



# THE WENDELL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## GOLD LEAF NOTES

Page 1

Vol. 1

April, 2022

### WELCOME

Here we are in 2022. As the saying goes, “If I had known I was going to live so long, I would have. . . .” well, you know the rest. The Wendell Historical Society has been in operation since 1968 and, fortunately, we had an excellent slate of officers elected at the Fall business meeting to guide us from 2022 through 2024. The Board for the Wendell Historical Society also, selected members to serve on the Board. These officers and board members are committed to taking care of the Wendell Historical Society for the present and to assist in planning for the future.

#### Officers For 2022 Thru 2024 are:

President:	Peedie Edwards
Vice President:	Mary Jo Cashion
Secretary:	Martha Ramsey
Treasurer:	Ray Hinnant
Past President:	Hugh Cashion

#### Board Members are:

Keith Acree
Tracey Caldwell
Dean Castleberry
Linda Hess
Chris Smith

### ABOUT OUR PRESIDENT

Peedie Edwards became the President of the Wendell Historical Society, in 2020. It was a year like no other with Covid causing activities to be put on hold. Who knew that “hold” would last so long. Through it all Peedie kept a positive attitude and encouraged all of us to just hang in there. Peedie is someone you can depend on to volunteer, not only with food, but with his presence, and, his unending support. He has that whatever you need, I’ll help, outlook.

These traits have not only earned the respect of the WHS but were recognized this year by the Chamber of Commerce and the Town of Wendell. Peedie Edwards was awarded the Annual Mayor’s Award.



*Peedie Edwards with Mayor Gray*

Wendell Historical Society  
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[www.wendellhistoricalsociety.com](http://www.wendellhistoricalsociety.com)



### 2022 PROGRAMMING

The Vice President of the WHS is responsible for managing quarterly programs during his/her term in office. Mary Jo Cashion, our present Vice President has scheduled a variety of interesting programs for the coming year.

On March 17, 2022 Bridgers Coal and Supply, Tabernacle Baptist Church and Riley Hill Baptist Church included the WHS in the anniversaries. Bridgers Coal and Supply and Tabernacle Baptist Church are celebrating their 100<sup>th</sup> anniversaries. Riley Hill Baptist Church is celebrating its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The Wendell Historical Society is happy to be a part of each of the entities' celebrations. Best wishes for many more anniversaries to come.



*Pictured from left to right:*

*Olivia Baker Cooke of Tabernacle Baptist Church;  
Joyce Crews Hodge of Riley Hill Baptist Church;  
Glenn Bridgers of Bridgers Coal and Supply; and,  
Peedie Edwards.*

The next program is a "Walk Down Mainstreet". This will be a walking tour of the Main Street with information presented on business, past and present, that have contributed to Wendell's history.

In the fall, Deans Eatman will present a program on one of his ancestors, Applewhite Richardson. Mr. Richardson could be looked upon as the father of Wendell in one way. He was married 3 times and fathered 22 children. We look forward to that program.

In case you are wondering, there will be a REVERSE RAFFLE again this year. Last year was a great success. There was a \$10,000 winner.

*WHS Treasurer, Ray Hinnant,  
presents the grand prize to the winner  
of the 2021 Reverse Raffle winner,  
Wallace Johnson. Also pictured is  
Hanna Johnson*



You will receive a notice of date, time, and location for all of our programs and events.



### MUSEUM UPDATE

The Wendell Museum is the most important project the WHS has undertaken. Many hours of researching topics, collecting materials and lead us to the planning and implementing of the exhibits. If you are expecting to see something that looks like grandma's attic, you will be surprised. Grandma doesn't live here anymore. The Museum will provide a sleek, professional, and educational view of our past. The WHS believes that all who visit will be amazed and proud of the museum, and that it will be an asset for the Town of Wendell.

The "ribbon cutting" is scheduled for Friday, June 17, 2020 at 11 o'clock at the Museum at 122 East Second Street.

### RUTH HARROD MORGAN

*By Carol R. Hinnant*

While my husband, Ray, and I were researching Wendell organizations for the Wendell Museum, I became interested in one of its first members of the Wendell Wake County Branch of the NAACP, Mrs. Ruth Harrod Morgan. I set out on my own personal journey to discover as much as I could about the woman. With the help of Mary Perry, Patricia Merritt, Carolyn Sims, Geraldine M. Johnson and articles by Sue Todd Holmes, I came to realize what an important individual Mrs. Morgan was to the African American Community, the community of faith, to the young people she touched and therefore to the greater Wendell community.



Mrs. Morgan was born December 7, 1902 in Newport News, Virginia. She attended Franklinton Christian College where she met and later married Mr. Wayman Morgan of Wendell, NC. Mr. Morgan was a local businessman.

It has been said, and I believe this, that many people are given the ability to make positive change happen, but few of us have the courage to do anything. Ruth Harrod Morgan had that courage and applied it to areas that would have far reaching to benefits.

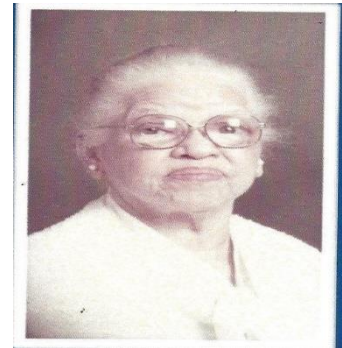
In the era of JIM CROW when African Americans were blocked from voting at every possible opportunity, Mrs. Morgan beat the system and the politicians at their own game. Mrs. Morgan wanted to vote for Franklin D. Roosevelt for president. She was told she could not vote unless she could write a section of the Constitution. Mrs. Morgan went home, memorized the section. When she returned to the voting place, she wrote out the section verbatim, with no errors. She was the first Black person to register and vote in Wendell or eastern Wake County.

Any action by a woman in the mid-20th century, except to be barefoot and pregnant, was met with derision. Being a Black woman made it even harder. Being a woman, and Black, did not deter Mrs.



Morgan. She worked to register voters, worked for civil rights and was a leader in establishing the Wendell Wake Chapter of the NAACP.

She worked tirelessly with young people and shared her faith through music and personal witness. Mrs. Ruth Harrod Morgan died at on January 22, 2003 at the age of 100. A headstone was erected at her grave at Pleasant Grove Baptist Church Cemetery on October 15, 2021. A celebration in honor of her legacy was sponsored by the Wendell-Wake County Branch of the NAACP. The Wendell Historical Society contributed and participated in the event.



I am sorry that I did not personally know Mrs. Morgan, but as her story is shared, I hope that others will become familiar with her life of service, and, that her kind of courage will be a standard that we all will strive for. Wendell's history is better for having Mrs. Ruth Harrod Morgan as a home town hero.

### **GOLD LEAF FARMER NEWSPAPERS**

Old copies of the Gold Leaf Farmer newspapers were sent to Newspapers.com last August to be included in their on-line archives. The WHS has been notified that these valuable documents are now available through the Newspapers.com service.

If you have papers to add to the collection, please contact Mary Jo Cashion, (919) 744-5442 or [mjcashion@bellsouth.net](mailto:mjcashion@bellsouth.net).

### **A LEAF OF HISTORY**

Prior to the arrival of the English, our area was a part of the Tuscarora Nation. As a part of British colonization, Wake County was created in 1770 by annexing parts of Johnston County, Cumberland County and Orange County. The County was named for Margaret Wake, wife of Colonial Governor William Tryon.

The population of the county began to increase in the early 1800's but it saw significant growth in the 1870. The increase was due to the "Granville Wilt" a tobacco disease that hit Granville County causing many farmers in that area to sell their lands and move to this area. After clearing timber, the area became farm land and the Town of Wendell was born.

Citizens of Wendell asked the legislature to officially recognize the town. This was approved on March 6, 1903. The legislature also appointed the first Mayor, Mr. Burrell Baker.

Consider a visit the Wendell Museum to discover many facts about the charming, vibrant, industrious Town of Wendell.