

City of Radford

# The New River City

An Overview of Our Community and the Radford Sheriff's Office

VLEPSC Re-Accreditation Assessment  
August 16 – 19, 2010

## **Geography**

According to the United States Census Bureau, the city has a total area of 10.2 square miles, of which, 9.8 square miles of it is land and 0.4 square miles of it (3.63%) is water. The New River runs along the southeastern edge of the city.

## **History**

The first permanent settlement within Radford's present boundaries occurred at the New River crossing of the Wilderness Road. This trail extended westward from the valley of Virginia through southwest Virginia and on to the Cumberland Gap into Kentucky. This pathway became known as the Wilderness Road and with later development it became known as the Stagecoach Road. Stagecoach Road would later be called the Valley Pike and eventually what is now US 11. Radford's section of this road is known as Rock Road and here in 1762 William Ingles and his wife, Mary Draper Ingles, established Ingles' Ferry. The ferry became the nucleus of a commercial center which was to have, among other businesses, a tavern, blacksmith's shop and a general store.

The coming of the Virginia and Tennessee Railroad in 1854 brought a marked change in orientation for Radford. A depot was constructed at Lovely Mount and because it was situated halfway between Lynchburg and Bristol, it was named Central. Its midway location also led the railroad to build repair shops at Central stimulating residential and commercial growth in the village. When the railroad arrived, Lovely Mount had a population of 30. Two years later, when the first scheduled trains ran, there were over 100 people, a roundhouse, repair shop, workmen's homes, a tavern, restaurant and general store. Gradually trade was taken away from Lovely Mount Tavern and Central became the commercial center, serving as a shipping point for the area's products. These products consisted of tobacco, bacon and lumber.

In 1872, the New River Railroad, Mining and Manufacturing Company chartered to build a railroad from Central to the Pocahontas coal fields in West Virginia. It was 10 years before Pocahontas coal reached Central (the railroad by then operated by Norfolk and Western), but this enterprise, coupled with a road to the Cripple Creek iron mines, spurred a boom in Central. Land development Companies were formed and subdivisions planned. The Radford Land and Improvement Company developed much of the area that was to become West Radford. Several other companies developed East Radford and the area around the New River depot across the river. Industry was promoted and during this time an iron foundry, brick works, lumber companies, a knitting mill and a stone quarry came into being. Virginia Iron, Coal and Coke Company was a major employer. The population grew from 300 in 1880 to 3,000 in 1890. In 1885, Central City was incorporated as a town and in 1887; its name was officially changed to Radford. In 1888, the post office was moved from Lovely Mount Tavern to Radford, although it retained the Lovely Mount name until 1891 when it was changed to Radford. The following year, 1892, a post office was established west of Connelly's Run and also named Radford. Therefore, the first post office was again renamed, this time to East Radford. There were also two railroad stations constructed, one on either side of Connelly's Run. They were called Radford (east side) and West Radford. By 1892, the two Radfords merged politically and, having the required population of 5,000, attained city status.

The Panic of 1894 put an end to Radford's boom. The city population between 1890 and 1900, but in the twentieth century began slowly to grow again. Several Radford industries began between 1900 and 1930. These included Radford Ice Manufacturing Company (1916), Clover Creamery Company (1922), West End Milling (Lewis Harvey and Sons, owners), and Norfolk and Western Timber Preserving Plant (1921). The Lynchburg Foundry acquired the Radford Pipe Works (opened in 1892) in 1905.

The State Legislature selected Radford as the site for the State Normal School (later named Radford College) in 1913. This added a new element to the city's economy, but also a new divisive factor. East Radford had started as the commercial center and now was the educational center. West Radford was the industrial sector, although some of the city's finest homes were also there. A sometimes intense rivalry developed.

In an era when paved roads were scarce in Southwestern Virginia, it proved a boom to the city to secure the passage of the Lee Highway through its center in 1920. By 1928 there were fifteen industries in Radford employing 980 workers (Norfolk and Western and Lynchburg Foundry were the major employers) and 84 retail and wholesale establishments employing 245. Its population approaching 6,000, the city had three banks, three hotels, two motion picture theaters and two weekly newspapers. The decade saw the addition of a few other industries, including the New River Textiles, unit of Burlington Mills, and the Old Colony Box Company. Also, during this time Appalachian Power's Claytor Lake Dam was built which brought further economic modernization to the area.

During the 1930's the federal government had decided the Radford area was a choice site for a major industry requiring ample space, plentiful water, good transportation and a large work force. Radford "powder plant" or Arsenal was built in 1940-1941 to manufacture gunpowder and associated products. 10 War time employment exceeded 20,000. Three housing projects were developed in Radford to accommodate the rapid influx of people. These were Monroe Terrace, Radford Village, and Sunset Village. Fairlawn, which is the area across the river from Radford to Pulaski County, was also developed at this time. Hundreds of freight cars and no fewer than 12 passenger trains passed through Radford daily during the peak of the war time economy.

The rapid population growth (to 12,000 in 1943) necessitated change in city government as new and increased services were needed. New committees and boards were established and a fine recreation expansion and establishment of a Community Hospital and Chamber of Commerce.

The post-war years saw a sharp decline in population followed once again by slow increase. In 1957, the city joined the New River Valley Industrial Commission to help attract new industries to the city. Since then several companies have chosen to locate in Radford, among them the Inland Motors Division of Kollmorgen Corporation, Kenrose Manufacturing Company, Brad Ragan Rubber Company, which was originally the Graflo Rubber Company, and the RADVA Plastics Corporation. The growth of Radford College, given university status in 1979, has influenced the character and development of east Radford. The concern for education and juvenile after-hours behavior was the basis for Radford's achieving "All American city" status.

The railroad no longer dominates Radford. All passenger service was discontinued in 1971. The Radford section of Interstate 81, which was completed in 1965, bypassed the city and reduced US 11 to primarily local traffic. The hospital relocated from Radford to the neighboring county in 1999. Today Radford is a quaint small university town with a thriving business community made up primarily of specialty shops.

## **Demographics**

As of the census of 2000, there were 15,859 people, 5,809 households, and 2,643 families residing in the city. The population density was 1,615.2 people per square mile. There were 6,137 housing units at an average density of 625.0/sq mi. The racial makeup of the city was 88.21% White, 8.10% African American, 0.25% Native American, 1.43% Asian, 0.03% Pacific Islander, 0.49% from other races, and 1.51% from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race were 1.16% of the population.

There were 5,809 households out of which 18.8% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 33.9% were married couples living together, 8.9% had a female householder with no husband present, and 54.5% were non-families. 32.0% of all households were made up of individuals and 8.7% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.25 and the average family size was 2.78.

The age distribution, which is strongly influenced by Radford University, is: 12.9% under the age of 18, 44.0% from 18 to 24, 19.6% from 25 to 44, 14.3% from 45 to 64, and 9.2% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 23 years. For every 100 females there were 83.5 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 81.6 males.

The median income for a household in the city was \$24,654, and the median income for a family was \$46,332. Males had a median income of \$33,045 versus \$22,298 for females. The per capita income for the city was \$14,289. About 6.9% of families and 31.4% of the population were below the poverty line, including 10.8% of those under age 18 and 9.4% of those age 65 or over. However, traditional measures of poverty can be extremely misleading when applied to a community with a large proportion of university students, such as Radford.

## **Local Attractions**

Radford has four parks; Bisset, Sunset, Wildwood, and Riverview. Bisset Park and Sunset are family attraction parks with playgrounds, swings, baseball fields, beach volleyball, and picnic shelters for parties. Bisset is the larger of the two, located on the New River, it stretches 57 acres. The Bisset Park was named for David Bisset, a major contributor and overseer of parks and recreation in Radford. Bisset Park is located in the center of town across from Wildwood Park. Sunset Park is located in the center of the west end of Radford.

Riverview is used mainly for soccer practices and like its name suggests is also located on the river and on the west end of Radford.

Wildwood Park is a wildlife and plant reserve for the city. It is located in the center of town. The park separates the West or Industrial side of Radford from the Eastern side where Radford University is located. The park contains extensive walking and biking paths. It is also used by Radford High School for biology classes. Wildwood Park is the only perfectly preserved place in Radford. With limited exotic species, no buildings or sports fields, and many walking and biking trails, the park represents the way Radford looked before the coming of the railroad. Wildwood Park is a very quiet place where many types of native animals like birds, raccoons, opossums, skunks, and woodchucks decide to make their homes. In the spring, people travel from all over the state and sometimes country to see the wide variety of wildflowers.

## **Local Sports Accomplishments**

- In 1947, Radford had it's first and only Professional Baseball team, The Radford Rockets.
- John Dobbins was the 1st Black Football player for Virginia Tech.
- Radford High School a very strong sports program, in the 2009-2010 school year they had 7 VHSL Single A State Champions and Runners Up.
  - o 2009 Football- Runners Up
  - o Zeke Schaffer-Golf- State Champion
  - o Jared Miller-Cross Country-State Runner Up
  - o Julian Minter-Wrestling- State Champion
  - o Boys Soccer-State Runners Up
  - o Girls Soccer-State Runners Up
  - o Ava Bell-Track and Field-Discus State Champion

## **Notable people from Radford**

- John Dalton, former Virginia governor
- Mike Williams, Major League Baseball relief pitcher
- John Ripley, United States Marine Corps colonel
- Kevin Hartman, Major League Soccer goalkeeper
- Shayne Graham, NFL kicker
- Margaret Skeete, oldest living American 1993-1994
- Gary Clark, Pro Bowl wide receiver
- Michael, Evan and Andrew Gregory of The Gregory Brothers and Auto-Tune the News

## **Radford Sheriff's Office - History**

The Town of Radford incorporated as an independent city in 1885. With this change in status, Judge G.E. Cassel of the Hustings Court of the City of Radford appointed J.H. Fisher as Radford's first City Sergeant. The only other record of a City Sergeant was Harry S. Mundy, who served as City Sergeant until his death in December 1950. Mr. Mundy's daughter Elizabeth Mundy Graham still resides in Radford today.

In 1950 the Judges of the 27th Circuit Court appointed Mr. Fred M. Cox as the City Sergeant. The Code of Virginia was amended in July 1971 and the Office of City Sergeant was changed to the Office of the Sheriff. Mr. Cox served as Sheriff until he retired in early 1976. Sheriff Cox died in 1984 and is buried here in Radford.

In 1976 the Judges of the 27th Circuit Court appointed Mr. Bobby Farmer as the Sheriff. Sheriff Farmer served as Radford City Sheriff until he retired in 1999. Sheriff Farmer still resides in Radford and is still active in the community.

In 1999 the Judges of the 27th Circuit Court appointed Mr. Allen J. Taylor as the Sheriff. Sheriff Taylor was duly elected to office in November 2000. Sheriff Taylor served as Sheriff until he retired in January 2004.

In 2004 the Judges of the 27th Circuit Court appointed Mr. Terry W. Alley as the interim Sheriff until an election could be held In November 2004.

Mr. Mark R. Armentrout was duly elected by the citizens of Radford as Sheriff in November 2004. Sheriff Armentrout was reelected in 2005 and again in 2009.

The old location of the Sheriff's Office and Radford City Jail was 601 West Main Street, which currently houses the Radford City Police Department. The old office had a 20 man jail, a kitchen, a laundry facility, a recreation area, and office space for the Sheriff and 18 deputies.

In 1999 the New River Valley Regional Jail Authority was formed and a new regional jail was built. The old Sheriff's Office and jail were closed and a new facility was built. The modern Sheriff's Office is located at 619 2nd St. in the Radford Municipal Building. The Sheriff's Office now consists of the Sheriff, 5 full time deputies, 1 part time deputy and 1 civilian administrative specialist, who also serves as the accreditation manager.

### **Mission Statement**

The Radford City Sheriff's Office is committed to providing the most effective and safe delivery of services to every citizen. All matters of courtroom security, civil process service, and community outreach programs are performed with respect, care and compassion.

We are committed to building and maintaining professional relationships with our partners in the community and other law enforcement agencies. We will strive for innovation and excellence in order to meet the needs of the community.

<b>Performance/Workload Measures</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
Criminal Warrant	0	0	0
Garnishment	38	101	85
Mental Jurisdiction	15	30	22
Inmate Transport	150	177	120
Jury Summons	250	260	181
Levies	1	8	2
Notices	355	321	220
Civil Process	1,125	1,555	1,575
Petition	25	22	30
Protective Orders	54	59	65
Show Cause Civil	20	33	55
Show Cause Criminal	15	20	26
Subpoenas	5,156	5,041	4,881
Summons	3,111	3,002	2,784
Warrant in Debt	65	80	75
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,380</b>	<b>10,709</b>	<b>10,121</b>
Mental Patient Transports	15	14	12
Mental Patient Transports - Outside Jurisdiction	0	5	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>17</b>
Circuit Court Days	135	139	135
General District Court Days	120	115	118
Juvenile and Domestic Court Days	89	70	65
<b>Total</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>324</b>	<b>318</b>
Security of Inmates Awaiting Trial (hours)	2,545	2,552	1,987
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,545</b>	<b>2,552</b>	<b>1,987</b>
From Fluvanna	2	0	0
From Floyd County	0	0	0
From Roanoke County	0	15	25
From Bland County	0	0	0
To SW State Hospital	0	0	14
From Roanoke City	24	0	22
From Montgomery Co. Detention	15	18	20
From Montgomery County	95	105	125
From Court	175	150	225
From Martinsville Jail	1	0	0
From N.R.V. Detention Home	0	0	0
From Goochland	1	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>431</b>