



# Historic Civil Rights Commemorations Task Force



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# HCRC Task Force Charge



Create a timeline that identifies people, places, and events significant in the Town's civil rights struggle

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# HCRC Task Force Members

**Ken Broun**, Task Force Chair

**Nancy Oates**, Town Council Member

**Donna Bell**, Town Council Member

**Sally Greene**, former Town Council Member

**James Britt**, Chapel Hill Nine family member

**Reginald Hildebrand**, retired UNC History Professor

**Dianne Jackson**, NAACP representative

**David Mason**, Chapel Hill Nine Member

**Danita Mason-Hogans**, Chapel Hill Nine family member

**OJ McGee**, UNC Black Caucus representative

**Mae McLendon**, St. Paul's AME representative

**Jim Merritt**, Chapel Hill Nine Member and former Town Council Member

**Cecelia Moore**, UNC Historian

**Megan Stanley**, Marion Cheek Jackson Center representative

**Albert Williams**, Chapel Hill Nine Member and former Town of Chapel Hill firefighter

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# HCRC Task Force Process

Working Group



Research & draft  
timeline

Chapel Hill Nine  
Subcommittee



Develop  
recommendations

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# HCRC Task Force Guiding Values

- Inclusive & Collaborative
- Transparent & Ethical
- Timely

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# HCRC Task Force Outcomes/Goals

- Deliver to Council a living document, open to revision and new information
- Develop a collaborative process for collecting community history
- Design mechanism for interactive community engagement
- Develop a set of recommendations for next steps

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# HCRC Task Force Guiding Questions

How do  
we...

- Create a shared history that is inclusive and open to new information?
- Reconcile conflicting accounts of events?
- Contextualize this work in history?
- Evaluate items for inclusion in the timeline?
- Share our work with current and future generations?

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# HCRC Task Force Community Input

**Share your experiences with us.  
Tell us your stories.**

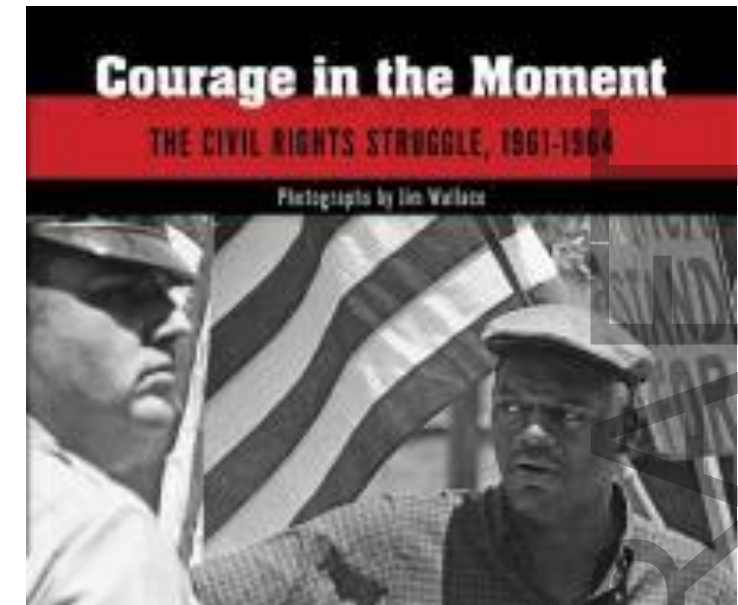
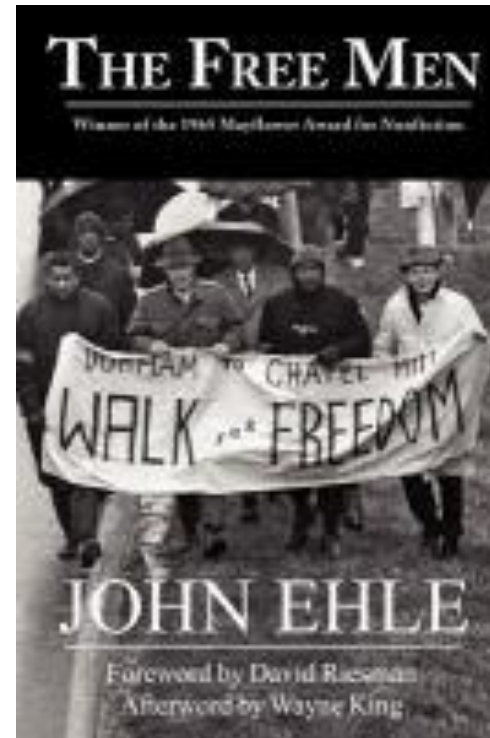
[chapelhillpubliclibrary.org/civilrights](https://chapelhillpubliclibrary.org/civilrights)

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# Findings: Written History

- 1963-1964: well documented in *The Free Men and Courage in the Moment*
- Movement led by university students & faculty



# Findings: Our Community Teaches Us

- Indigenous movement with long community history
- Direct action powered by young high school students in 1960
- Largely unrecognized
- Led the way for later protests in 1963-1964



# Findings: Chapel Hill Nine

Clarence Merritt Jr., 17

Douglas Perry, 17

James Merritt, 16

Harold Foster, 18

Dave Mason Jr., 17

William Cureton, 18

Albert Williams, 16

Earl Geer, 16

John Farrington, 17

## Negro Teenagers Are Found Guilty Of Trespassing

Nine Negro teenagers charged with trespass as the result of a spontaneous sit-in demonstration at Colonial Drug Store last month were found guilty in Chapel Hill Recorder's Court Tuesday.

Each of the nine was fined \$10 and costs and given a suspended 30-day jail sentence.

The teenagers, who were defended by Durham attorney Floyd B. McKissick and Lisbon C. Barry, are Clarence Merritt Jr., 17; Douglas Perry, 17; James Merritt, 16; Harold Foster, 18; Dave Mason Jr., 17; William Cureton, 18; Albert Williams, 16; Earl Geer, 16; and John Farrington, 17.

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# HCRC Task Force: Recommendations

## Share and Engage: Display Timeline throughout the Town

**February 1**  
**THE SPARK**  
Chapel Hill campus debate among students at Lincoln High School

**February 28**  
**COMMUNITY ORGANIZING**  
Throughout the Spring  
First meeting at Robinson Street Community Center leads to the formation of the Chapel Hill Citizens Committee for Racial Equality (CCRE). Harold Foster is elected chair. CCRE members organize picketing of segregated businesses.

**February 29**  
**COMMUNITY ORGANIZING**  
800 Timesquare place a full-page ad in the Chapel Hill Weekly in support of members who picketed.

**1960**  
**MOVIE THEATERS PICKETING AND PROTESTS**  
Throughout the year, protesters focus on integrating Chapel Hill theaters. This movement becomes known as Citizens for Open Movies.

**1961**  
**MOVIE THEATERS DESEGREGATE**  
The picketing movement results in Chapel Hill movie theaters officially desegregating.

**1962**  
**SUMMER '62 PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS VOTE #1**  
First vote from the Board of Aldermen on the public accommodations ordinance. Board of segregation in one business does not vote. CCR members organize series of new civil disobedience activities.

**1963**  
**VIOLENT BACKLASH**  
Quinton Baker, along with other protesters, charged with Chrono and arrested at a protest at the Roper Inn. He was taken to the hospital with first-degree burns and had his stomach pumped. Police violence at Watts Hotel demonstrations.

**1964**  
**FREEDOM FOR CHRISTMAS**  
Approximately 200 arrests after protests, including Karen Parker who was part of a group picketing at Lee's restaurant. Of note, demonstrators never agreed to press charges against any perpetrators of the violence.

**1964**  
**CIVIL RIGHTS ACT**  
1964 Civil Rights Act passed by Congress. Black members of the community test civil rights law by visiting formerly segregated eateries. Denial of service and attacks at two eateries: Watts Grill and Clarendon's Bar & Grill.

**1965**  
**KAREN PARKER**  
Karen Parker, the first African American woman undergraduate at UNC and active member of the movement, graduates with a degree in journalism.

**1965**  
**HOLY WEEK FAST**  
Friday "Holy Week" fast is held on the post office steps to protest the nearly 20 segregated businesses in Chapel Hill. The fast is covered by The New York Times every day. The Ku Klux Klan holds a rally of about 700 people at the town's edge on the seventh day.

**1966**  
**LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL**  
Lincoln High School closes. All students attend the newly constructed integrated Chapel Hill High School. Black students are forced to give up their school name, their mascot, their principal, their coach, and their school trophies.

**1968**  
**"RIOT" AT CHAPEL HILL HIGH SCHOOL**  
From SCRP interview with Walter Durham: "Durham describes the actual "riot" at Chapel Hill High School in 1968. Durham, along with several of his classmates, used chairs to lock down the school. Durham says that what they sought with this demonstration was to have more of a voice at Chapel Hill High School. He again emphasizes the family atmosphere that had characterized Lincoln High School and indicates that they hoped to regenerate a similar feeling at Chapel Hill High School by drawing attention to the fact that they wanted to be included."

**1968**  
**SEPTEMBER 1**  
Albert Williams, among the youngest of the original Lincoln High School demonstrators, is hired as the first African American firefighter for the Town of Chapel Hill.

**1968 - 1969**  
Ongoing protests at Chapel Hill High School. Student body voted to change the name of their mascot to the Tigen, the former Lincoln High School mascot.

**1969**  
**ELECTION OF HOWARD LEE**  
Lee became the first African American elected mayor in a predominantly white southern town since Reconstruction. Lee went on to win his next two mayoral elections by large margins. He also ran unsuccessfully for Congress in 1972 and Lieutenant Governor in 1976. He was elected to the North Carolina state senate, serving there from 1990 to 1994 and again from 1996 to 2002. In 2003, Lee became the first African American elected by the North Carolina Board of Education to be its chair.

**FOR MAYOR OF CHAPEL HILL**  
Howard Lee, campaign address: 1000 N. Salisbury Street, Durham, NC 27701. Lee was born in Durham, NC. He graduated from Duke University in 1964. He was elected Mayor of Chapel Hill in 1969. He was re-elected in 1972 and 1976. He was elected to the North Carolina State Senate in 1990 and served until 1994. He was elected to the North Carolina Board of Education in 2003 and served until 2007.

# HCRC Task Force: Recommendations

Share and Engage: Develop an interactive, engaging online history



Learn From the Past, Organize for the Future, Make Democracy Work

discover SNCC



PEOPLE

TIMELINE

OUR VOICES

INSIDE SNCC

MAP

TODAY

RESOURCES

Town of Chapel Hill | 405 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. | [www.townofchapelhill.org](http://www.townofchapelhill.org)



# HCRC Task Force: Recommendations

## Share and Engage: Develop Community Conversation Series

### BEYOND THE HEADLINES

### CONFEDERATE MONUMENTS HISTORICAL MEMORY & FREE SPEECH

A panel discussion

**WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 30**  
**6:00 IN MEETING ROOM B**



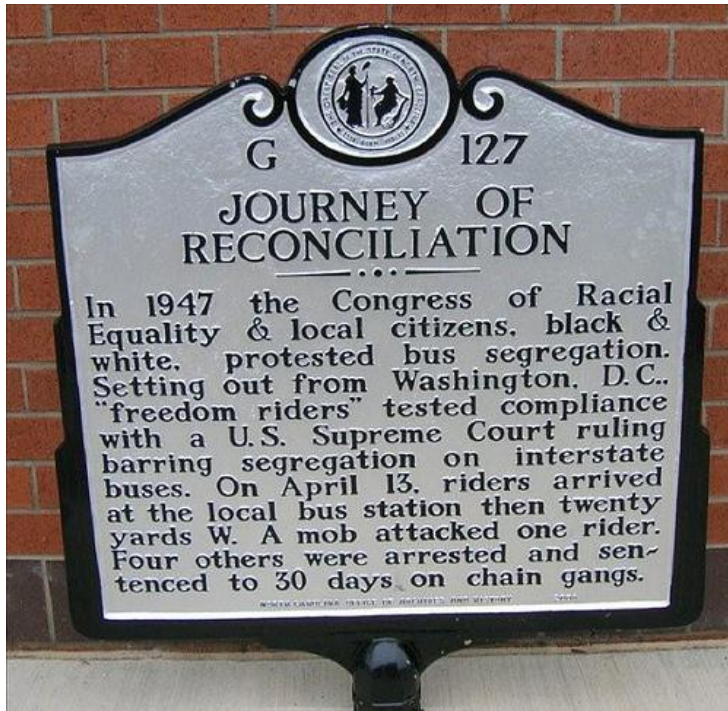
#### PANELISTS:

Chris Blue  
Danielle Christmas  
Jamie Fiocco  
William Sturkey  
Harry Watson  
Edwin M. Yoder, Jr  
Moderated by  
Lloyd Kramer



# HCRC Task Force: Recommendations

Commemorate: Authorize Chapel Hill Nine Subcommittee to plan historical marker



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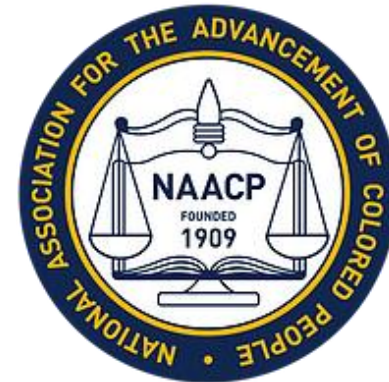


# HCRC Task Force: Recommendations

Commemorate: Collaborate with other community organizations



The Mighty Tigers!  
Chapel Hill, North Carolina



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# HCRC Task Force: Recommendations

## Commemorate: Consider Harold Foster for Peace and Justice Plaza

We were troublemakers. We *questioned* authority and *challenged* it head on. . . we were *disobedient* to that extent, disobedient to those who told us to be obedient, but obedient to our own consciences as it were.

—Harold Foster



# Recommended Council Action

That the Council adopt this Resolution to:

- accept the task force's report,
- dissolve the full task force,
- authorize the Chapel Hill Nine Subcommittee to continue its work and make a recommendation to Council in early Fall 2018, and
- authorize the Town Manager to review the reports, identify connections, and discuss potential next steps.

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