

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA**  
**SESSION 2005**

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**HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION DRHJR80110-LG-97A (02/24)**

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Sponsors: Representative Williams.

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Referred to:

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1 A JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THE EARLY RESIDENTS OF THE TOWN  
2 OF BATH ON THE TOWN'S THREE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY.

3 Whereas, the Town of Bath, located between Bath Creek and Back Creek in  
4 Beaufort County, was settled by Europeans and their slaves in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century; and

5 Whereas, during the Colonial era, Bath was originally located in Bath  
6 County, which later became Beaufort, Hyde, and Craven Counties; and

7 Whereas, by 1704, local residents had made plans to establish a town in Bath  
8 County that would serve as an important commercial and political center for the colony;  
9 and

10 Whereas, Bath was incorporated by the General Assembly on March 8, 1705,  
11 becoming the State's first town; and

12 Whereas, the Town was laid out by John Lawson, who served as one of the  
13 Town's first commissioners and later served as surveyor-general for the Lords  
14 Proprietors; and

15 Whereas, in 1709, John Lawson published a book entitled, "A New Voyage  
16 to Carolina," which described his journey through the colony; and

17 Whereas, on September 27, 1706, the first lots for the Town were sold and by  
18 the end of October of that year, a total of 25 people had purchased lots, including  
19 Nathaniel Wyersdale, Richard Odeon, Jr., Maurice Luellyn, Thomas Cary, Christopher  
20 Gale, George Birkenhead, Thomas Peterson, John Porter, John Worsley, John Lawson,  
21 David Perkins, Henry Robinson, Simond Worsley, Nicholas Daw, James Beard, Daniel  
22 Mathews, Otho Russel, Giles Shute, Lyonell Reading, Thomas Sparrow, Thomas  
23 Worsley, James Walsh, Edmund Pearces, and Joel Martin; and

24 Whereas, in 1708, Bath had 50 residents and 12 houses; and

25 Whereas, Bath's proximity to the Pamlico River and the Atlantic Ocean led to  
26 the Town becoming the State's first port of entry and the site of the State's first shipyard;  
27 and

1           Whereas, during Bath's early years, a number of merchants set up small stores  
2 and several residents established taverns and inns for travelers; and

3           Whereas, in 1707, John Lawson, Christopher Gale, and Dr. Maurice Luellyn  
4 established the Town's first horse-driven grist mill; and

5           Whereas, Bath's early families, including the Marsh, Van Der Veer, and  
6 Bonner families, contributed to the Town's early economy as merchants and owners of  
7 such businesses as a turpentine distillery and steam sawmill; and

8           Whereas, some of Bath's other notable citizens were Christopher Gale, the  
9 State's first chief justice, and several of the State's governors, including Robert Daniel,  
10 Thomas Cary, Edward Hyde, Charles Eden, and Matthew Rowan; and

11           Whereas, Edward Teach, the infamous pirate known as Blackbeard, spent  
12 several months in Bath and married Mary Ormond, a young resident of the Town; and

13           Whereas, despite a pardon from Governor Charles Eden, Blackbeard  
14 continued his pirating activities before being killed by Lt. Robert Maynard of the Royal  
15 Navy near Ocracoke on November 22, 1718; and

16           Whereas, in its early history, the citizens of Bath withstood conflicts over  
17 religion and politics, a yellow fever epidemic, a severe drought, and numerous conflicts  
18 with Native Americans; and

19           Whereas, Bath holds the distinction of serving as the location of the State's  
20 first public library, which was established in 1701 with 1,000 books sent from England  
21 to the St. Thomas Parrish by the Reverend Doctor Thomas Bray, the Anglican founder  
22 of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts; and

23           Whereas, the General Assembly enacted several laws designed to protect and  
24 preserve the library, and in 1715, created a commission to oversee the library, which  
25 included Charles Eden, Christopher Gale, Tobias Knight, Edward Moseley, Daniel  
26 Richardson, Fred Jones, John Porter, Joel Martin, John Drinkwater, John Clark, Patrick  
27 Maule, Thomas Worsley, Lionel Reading, James Lee, and Thomas Harding; and

28           Whereas, Gilbert Towerson's "Application of the Church Catechism" is the  
29 only known volume of that library to exist today; and

30           Whereas, the St. Thomas Parrish set up a school for Native Americans and  
31 blacks and established the colony's only glebe, a 300-acre farm for the Parrish's  
32 ministers located on the edge of Town; and

33           Whereas, St. Thomas Church, the State's oldest existing church, was  
34 established in Bath in 1734; and

35           Whereas, Bath served as the county seat from 1696 to 1785 and the site of  
36 Beaufort County's first courthouse, which was built in 1723; and

37           Whereas, in 1722, the General Assembly enacted legislation allowing Bath to  
38 elect a representative to the General Assembly; and

39           Whereas, Bath hosted the General Assembly in 1744 and 1752, and was once  
40 considered a location for the capital of the colony; and

41           Whereas, the Bath Historic District, the Palmer-Marsh House (ca. 1751), the  
42 Bonner House (ca. 1830), and the St. Thomas Church are listed on the National Register  
43 of Historic Places; and

1           Whereas, through its long history, Bath has remained a small village that has  
2 held onto its historic roots; and

3           Whereas, the year 2005 marks Bath's 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary; and

4           Whereas, the citizens of the Town have been actively preparing a celebration  
5 to honor this historic occasion, including tours of historic landmarks and a marker  
6 dedication ceremony at Bonner Point in honor of John Lawson; and

7           Whereas, in observance of Bath's tricentennial, the General Assembly has  
8 been invited to meet in Bath on March 8, 2005; Now, therefore,

9 Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

10           **SECTION 1.** The General Assembly honors the memory of the early  
11 residents of the Town of Bath for their contributions to their community and the State of  
12 North Carolina.

13           **SECTION 2.** The General Assembly extends sincere good wishes to the  
14 citizens of the Town of Bath on the occasion of the town's 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary on March  
15 8, 2005, and encourages the citizens of this State to join Bath in demonstrating respect  
16 for our history and heritage.

17           **SECTION 3.** The Secretary of State shall transmit a certified copy of this  
18 resolution to the Mayor of the Town of Bath.

19           **SECTION 4.** This resolution is effective upon ratification.