

## Biographical sketches of early Knightdale Mayors

### Bennett Lewis Wall

1927-34

Bennett Lewis Wall was the first mayor of Knightdale. He was born in the Shotwell Community in 1887. He went to school at the Shotwell School.

His first job was as a salesman for the New England Insurance Company. He later operated the Knightdale Drug Company. He served as post master of Knightdale for 27 years.

Wall first married Evie David Harrison. They had six children, Elizabeth, Bennett Harrison, Lewis McGinnis, Joyce, Harold and Ada Burton. He later married Myrtle Umstead and they had one child, Gail Mann. He died in March, 1941.

### Landon Anderson Doub

1934-38

Landon Anderson Doub was born in 1889 in the Shotwell Community of Wake County. He attended Wakelon High School in Zebulon. He later attended N.C. State in Raleigh and received his law degree from a private lawyer, Dr. Pell.

Doub was a lawyer and also operated a general merchandise store on the corner of Fayetteville Street and Railroad Street in Knightdale. He served as a member of the Wake County Draft Board during World War 2 and was treasurer for a number of years.

He married Mae Horton on December 15, 1915. They did not have children. He died in 1974.

### John Elliott Davis

1938-40

John Elliott Davis was born in Wake Forest on September 21, 1870. He attended Wake Forest High School and graduated from the old Page's School of Pharmacy in Raleigh.

Davis worked at the Knightdale Drug Company for many years. He was a licensed pharmacist and manufactured fountain syrups and soft drinks.

Davis married L.V. Crawford and they had one daughter. He died in Nov. of 1941.

### Elijah Daniel Flowers

1940-42

Elijah Daniel Flowers was born in Brushy Lake, Cross County, Ark on February 15, 1894. The family moved back to Wilson County when he was a small boy.

He attended Rock Ridge High School in Wilson County. He went to Wake Forest College and studied law. He served as a Justice of the Peace in Wilson County as a young man. He practiced law in Raleigh and Wake County for many years.

Flowers married Maggie Pearl Jackson in Edgecomb County on August 18, 1916. They were the parents of eight children – six girls and two boys. He died on 3-25-1955.

### Dr. Rupert Ryan Weathers

1942-48

Rupert Ryan Weathers was born in Wake County, near Wendell in 1897. He attended high school in Zebulon.

He attended Wake Forest College and graduated from the Medical College of Virginia in Richmond, VA. Weathers practiced medicine in the Knightdale community for 32 years.

He married Josephine Woodson in 1926. They had one daughter, Sue Weathers Wilder.

Weathers died in 1968. He was a well loved “country doctor”.

### John Carlisle Stalvey

1948-49

John Carlisle Stalvey was born in Rocksboro in Person County on December 6, 1911. He graduated from high school in Tabor City and graduated from Lambuth College in Jackson, Tennessee in 1934.

He came to Knightdale on August 20, 1939 as pharmacist at Knightdale Drug Company.

Stalvey married LaRue Weathers in June, 1944. They had one child, Ruth Gale Stalvey Gardner. The Stalvey's moved to 801 North First Avenue extension in 1949. Since that property was outside the city limits of Knightdale, Stalvey had to resign his \$5.00 per month position as mayor during the second year of his term. John died in Nov. 1999.

### Eugene Field Harper

1949-62, 1964-76

Eugene Field Harper was born in Laurel, now called Louisburg on July 13, 1911. He attended Gold Sands High School and graduated from Campbell College in 1930. In 1942 he attended N.C. State in Raleigh to study for a tool machinest degree.

His first job was as a service station attendant in Wake Forest. After coming to Knightdale, he worked at Robertson and Keith General Merchandise Store. In 1952, he worked at American Machinery Foundry as a test machinest.

Eugene Harper married Lillian Robertson of Knightdale in 1935. They had three sons, Jutson, Charles and Wayne. Lillian Harper died in 1979. Harper married Lois Faison Holifield in 1982. Harper died in Oct, 1984.

### Ashley Wilder

1962-64

Ashely Wilder was born in Wake County in 1909. He has always lived in Knightdale and graduated from Knightdale High School.

Wilder had a number of occupations. He farmed, worked as a grocery clerk, owned and

operated a grocery store, owned and operated a salvage company and owned and operated a wood burning stove business.

Ashley married Lona Eddy and they had three sons, Barry, Steve, Landon.

### **William A. Wilder Jr.**

1976-1992

William A Wilder, Jr. was born in Wake County in May of 1934. He is a lifelong resident of Knightdale. He graduated from Knightdale High School and from N.C.State.

He worked in Winston-Salem as a county agent, taught at N.C. State for two years and worked for the N.C. Department of Agriculture where he was assistant agriculture commissioner for eight years.

In later years, he was president of Wilders Nursery Inc. of Knightdale as well as executive director of both N.C. Association of Nurserymen and the N.C. Landscape Contractors Association.

Bill Wilder married Libby Jean Jones in April 1955. They have two daughters, Barbara and Deborah.

### **Notes**

During these early years each term of office was two years.

Meetings of town staff have been held at a number of locations, to include: 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of stained glass building (Cir 1927-53), office of firestation, Old town hall on Main St. and new town hall.

### **Sources:**

Several local newspapers articles, most unknown publisher.  
Much discussion with old timers.

**Wayne Schulz**