

Elizabeth Chapter



History of Elizabeth City Chapter

FIFTY YEARS AND COUNTING

During the week of March 5-11, 1962, the infamous Ash Wednesday storm was battering our mid-Atlantic and northeast coast causing over \$200 million in property damage and killing 40 people, and the Elizabeth City Chapter of National Epicureans was to be installed that weekend.

Virginia State College friends, Valerie Word Vaughan and Helen Marshall Caldwell along with Mollie Majette Beasley and Georgia Long Smith, were in a dilemma because they had spent many hours putting plans in place to bring the presence of National Epicureans to Elizabeth City. Gloria Cooper, Queenie Ferebee Boyd, Wilhelma Cooper, Ethel Harrell Fox, Louise Harris, Lillie Cooper Perry and Vivian Sharp Trent joined them in this effort. They, with the help of Eppies Laureta Vaughan Matthews and Katherine Bennett of the Petersburg Chapter, had selected March 10, 1962 as the date of installation. Because Elizabeth City was in the direct path of the storm, the U.S. Coast Guard had declared the National Guard Armory unavailable for private use. In those days, the National Guard Armory was the only place in town that was large enough to accommodate a group that size. A delectable menu was in preparation. Stylishly beautiful garments had been purchased. Festive and fun activities for an elegant weekend had been meticulously planned. So, what to do! What to do! WHAT to do!

Highly motivated by the expectation that the other ten Chapters would be in attendance, this energetic, innovative and determined group of very close friends (along with their husbands) would not be thwarted and decided on what to do and proceeded to forge ahead. Ether Harrell

Fox offered her small ranch style home on Roanoke Avenue for the celebration where they could, (and did) "eat, drink, and be merry".

Despite the fact that the weather was most uncooperative and the roads were treacherous, Helen Harvey of Danville, VA - National President and Katherine Bennett - National Vice President arrived with members of the sponsoring chapter from Petersburg, VA along with Eppies from Richmond, VA and representatives from each of the other eight chapters. They, heroically, managed to propel Elizabeth City Chapter of National Epicureans into existence: Saturday, March 10, 1962.

We, the eleventh chapter of National Epicureans, Inc., integrated the Outer Banks of NC with the first ever "Colored" event in northeastern North Carolina at the Carolinian Hotel in Nags Head, NC. In June 1990, we gathered at the Hilton Waterside in Norfolk because there still was no hotel facility in northeastern NC that could accommodate the modern Epicurean gathering. In 2013, we again, were away from home, but at the Renaissance in Portsmouth, VA hosting our third National Conclave.

After 50 years of existence and with only two of our original eleven dedicated Eppies - Mollie Beasley and Helen Caldwell and two of our original dedicated Eppos - T.V. Beasley and Bobby Vaughan - boosted by our newer dedicated Eppies and Eppos, we have grown to truly value the sentiments of the Greek Philosopher, Epicurus: "Friendship goes dancing round the world, announcing to all of us to wake up to happiness" and "Let us live while we are alive".