

When the first settlers arrived in the valleys of the lower Piedmont, they found lush meadows, streams and hills crowned with trees suitable for cabin building. From overseas and the northern states of Pennsylvania, Maryland and Delaware came the Scotch-Irish in large numbers. The new families stayed busy cutting down trees and setting up cabins, burning acreage for crop planting and organizing the two most important social functions of any settlement, the meeting house and the local still.

The 360-acre community of Charlotte moved to incorporate a regular town government and an eventual county seat. On May 20, 1775, Charlotte patriots defied the wrath of the English King and signed a Declaration of Independence.

The rest is recorded history:

- 1730s The first settlers move into present Mecklenburg County. Exact site of first cabin not recorded.
- 1740 One of Charlotte's first manufacturers makes the first Charlotte rifle, later to become George Washington's favorite rifle.
- 1749 Earliest land grant from the Crown arrives from England.
- 1750 Trade route to Charleston, S.C. established by following Indian trails. Some trading with Cherokees who had access to French and Spanish trading goods.
- 1754 King's Commissioners meet with Catawba Chief Hagler to establish peaceful trade relations between Indians and settlers.
- 1762 Mecklenburg County created December 11.
- 1766 Log Court House built in center of settlement — beginning of "downtown."
- 1767 Birth of President Andrew Jackson in southeastern section of Mecklenburg County (now Union County) recorded on March 15. Sawmill and grist mill constructed. 360 acres purchased for site of Charlotte.
- 1768 County divided — upper half becomes Tryon County. Charlotte incorporated December 7.
- 1770 Jeremiah McCafferty opens first store in Charlotte.
- 1771 Queens College, first in North Carolina, established. Later, in 1777, college becomes Liberty Hall.
- 1774 Charlotte is made county seat as population reaches 200.

- 1775 Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence signed on May 20. Captain James Jack reaches Philadelphia with copy and presents it to North Carolina Continental Congress delegates Joseph Hewes and William Hooper. May 31 Mecklenburg Resolves signed.
- 1777 Mecklenburg patriots ordered north, taking part briefly in battles of Germantown and Brandywine.
- 1780 Battle of Charlotte, September 26. British General Lord Cornwallis occupies town. October 7, patriots defeat British and Tory troops at Kings Mountain. Colonel Sevier speeds with Rangers over mountains to protect frontier settlements from attack by Cherokees. October 12, Cornwallis leaves Charlotte, referring to town and citizens as "a damned hornets nest."
- 1790 Mecklenburg population 11,725 after first U.S. Census.
- 1791 President Washington visits Charlotte May 28. Refers to it later as "a trifling place."
- 1792 U.S. Post Office established here; Edward Wayne, Postmaster. Cabarrus County created from eastern section of Mecklenburg.
- 1795 President James K. Polk born November 2, in a one-room log cabin twelve miles south of Charlotte.
- 1799 Gold discovered by Conrad Reed in Cabarrus County.
- 1805 Nathaniel Alexander is first Mecklenburg citizen to be elected governor.
- 1812-1814 Five companies of Mecklenburg troops serve in War of 1812. Charlotte population under 70 families.
- 1824 First newspaper published in Charlotte.
- 1834 Branch of North Carolina Bank opens in Charlotte.
- 1837 Charlotte branch of U.S. Mint opens October 19.
- 1838 Male Academy opens ensuring teenage education.
- 1847 Company of Dragoons under Green W. Caldwell leaves for Vera Cruz to serve in Mexican War.
- 1849 Grading of railroad right-of-way from Charlotte to Columbia, S.C.
- 1850 Mecklenburg's population 13,914; Charlotte's 1,065.
- 1852 First passenger train arrives, crowd attending picnic estimated at 20,000. First telegraph office opens.
- 1854 Age of steam power reaches community as Spring's flour mill is operated by steam engine.
- 1856 Railroad from Charlotte to Goldsboro completed. Western Union Telegraph Company takes over telegraph lines.

- 1857 Charlotte Female Institution organized, making learning co-educational.
- 1858 First gas lights turned on in Charlotte.
- 1861 Civil War clouds loom. May 20, N.C. secedes from the Union. May 27, N.C. is admitted to the Confederacy, drilling of volunteers begins. U.S. Mint appropriated for use by the Confederacy. Faculty and cadets of Charlotte Military Academy assigned to drill green troops in Raleigh.
- 1865 April 15, Charlotte greets Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederacy, with his Cabinet and honor guard of 1,000 cavalry for last full cabinet meeting held April 20. News reaches courthouse of Lincoln's assassination.
- 1867 Biddle University for Blacks, now Johnson C. Smith University, established. U.S. Mint re-opens as assay office.
- 1869 January 25 — First daily issue of The Charlotte Observer.
- 1872 Union troops depart Charlotte. First carpetbagger arrives.
- 1873 Grade school organized in Charlotte, the first in N.C.
- 1875 May 20 — Centennial Celebration of Mecklenburg Declaration, attended by 30,000.
- 1876 Chamber organizes as Board of Trade.
- 1881 Cotton mill begins operation; textile industry on its way.
- 1887 Electric lights installed. Mr. Edison blessed by local citizens. Horse-drawn cars appear.
- 1891 Charlotte Public Library organized.
- 1893 Street cars replace horse power with electric power.
- 1898 Two companies of famed North Carolina Regiment infantry land in Havana during Spanish-American War.
- 1902 Deepest snow ever recorded for Charlotte occurs in February — 17.4 inches.
- 1903 New library officially opens July 2 by Mr. Andrew Carnegie in absentia. Presbyterian Hospital opens in former Arlington Hotel.
- 1904 Automobiles in city streets. City Directory mentions dealer of earlier models.
- 1905 President Theodore Roosevelt visits Charlotte. Prohibition becomes effective.
- 1906 Mercy Hospital begins operation on East First Street.
- 1907 Glamour of movieland first mentioned in business section of the City Directory. Full houses every Saturday afternoon at the Odeon and Wonderland Theaters.

- 1909 President William H. Taft visits Charlotte. Independence Building, North Carolina's first skyscraper, completed.
- 1913 U.S. Mint-Charlotte Branch closes.
- 1914 Queens College opens campus on Selwyn Avenue.
- 1916 President and Mrs. Woodrow Wilson visit Charlotte.
- 1917 Camp Greene constructed at Charlotte, expanding Charlotte's population from 20,000 to 60,000.
- 1919 Five people killed, 25 wounded in street car strike riot on August 25.
- 1920 Charlotte's population 46,338.
- 1921 Radio Station WBT hits airways.
- 1927 Federal Reserve Bank branch opens.
- 1930 Pilot Gene Brown flies first air mail service to Charlotte. Charlotte becomes largest city in state with 82,675.
- 1932 Symphony Orchestra organized.
- 1936 American Legion Memorial Stadium, the Municipal Airport and the Mint Museum of Art open; President Franklin D. Roosevelt visits Charlotte as guest of honor at a "Green Pastures" rally.
- 1938 Buses replace street cars.
- 1940 City population reaches 100,899. Charlotte Memorial Hospital (CMS) opens.
- 1946 Charlotte College, predecessor to UNCC, established.
- 1947 First annual Carolinas' Carrousel Ball and Parade. Television first introduced to Charlotte.
- 1952 Population approximately 145,000 and rising.
- 1954 Douglas Municipal Airport completed. President Dwight D. Eisenhower visits Charlotte.
- 1955 Auditorium-Coliseum and Park Center completed.
- 1959 City and county schools consolidated. Cowans Ford Dam starts.
- 1960 City Population — 201,564.
- 1961 New County Office Building completed. Charlotte College occupies two buildings of new 270 acre campus. Later to grow to 1,000 acres.
- 1962 First jet service to Charlotte. Additions to Memorial Hospital completed.
- 1963 Charlotte population 228,000. County population over 328,000. In Raleigh, General Assembly approves four-year state-supported status for then Charlotte College. Lake Norman filled.

- 1965 First convocation of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.
- 1966 Plans for Downtown Civic Center as Hub of "New City" drafted. University Research Park formed.
- 1968 Charlotte celebrates bicentennial and wins All-America City designation.
- 1970 SouthPark Shopping Center, with 1,000,000 square feet, opens. 1970 Census reports Charlotte's population at 241,178 and Mecklenburg County's at 354,656.
- 1971 Billy Graham honored as a native son. 32-story Jefferson First Union Tower completed, at the time the tallest building in the Carolinas. President Nixon attends ceremony.
- 1972 Interstate 77 opens from Charlotte to South Carolina state line. Douglas Airport tops one million passengers for the first time.
- 1973 Carowinds theme park opens in March.
- 1974 Charlotte becomes the nation's 50th largest city. 40-story NCNB Plaza completed, at the time the tallest building in the Carolinas; the 32-story Wachovia Center also completed.
- 1975 Charlotte celebrates Mecklenburg Declaration Bicentennial, attended by President Ford. Re-enactment of Captain Jack's delivery on horseback of the Mecklenburg Declaration to the Continental Congress. 22-story Southern National Center completed. Eastland Mall opens with over 100 stores. Fourth Ward redevelopment begins.
- 1976 County celebrates Nation's Bicentennial. Freedom Train passes through Charlotte. Spirit Square, an umbrella for the arts and sciences, opens. Mint Museum of History opens.
- 1977 First year with district representatives on City Council.
- 1978 Voters support a new \$47 million airport terminal and Liquor-by-the-Drink referendums. IBM announces plans for new manufacturing facility.
- 1979 Fourth Ward, a restored Victorian neighborhood in the Center City, comes of age with construction of townhouses.
- 1980 Economic expansion surpasses \$300 million for first time. Airport begins operation of new 10,000 foot runway. Ground broken for new passenger terminal. Charlotte Foreign Trade Zone established.
- 1981 The 1980 Census puts Charlotte population at 315,473; Mecklenburg County at 404,270. NCNB buys first out-of-state bank, beginning interstate banking.
- 1982 Charlotte/Douglas International Airport dedicates new terminal facility and new name.
- 1983 New Charlotte-Gastonia-Rock Hill, MSA, designated by Federal Government — 42nd largest with over 1 million population.
- 1984 \$8.1 million Tryon Street Mall completed.
- 1986 Six million passengers board planes at Charlotte/Douglas International Airport, making it the 23rd largest airport in the Nation.
- 1987 NBA franchise announcement. Foreign firms in Mecklenburg reach 200. Daily flight to London begins. I-277 opens.
- 1988 New 25,000-seat Charlotte Coliseum completed in July. NBA basketball (The Charlotte Hornets) begins in the \$52 million facility. One First Union Center and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Government Center completed.
- 1989 Charlotte Hornets end their first season with 36 sell-out games. Local banking resources surpass \$100 billion.
- 1990 Census puts city population at 395,934, making it the 35th largest city; county at 511,433. Charlotte receives All-America City Award. First phase of I-485 opens.
- 1992 NationsBank (Bank of America) occupies their 60-story corporate center — the tallest building in the Carolinas. Blumenthal Performing Arts Center opens.
- 1993 New construction permits surpass \$1 billion. Mecklenburg employment surpasses 300,000.
- 1994 New 850,000 square foot Convention Center opens. Airport enplanements surpass 10 million passengers. Retail sales total more than \$10 billion.
- 1995 Carolina Panthers play their first season in Clemson. Charlotte becomes second largest banking center.
- 1996 Ericsson Stadium, home of the Carolina Panthers, opens at a cost of \$180 million. Mother Theresa visits Charlotte. Charlotte Trolley begins running.
- 1998 BF Goodrich moves to Charlotte. Record \$2.2 billion investment in new and expanded business. NationsBank merges with Bank of America.
- 1999 TIAA-CREF moves to Charlotte. Record 19,758 new jobs from new and expanded business.
- 2000 540,828 city, 695,454 county population reached on census count.
- 2001 SPX and Carlisle Corporation move to Charlotte. First Union and Wachovia Bank merge. Westin hotel announced.
- 2002 President George W. Bush visits Charlotte Chamber. Johnson & Wales University announces move to center city.
- 2003 Charlotte banking resources surpass \$1 trillion. NBA returns to Charlotte with the Charlotte Bobcats.
- 2004 City of Charlotte population surpasses 600,000. The metro population reaches 1.5 million.
- 2006 NASCAR Hall of Fame announced. New residential units surpass 10,000 mark. Total construction value surpasses \$4 billion.
- 2007 IKEA and The Shaw Group announce Charlotte facilities. International aircraft boardings surpass 1 million. Billy Graham Library dedicated by former U.S. Presidents George H.W. Bush, Bill Clinton and Jimmy Carter. Light rail begins operation.
- 2008 County population surpasses 900,000. Bank of America acquires Merrill Lynch; bank assets exceed \$2.3 trillion.
- 2009 GMAC Financial (Ally Bank), NACA, ZENTA and US Bancorp announce major relocations to Charlotte. Electrolux announces its corporate headquarters move.
- 2010 Most economic indicators begin upward movement. Airport surpasses 19 million boardings; given the prestigious Eagle Award for best airport in the world. Charlotte Douglas Airport becomes seventh most active in the world. Siemens announces 825 new jobs. Levine Center for the Arts opens.
- 2011 Duke Energy announces merger with Progress Energy making it the largest electrical provider in nation. Duke Energy tower opens. Foreign firms surpass 625 in Mecklenburg. Chiquita Brands International announces headquarters move.



CHARLOTTE'S CHRONOLOGY

