



Trail of History

So much of Charlotte is new and shiny these days that it's easy to forget what a rich history the city has. Which is why I recommend a trip down the Trail of History, a 1.5 mile stretch of the Little Sugar Creek Greenway displaying a collection of bronze statues of key figures in Charlotte's historic growth and development. Part outdoor museum, part scavenger hunt, the Trail of History offers a fantastic opportunity for exercise, exploration and education.

The Trail of History runs along Kings Dr. from 7th St. to Morehead St. There are currently eight statues installed, with more planned. Some statues have informational signs and some are described online.

How to experience the Trail of History

Parking

Parking is available at the Metropolitan (Target/BJ's deck) at 1116 Metropolitan Ave. (jump on the greenway on the other side of Wendy's) or the Elizabeth Park parking lot at 1124 E. 4th St. (there is a four hour limit on parking here). We also sometimes park in the CPCC lot at the corner of 7th and Kings Dr. adjacent to Memorial Stadium/Grady Cole Center.

Statues

Wherever you park, make your way toward the Philip L. Van Every Culinary Arts Center (425 N. Kings Dr.), also home to CPCC's Greenway Restaurant. On the greenway side of the building, you'll find the first two statues: Thomas Spratt and King Haigler. They are standing together. Spratt was an early settler and Haigler was Chief of the Catawbas. (Look for Spratt's hat across the greenway from the statues!)

Heading south on the Greenway, next you'll come to one of the latest installments on the Trail: Edwin Augustus Osborne, founding superintendent of Thompson Orphanage, surrounded by barefoot children. This is probably our favorite.

Next, at the corner of 4th St. and Kings Dr. is Captain James Jack, Spirit of Mecklenburg, brave courier of Mecklenburg's Declaration of Freedom. Behind the Metropolitan you'll find William Henry Belk (retail pioneer) and Thad Tate (prominent African American businessman and civic leader).

The last two statues are near Morehead St. James B. Duke (business and philanthropic giant) is facing the intersection of Morehead St. and Kings Dr. (behind the clock tower) and Jane Wilkes (who was instrumental in building Charlotte's first two hospitals) is just around the Morehead St. corner facing, appropriately, one of the hospitals she helped establish.

As you backtrack to your parking spot, enjoy the Charlotte skyline with a better appreciation for how it came to be.



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