

# *Richmond County Historical Society*

*'Those who don't remember their ancestors don't deserve to be remembered!'*

## **September, 2019 Newsletter**

*The Richmond County Historical Society will meet on Monday, Sept. 16 at 7 p.m. in the Rockingham City Hall. The public is invited*

### *The Changing South: Who's Benefiting, Who's Losing?*

Over the last 40 years, the South has experienced social and economic change at a dizzying rate. During this period, the South was transformed from a poor region that was still in many respects “the Nation’s number one economic problem” to a golden “go go” region on the move, home to large corporations and banks, a thriving high technology industry, expanding suburbs and shopping centers, and some of the best colleges and universities in the country. Millions migrated south to take part in the bonanza including growing numbers of African Americans, some of them the children and grandchildren of people who had once fled the region to escape poverty and racial oppression. American politics now seem to turn on Southern priorities and seemed to require Southern leadership. In the words of journalist Peter Applebome, Dixie was “putting its fingerprints on almost every aspect of the nation’s soul, from race, to politics, to culture, to values.” But this dramatic transformation has had its costs, and like all big changes, has generated winners and losers in the region.

This talk will explore the costs and benefits of economic and social change and will critically examine some of the remedies that have been offered up to help areas and people left behind.



*John J. Beck holds a Ph.D. in American history from UNC-Chapel Hill with a specialty in Southern history. He has written a number of articles and essays on topics in Southern history, made numerous presentations on Southern topics at public programs and professional meetings across the United States, and for a number of years maintained a website on Southern culture. He is the co-author of Southern Culture: An Introduction. He is retired from a career in the North Carolina Community College System, last serving as Dean of Arts and Sciences at Vance-Granville Community college. He has taught at Elon University since 2007.*