

children bringing the dead out of the dark; they must be Moses' children freeing us from our own Folsom."

The spotlight falls on nikes at rest, after waltzing Luke the Drifter over oiled hardwood. Daddy came back from the drink box with a Coke, Tom's Peanuts, a cone of hand churned chocolate ice cream for Mama. He dropped peanuts down the slender neck of the bottle, baptizing them in dark syrup. Mama savored chocolate from the cone.

If Marna's heart had windows you'd see a house of broken panes. Daddy and Mama raise their hands grasping a life line, a saint pulling them into salvation as if they saw the light and were lifted on the wings of a snow white dove.
—Used by permission of Marty Silverthorne

From Fountain, take NC 222 for nine miles to its meeting with NC 43 and follow 43 another ten miles. It becomes Fifth Street and goes directly to the campus of East Carolina University and the Joyner Library. You are now at the literary epicenter of eastern North Carolina.

■ GREENVILLE

The early risers at the Pelt County Farmer's Market arrived yawning in ball caps and sweatpants, holey work shirts and flip flops, mulling about for local eggs and a few heads of lettuce or a sweet potato pie. Dozens of bodies moved from stall to stall in an easy, cordial way under the pavilion, out of the grasp of the morning's steamy heat. Somewhere in the din, a toddler asked for strawberries, even though it was past Labor Day. What was left of the season was mostly tough-skinned root food: Potatoes. Sweet potatoes. Squash and more squash. A few farmers sold hand-jarred pesto



Right to left: North Carolina Literary Review founding editor Alex Albright, founding art director Eva Roberts, and W. Keats Sparrow receive the Roberts Award for Literary Inspiration for their work in creating the Review. Presenting the award are Shelby Strother (then president of the Friends of Joyner Library) and the journal's current editor, Margaret Bauer. Photograph by Jim White, © 2007; courtesy of North Carolina Literary Review.

and comb-in-honey.—From "Freezer Burn," by Erica Plouffe Lazure, used by permission of the author.

A graduate of East Carolina University's master's program in creative writing, Erica Plouffe Lazure offers a culinary oxymoron. The combination of hand-jarred pesto and comb-in-honey captures perfectly the simultaneous presence of new school and old school in Greenville. Once a major tobacco center, this increasingly cosmopolitan college town has experienced growth at warp speed. The new industries are education and medicine. Nevertheless, there is yet the occasional scent of livestock and tobacco in the air, and if you're traveling by car, running up on some lumbering mechanical farm implement with giant studded tires is a predictable hazard on Pitt County back roads.

East Carolina University has built an impressive literary program. The ditch work began in the 1950s, under the muscle of novelist Ovid Pierce (see Tour 12) and the imagination of Kinston-born Keats Sparrow, a scholar of early North

Carolina literature who served as chair of the English department for many years.

In 1992, Sparrow tapped Alex Albright to become founding editor of the *North Carolina Literary Review*. The result is an annual compendium of literary news, fresh scholarship, poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, and reviews. Sparrow's dream was a publication to serve writers that would parallel the *North Carolina Historical Review*. He got his wish and more. The *North Carolina Literary Review*, now edited by Margaret Bauer, has become as important to the state's writers as Grier's Almanac once was to rural farmers. The journal *Tar River Poetry*, published for more than thirty years, also comes out of East Carolina. The current editor, Luke Whisnart, is a poet and fiction writer whose 1992 novel, *Watching TV with the Red Chinese*, was made into a movie in 2008. *Down in the Flood*, a collection of his short stories, published in 2006, draws upon the local landscape and eastern North Carolina weather for some of its drama.

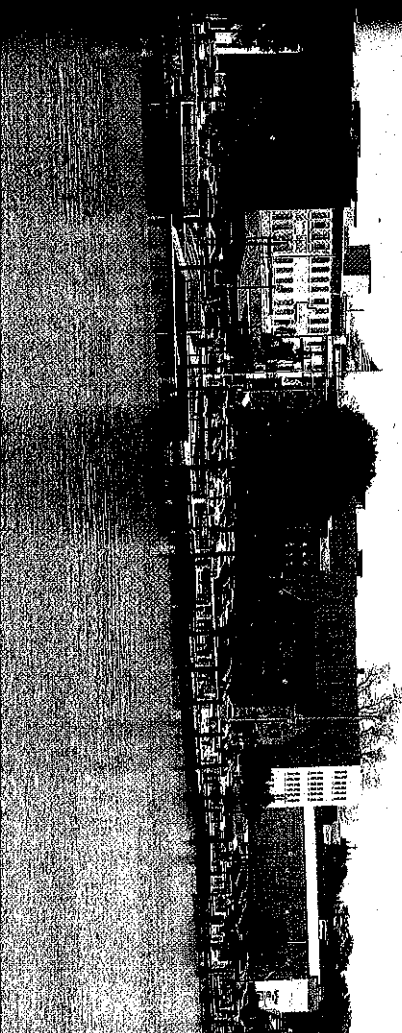
Maury York, who works in Special Collections at East Carolina University's Joyner Library, wanted to go beyond the production of publications and came up with the idea for an Eastern North Carolina Literary Homecoming. First held in 2004, it's now an annual festival sponsored by the library.

Beyond the university, Greenville's pleasures are many—galleries, diverse restaurants, a large river park on the banks of the Tar, several museums, and a number of neighborhoods with homes on the National Register of Historic Places. Fifth Street is a great place to start your exploration. The Pitt County Arts Council at Emerge Gallery at 404 South Evans Street offers classes for children and adults that focus on the visual arts; it's also a nice stop right in the heart of downtown Greenville.

From the East Carolina campus, head out of town on Fifth Street to its end at Tenth Street and turn left. This road (NC 33) runs sixteen miles to Chocowinity, parallel to the Tar River. In Chocowinity, turn left onto U.S. 17 Business North and soon you'll cross a bridge—the most attractive gateway into the Beaufort County seat of Washington.

■ WASHINGTON

Where the Tar becomes the Pamlico River sits Little Washington, as it is often called, founded in 1776. Playwright Henry Churchill DeMille, whose career in the New York theater was short but successful, was born here in 1853. Before his untimely death from typhoid fever at the age of thirty-nine, DeMille, with his writing partner, David Balasco, wrote some of the most popular plays of the nineteenth century, including *The Wife and Lord Chumley*. His son, Cecil Blount



The Tar River becomes the Pamlico River at "Little Washington," as it is commonly known, in Beaufort County. The father of novelist William Styron grew up here, and his father, Alpheus Styron, once ran a moonlight excursion boat from Washington to the Outer Banks.

DeMille, turned *Lord Chumley* into a silent film in 1914 starring Lillian Gish—one of seventy movies over the course of his career. Cecil B. DeMille would go on to found Paramount Studios.

Cecil's younger brother, William, followed more closely in his father's footsteps, working as a successful playwright until Cecil coaxed him into the movie business in Hollywood. A building with the family name inscribed at the top of its facade is located in downtown Washington, at the corner of Market Street and Ward Lane. The DeMille family plot, where Henry is buried, is in Washington's Oakdale Cemetery.

Several purveyors of cruises along the Washington waterfront offer an enchanting view of town from the river. The North Carolina Estuarium, also on the waterfront, provides environmental education in the form of exhibits, aquaria, and environmental artworks that explain a range of natural phenomena. The Inner Banks Artisans Center, at 158 West Main, is an innovative reuse of an old building that now houses studios, galleries, and shops run by artists.

This concluding volume of the *Literary Trails of North Carolina* trilogy takes readers into an unexplored land of pale sand, dense forests, and expansive lakes, through towns older than our country and rich in cultural traditions. Here, writers reveal lives long tied to the land and regularly troubled by storms and tales of hardship, hard work, and freedom. *Trails* tours lead readers from Raleigh to the District of Columbia, the Outer Banks, and across the Sandhills as they explore the region's connections to over 250 writers of fiction, poetry, plays, and creative nonfiction. In the way, Georgann Eubanks brings to life the stories, rich literary heritage as she explores these writers' connection to place and reveals the region's vibrant local culture. Excerpts invite readers into the region's worlds, and web links offer resources for further exploration. Featured authors include A. B. Spellman, Gerald Barrax, Charles Chesnut, Clyde Edgerton, Philip Gerard, Kaye Gibbons, Hammett Jordan, McCorkle, Michael Parker, and Blaine Smith.

GEORGANN EUBANKS is a writer, editor, and consultant to nonprofit groups across the country. She is director of the Table Rock Writers Workshop, a founder of the North Carolina Writers' Network, and is past chair of the North Carolina Historical Council.



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