

QUEEN CITY BECKONS CONFERENCE-GOERS

by

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The 37th Biennial Conference meeting in the White House Inn this October will mark the third time in its history that N.C.L.A. has met in Charlotte. N.C.L.A. was founded in 1904, and in the fall of that year held its first conference in Charlotte. Again in 1943, the association met here. This time the meeting was at the Hotel Charlotte (which became the White House Inn in 1966). Because of wartime activities, the conference was very streamlined, lasting only two days. The program topic was the timeless one of "Planning for the Future of Libraries in North Carolina." Interesting sidelights of that conference were the presentation to incoming President Dr. Susan Grey Akers of a gavel made by an industrial arts student of the then East Carolina Teachers' College from the wood of a campus holly tree, and the first meeting of the Staff Organization Round Table at an N.C.L.A. meeting.

The City of Charlotte, founded in 1768, was named for Queen Charlotte, wife of King George III of England. Mecklenburg County, founded in 1762, was named for Queen Charlotte's former home in Germany.

Charlotte, or the Queen City as it often calls itself, has been too busy preparing for the future to preserve much of its past. There are no remaining evidences to mark the earlier historical events such as the visit of George Washington to the Cook's Inn on West Trade Street in 1791, and Liberty Hall, an early academy incorporated in 1777 by the first legislature of the State of North Carolina.

The signing of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence on May 20, 1775 and the Battle of Charlotte on September 25, 1780, are commemorated in a plaque at the intersection of Tryon and Trade Streets in downtown Charlotte. The latter event gave rise to the name "Hornets' Nest" from tactics used by the Mecklenburgers. Unfortunately, it is practically impossible for visitors to view the plaque because of heavy traffic.

Visitors to Charlotte, may, however, enjoy visiting Sugar Creek Church, considered to be the oldest of our churches. While the present building dates only to 1870, the churchyard contains three graves from earlier periods. It is known that the church had a building as early as 1759. Another very early church is Hopewell Church, one of the seven important churches of the Colonial period.

Many of the very early homes of Charlotte were rock houses. The Hezekiah Alexander house, which is open to the public, is an authentic house of this period, having been built in 1774.

Turning to Charlotte's present and its plans for the future, visitors to the state's most populous city may enjoy a ride through the urban renewal area near the central business district, taking note of the impressive and useful construction achieved when private and government funds work to remove slums from the heart of a city.

Academic librarians will enjoy visiting the area's institutions of higher education: the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Davidson College, Queens College, Johnson C. Smith University, and Central Piedmont Community College.

If an extra treat for you as a conventioneer is to be a gourmet binge, Charlotte can provide that. For a foreign flavor, you may enjoy the special restaurants that provide Polynesian, Oriental, Italian, kosher or German food and atmosphere. Charlotte also offers several fine steak houses and restaurants.

There are two dinner theatres where, with advance reservations, librarians may enjoy an evening of dinner and a play on either Wednesday or Saturday, and not interfere with their convention plans — the Country Dinner Theatre of Charlotte near Pineville, and the Barn Dinner Theatre near Matthews.

For late evening fun and enjoyment, there are several lounges, most with live entertainment.

Many women look forward to a visit to another town as a chance to shop. In addition to the well-known stores, downtown Charlotte offers a variety, from the Casual Corner to Arnolde's Tall Fashions. Away from the center of town, there are such shops as a really 'camp' gift shop, Stowe Moody's; Treasures Unlimited, displaying medium-priced to expensive antiques; and Fancy That, featuring Mod and way-out fashions.

As this is written, it is too early to know what activities will be featured at the Auditorium, the Coliseum, Park Center, Mint Museum of Art, Children's Nature Museum, and Memorial Stadium, but a later check of these will show what athletic or cultural fare will be served during your convention weekend.

Charlotte is also known as a City of Churches, with a great variety of denominations represented for your Sabbath.

In making your plans for the convention, plan to spend some extra time in Charlotte to take in many of the pleasures and activities offered by the Friendly City.

1. Mrs. Moreland has been serials librarian, Mitchell Memorial Library, Mississippi State University, since July 1. She was formerly serials librarian at Charlotte Public Library.