

## History of the North Carolina Writers' Network

Written by Administrator

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In the mid-1980s, a small group of writers and teachers met at the Poetry Center Southeast of Guilford College in Greensboro, North Carolina, to discuss starting a statewide literary service organization. The group had surveyed writers, teachers, editors, librarians, publishers, and lovers of literature who embraced the notion of a statewide organization because many felt isolated from literary opportunities. They wanted to have access to events and support groups. By June 12, 1985, the organization was approved as a 501(c)(3) non-profit, and the North Carolina Writers' Network was born. The working Board of Trustees, elected from every area of the state and representing all genres of writing, began to design the programming and services that characterize this energetic organization. An illustrious Advisory Board of writers from around the country was selected. The first members were poets from the North Carolina Poetry Society, then slowly but steadily the membership grew just as the newsletter, the Writers' Network News, grew from a single foldover to twenty-four pages.

Situated in downtown Durham in free office space for the first two years, the Network gained recognition for its solid mission of service so that by 1987, there were 500 members, and the Network moved to Chapel Hill. For eighteen months the office was in the director's home, and the library was packed away in her closet. Then, thanks to a grant from the Bryan Family Foundation, the Network moved to a new home at the charming 1933 White Cross School, seven miles west of Carrboro on Highway 54.

Linda Hobson  
Executive Director, 1996-2002

The North Carolina Writers' Network continued to grow from its humble beginnings to become one of the largest writers' organizations in the country. In response to changing times, in 2008 the Network launched a redesigned, interactive website that allows members easier access to resources and the opportunity to interact with writers and other industry insiders from across the state and beyond. As a result, the Network eventually left the White Cross School to work from virtual home offices around the state, but we continue to honor our longtime home through the Virtual White Cross School weblog.

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The Network strives to lead, promote, educate, and—most importantly—connect writers, at all levels of skill and experience, from across the state and beyond. Though the Network's programs and services have adapted to changing economies and new technologies, we recognize that writers will always need to work toward excellence, search for opportunity, and feel a part of a community. For more than twenty-five years, the Network has made excellence, opportunity, and community a little easier for North Carolina's writers to find, and we look forward to doing so for many years more.

Ed Southern

Executive Director, 2008-present