Durham attorney who used his legal skills to advance Durham’s movement for civil rights. Marsh was the first black chairman of the Durham County Board of Elections and North Carolina’s first black county elections chairman. In 1999, Marsh was inducted into the National Bar Association Hall of Fame in recognition of his work in defense of civil rights. He grew up on Carroll Street.
BLACK RESTAURANT OWNER

Peggy Tapp (1940-2018) managed and ran the Chicken Hut restaurant (formerly The Chicken Box), Durham's longest-serving black-owned restaurant. The Chicken Hut is famous amongst local residents for their fried chicken and traditional southern cooking. She grew up on Carroll and Kent Streets.
ACTIVIST, POET, EPISCOPAL PRIEST
Pauli Murray (1910-1985) was the first African American woman to become an Episcopal priest in 1977. She also co-founder of the National Organization for Women, was the first African American, gender-nonconforming Episcopal saint, and the first African American to receive her J.S.D. from Yale University. Murray always challenged the status quo when it came to gender, sexuality, and race. She spent most of her childhood on Carroll Street.
CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVIST & EDUCATOR

Benjamin Ruffin (1941-2006), a lifelong civil rights activist, was the first African American to chair the UNC Board of Governors. He was also the chair of the corporate roundtable of the National Black Caucus of State Legislators, president of the Ruffin Group, a Winston-Salem management and consulting firm, and an assistant to Governor Jim Hunt. He grew up on Carroll Street.
Ernie Barnes (1938-2009) is a leading African-American artists and is well-known for his unique style of visual movement and elongation. Ernie Barnes was also a professional football player, actor, and author. He is the first American professional athlete to become a noted painter. His family once lived on Carroll Street.
Daisy Gunn (1917-1985) was the first African American woman hired to work as a sales associate in a downtown Durham store after the Economic Boycott for Racial Equality. In 1969, Gunn was promoted from her custodial work to work in the center candy counter. She once lived on Kent Street.