ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: DON'T THEY JUST TURN LEFT? NASCAR'S HERITAGE RACE TRACKS AND PRESERVING STOCK CAR CULTURE

Degree Candidate: Melissa A. Bleier

Thesis directed by: John C. Larson
Welch Center for Graduate and Professional Studies
Goucher College

This thesis examines the hypothesis that early NASCAR race tracks play an important role in the history of the United States and that they need to be evaluated and recognized as such. This thesis also identifies the heritage and traditions which are a part of the collective stock car culture and the ways in which heritage race tracks are the most significant places for this culture. In order to fully understand the cultural contribution of stock car racing, after an introduction to the history of stock car racing, a brief exploration of the formative years of the National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing follows.

This thesis explores the Southern roots of stock car racing and the ways in which NASCAR moved the sport from a Southern regional pastime to a national sport. It also examines the people and traditions that come together at a culturally significant space, the race track, and why preserving these race tracks is essential for stock car culture to thrive.

These heritage race tracks are the pivotal element for NASCAR's cultural continuity and provide excellent examples for future preservation efforts focusing on the heritage of stock car racing outside of NASCAR. The research for this thesis examined three tracks within the larger framework of the development of stock car racing. Martinsville Speedway, in Martinsville, Virginia; Darlington Raceway in Darlington, South Carolina, and Rockingham Speedway in Rockingham, North Carolina represent the best preservation opportunities for heritage race tracks and were chosen for their close connection to NASCAR's heritage.

Heritage race tracks are dynamic resources and require a preservation approach which can successfully address both the individual race tracks and the cultural significance of stock car racing heritage. An exploration of the available preservation methods to determine the best options for heritage race tracks is included in this thesis. Research for this thesis concludes that the best preservation option for NASCAR's heritage race tracks is the development of a stock car themed national heritage area. A national heritage area offers a comprehensive approach to preservation, providing preservation resources not only to major components, like NASCAR's heritage tracks, but also to the other elements of stock car heritage in the region.

DON'T THEY JUST TURN LEFT?

NASCAR'S HERITAGE RACE TRACKS AND PRESERVING STOCK CAR CULTURE

Melissa A. Bleier

Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Goucher College in

fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts in Historic Preservation

2009

Advisory Committee

John C. Larson, Chair

_____

Kenneth C. Breslauer

_____

Hugh C. Miller, FAIA

_____

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My heartfelt thanks go to all the people who have supported and encouraged me. Especially to my family, without whose love and support this would not have been possible. Thank you to my Browncoats who understood every time I said, “I can’t, I need to write.” Thank you to Mr. Clay Campbell for allowing me to hold my defense at Martinsville Speedway. I am proud to feel like a part of the track. Thank you to all of those at Martinsville Speedway, Darlington Raceway, and Rockingham Speedway for all of your time and support. Buz McKim, Eddie Roche, and Greg Fielden you are my inspiration, thank you for sharing NASCAR’s wonderful history with me. Thank you to Bud Moore, Cotton Owens, and Dot Owens for having lunch with me; it was the highlight of this experience. Thank you to NASCAR, to the drivers, team members, owners and wrenchers who were willing to listen to a girl talk about old race tracks. Eternal thanks to Vance Howell and Randy Heffner, who let me dog their heels in the garages. Thank you Sterns, for standing in front of the computer while I typed. Frederic Knapp, thank you for letting me run off to North Carolina once a month, and letting me return to a job. Donna, thank you for editing and making this look like a thesis. Ken, thank you for putting up my enthusiasm for stock car racing. John, thank you for being my preservation mentor all these years and for my little scholar’s loft. The greatest thank you goes to Hugh Miller, Richard Wagner and the entire Goucher faculty, who, when I said that I wanted to preserve historic race tracks, responded with enthusiasm.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER I
STOCK CAR RACING AND HERITAGE

Introduction

By 1949, Bill France organized the multitude of local stock car races held throughout the South and formed a structured national racing series. Dubbed NASCAR by one of the greatest racing mechanics of the era, The National Association of Stock Car Auto Racing has more than sixty years of tradition and heritage. Stock car racing developed out of the American South into the national sport that it is today. Today, it is the second most popular sport in the United States, bested only by professional football. NASCAR holds races at twenty-two race tracks throughout the United States yet in 2009, the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series races at only two tracks which hosted races during the formative years of the sport. These tracks are a tangible part of stock car history; it is imperative to act now and create a preservation program suitable for protecting these resources.

NASCAR could not have developed into the organization it is today without its race tracks. The race tracks give the stories of NASCAR a place and a place value. It is the races won, the drivers who battle against each other, the exciting finishes of the race which mark the history of the sport but it is the place where these historic moments happen which make them significant. It is at the race tracks where NASCAR's history is made. The earliest tracks ensure that the tangible connection between the history of stock car racing and the future of the sport remains intact.

I believe that the early NASCAR race tracks play an important role in the history of the United States and that they should be evaluated and recognized as such. My thesis hypothesis will examine how early NASCAR race tracks can be defined as heritage sites. The thesis research will examine three tracks within the larger framework of the development of stock car racing as NASCAR moved the sport from an early regional start in the Southern United States to a nationally popular sport. By exploring the continuum of culture and the living tradition associated with these tracks, my thesis will identify the value of NASCAR's heritage race tracks as culturally significant places in terms which can be understood and appreciated by those involved at all levels of stock car racing.

This thesis research will examine how early NASCAR race tracks can be defined as heritage resources and the ways that the community associated with stock car racing is a culture with identifiable heritage and traditions. That NASCAR and stock car racing are culturally significant is another supposition explored in this thesis research. The supposition that stock car racing and the tracks which have defined its growth are valid heritage resources was the foundation of the research for this thesis. While historic preservation in the United States is slowly beginning to explore what makes the vernacular landscape significant, the idea of a sporting venue as a valid cultural resource is still a relatively unfamiliar concept.

After a brief examination of the available preservation methods used in the United States, my thesis research will explore the preservation opportunities which a national heritage area can offer. My thesis findings will explain why the National Heritage Area Program is the best preservation program for heritage race tracks. This will establish a

framework for the preservation of significant NASCAR race tracks as well as encourage the future preservation of other stock car related heritage cultural resources.

An additional supposition for this thesis research is that a race track's physical integrity should not be the basis for determining significance within the preservation methodology, that the changeable and dynamic physical elements of the track are less significant than the ability of the race track to convey cultural meaning through continued use.

The last supposition of this thesis research is that race tracks as heritage resources require a preservation approach which emphasizes the holistic nature of active and changing heritage resources. Race tracks are not isolated sites of history; they are instead interconnected by their relationships with the local community and the complex culture of NASCAR and stock car racing.

Research Methods

My thesis research examines the history of stock car racing using several different approaches. Research was conducted in person in North and South Carolina and Virginia to find primary sources. The internet was used to delve into archives, find publications and access sources which would not have been otherwise available. To ensure the research for this thesis research will address both historic and current cultural contributions, personal interviews with members of the NASCAR community were an important part of the research process. The interviews were all conducted informally and were conversational in tone. Bud Moore, Cotton Owens, and his wife Dot Owens shared their stories of the early days of NASCAR and stock car racing. Vance Howell, who works for Stewart-Haas Racing as a transport hauler driver, gave an account of what

NASCAR is like in 2009. At Martinsville Speedway, President Clay Campbell was on hand to give an informal tour and answer questions about the track. At Darlington Raceway, Harold King, who has been involved with the track since its first years, recounted a history of the track. Chris Browning, President of Darlington Raceway, and Jacob Harris, the public relations representative, also added their thoughts on the track. Andy Hillenburg, President of Rockingham Speedway and Charles Hudson, public relations representative talked about what it was like to reopen a heritage race track.

This thesis examines the cultural presence at a NASCAR race weekend. To gain first hand knowledge of this experience the author, though very familiar with NASCAR races, attended the October 2008 Tums QuickPak 500 at Martinsville Speedway in Martinsville, Virginia and the May 2009 Southern 500 at Darlington Raceway in Darlington, South Carolina.

Site visits to each of the three proposed heritage tracks explored in this thesis research provided familiarity with each track's architecture and unique features. These visits also provided the opportunity to speak with individuals directly involved with the track and to gain a greater understanding of the significance of each race track. The three tracks used as case studies provided insight on the ways in which the modern requirements of a working sporting facility complement the active heritage of a cultural resource.

The archives of the major racing publication, *The National Speed Sport News* provided opinions contemporary to the developing years of stock car racing. The archives for *The Richmond County Journal* (Rockingham, North Carolina) and *The Darlington News and Press* (Darlington, South Carolina) were invaluable and provided information

and articles which discussed the construction and local impacts of each track. The International Speedway Corporation (ISC) NASCAR archives in Daytona Beach, Florida provided images and article clippings on the development of the sport. Each of the race tracks have a dedicated clippings file at the ISC Archives and information from these files was used to develop a more complete understanding of the history of each track.

Biographies, memoirs, histories of NASCAR and the few books published about specific race tracks served as resource material to gather stories about the tracks. These books also provided personal accounts about what each track meant to some of the people who have been involved with NASCAR for the last sixty years.

In order to discover which preservation approach would best address the needs of a race track as a heritage resource, publications and preservation organizations were consulted. The informational bulletins published by the National Park Service focused and simplified basic elements of preservation. The thesis research explores how the significance of a heritage resource, not easily recognized as a valid cultural resource, is established. Each of the preservation methods which are familiar to those in the field of historic preservation, the National Register, museums, and historic site development will be compared to a less familiar preservation option, the national heritage area. I will examine the best methods for a comprehensive and holistic approach to preservation and how each might address the needs of NASCAR's heritage race tracks.

Using these research methods, this thesis will first present an introduction to the history of NASCAR. This first chapter will bring my thesis research from the start of stock car racing into the modern NASCAR of 2009. After this introduction, the thesis research will examine the cultural elements which make heritage NASCAR race tracks

significant places. This chapter will provide an understanding of the ways in which NASCAR's heritage and traditions create a continuity of culture that is expressed at these heritage tracks. The fourth chapter in the thesis analysis will present three tracks as case studies for consideration as potential NASCAR heritage tracks: they are Martinsville Speedway in Virginia, Darlington Raceway in South Carolina, and Rockingham Speedway in North Carolina.

The fifth chapter of the thesis analysis will discuss national heritage areas and why they are the most fitting preservation option for heritage race tracks. Following a brief examination of other preservation methods, this chapter will define the ways the criteria of the National Heritage Area Program establish a framework for the preservation of heritage race tracks. The final chapter will discuss the research findings and conclusions reached by my thesis analysis. This chapter will also include recommendations for future research by others as well as discuss future preservation options for NASCAR's heritage race tracks. An appendix follows the main body of the thesis research which includes a discussion of a potential stock car racing themed national heritage area. A second appendix presents a brochure for a stock car themed national heritage area.

NASCAR and Stock Car Racing

NASCAR is stock car racing, but not all stock car racing is NASCAR. There are many facets to stock car racing heritage in the South and throughout the United States. NASCAR carried traditions and culture as it grew, creating its own identity as the most prominent and recognizable stock car series in the nation.

Though in recent years, NASCAR worked to expand beyond its Southern roots and in many ways disassociated itself with the South, stock car racing culture never left the South. Regional and local series, like the ones that NASCAR brought together in 1947 are still active in 2009. Local drivers, who the NASCAR fan might never have heard of, are the heroes at the local tracks. There are hundreds of tracks where NASCAR no longer races or never has raced; these tracks carry on the heritage of stock car racing at a local level. On Saturday nights, one can find local stock car racing flourishing at the local short tracks across the nation with little mention of NASCAR at all.

These local tracks do not have the same name recognition that NASCAR's heritage tracks enjoy, but they are an essential part of stock car racing culture. These tracks are what anchor NASCAR to its earliest roots. In discussing the ways that stock car culture manifests itself at NASCAR's heritage tracks, it is important to remember that NASCAR tracks are not the only place at which this culture thrives. The heritage of stock car racing extends both forward to major NASCAR tracks and backward to the local tracks. Likewise, it is imperative that any preservation program extend and incorporate these tracks as well. The greater stock car culture will benefit from having strong examples of heritage preservation as demonstrated by the examples of heritage NASCAR tracks examined in this thesis research. The inclusion of all elements of stock car racing into a preservation program is essential to preserving stock car culture.

NASCAR's heritage race tracks have an important role in the traditions and history of racing. Despite their potential as accessible and active historic resources, many older tracks are abandoned in favor of modern facilities. The heritage tracks of NASCAR are not only physical pieces of stock car history; they serve as literal forums for the

retelling and experiencing of the history of stock car racing. Once modern tracks replace the remaining older race tracks, it will be impossible to return to NASCAR's heritage places.

This thesis research examines how the continued use and reoccurring cultural events associated with three of NASCAR's heritage race tracks form the groundwork for historic significance of a greater stock car racing cultural presence in the United States. In order to do so, this thesis research will discuss the communities who maintain the traditions found at heritage race tracks. The local community associated with the race track by geographical location is the community which has developed an economic and cultural relationship with the track over the years. The track and the community define each other and so, are inextricable. The second community which identifies with the heritage race track is the larger stock car racing community. This community forms each race weekend. The arrival of NASCAR, visitors, and fans make up the core of this community. The heritage tracks have been a part of the NASCAR series for the last sixty years. The relationship between the race track, the community, and the larger organization of NASCAR imparts significance to the track. Without NASCAR's heritage tracks, an irreplaceable piece of the culture of stock car racing is lost.

This thesis research argues that NASCAR's heritage tracks and by extension, other early stock car race tracks, are valid and valuable heritage resources. It may be difficult for some to look past the rough spectacle that characterizes the world of stock car racing, but these race tracks are an important part of our American heritage. Stock car racing was part of the American culture even before the founding of NASCAR; for the last sixty years, NASCAR has been the core of stock car racing. The United States of

America is only two hundred and thirty three years old. Stock car racing has been a part of popular culture for more than a quarter of the nation's collective history.

The historic preservation community, while working hard to save historic buildings and traditional cultural resources, must take the time to consider those places which are significant for their cultural contributions and not their structural presence. Even if to outsiders NASCAR seems little more than fast cars driving in circles, there is a significant American culture centered on NASCAR's heritage race tracks. A creative and cohesive preservation plan will ensure the future of stock car racing heritage in the South.

CHAPTER II
A BRIEF HISTORY OF STOCK CAR RACING

Introduction

The National Register includes "Entertainment and Recreation" as one of the possible designations for a historic resources' area of significance. This category includes the development and practice of leisure activities, including sport. So while there is a recognizable and legitimate preservation category for heritage resources associated with sports and sporting events, there are only three race tracks listed in the National Register. Only two of these have an association with automobile racing, only one directly relates to stock car racing.

The National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing (NASCAR) is now more than sixty years old. Formed in December of 1947, the organization as a whole has only just begun to develop a sense of its own history. In 1998, NASCAR celebrated its 50th Anniversary with a standard marketing campaign which sold 50th Anniversary themed merchandise. While it was in fact a milestone in the history of the sport, NASCAR's acknowledgement of its own heritage did not expand much past special edition promotional merchandise and a television special which broadcast to a "new market" out of Beverly Hills. A naming of the Top 50 Drivers in NASCAR history brought forward a recognizable group of drivers into the spotlight. NASCAR approached quite differently their 60th Anniversary in 2008. The television commercials and merchandise for the 60th Anniversary celebrated the heritage and community of the sport. Television commercials

focused not just on one particular race or driver, but rather on the collective history and heritage of the sport. These commercials featured images of cars and drivers from the past sixty years, but also importantly, showed images of the fans throughout the years.

Promotions emphasized each race track's place in the history of NASCAR. Past champions were interviewed and honored for their contributions to NASCAR. A 60th Anniversary logo in a retro style recalled NASCAR's past logo styles. The message was clear that NASCAR and stock car racing have an important cultural history. There is finally an emerging self-awareness and a self recognition of the sport's own heritage that was not present for any of the 50th Anniversary celebrations. While the 50th Anniversary focused on advertisement, the 60th Anniversary acknowledged that the history of NASCAR deserved both recognition and celebration

The tracks used by NASCAR in 2009 are still a mixture of the past and present. During a race season, NASCAR holds races at both modern and historic tracks. The few tracks which were a part of the formative years of NASCAR still in use today must be considered heritage resources. These tracks facilitate the continuation of the culture which defines stock car racing in the United States. A better understanding of the traditions and heritage encourages a future appreciation for the culture of the sport while ensuring the preservation of the heritage race tracks.

This chapter explores the beginnings of stock car racing in America and how stock car racing became a popular sport in the years following World War II. This chapter also introduces the National Association of Stock Car Auto Racing and the ways in which its founder, Bill France, facilitated the growth of a past-time centered in the Southern United States to a nationally popular sport.

Faster! Faster Would Be Better: Racing in America

An old saying commonly attributed to the King of Stock Cars, Richard Petty says that "the first race was held the day that the second automobile rolled off the assembly line." America's first recorded automobile race on a closed course, rather than on a measured mile or straight road was held in 1896. The invention of the automobile changed the landscape of America and the affordability of Henry Ford's coupes changed the life of almost every American in the early part of the 20th century. Racing and the development of the automobile have always had an interwoven history.

As automobiles became plentiful and more affordable, they were soon a commonplace sight in America. It didn't take long before automobile owners were testing their new machines, pushing them to go faster and faster. Not long after that, the competitive spirit brought drivers together to prove who was the fastest. In the South, local boys started racing their cars on ovals carved into the red clay farm fields. These informal races were the grassroots of the National Association of Stock Car Auto Racing.

The history of automobile racing in America is long and complex. European traditions influenced early automobile racing in America. At the turn of the 20th century, open-wheel automobile races dominated the racing world. The cars, however, looked nothing like the few passenger cars available at the time; they had open cockpits, custom-built bodies, and fully-exposed wheels. These open-wheel cars, designed for speed and open-wheel racing, were popular throughout the western world.

As automobile racing gained popularity in America, fairground tracks that once featured horse races soon featured automobile races. The fairground tracks were usually dirt ovals, though some, especially in the East, featured board tracks. The board tracks

were constructed with wooden boards laid end to end to make an extremely high banked and extremely fast racing surface.[1] Board tracks, however, were costly to maintain and easily damaged by bad weather. They fell out of favor but were influential in the future design of other race tracks, especially the high banked paved oval tracks.[2]

Figure 1: Checking the board track. The boards are set face to face, creating a fast and smooth racing surface. [*Auto Racing in Charlotte*, c1919.]

Although horse racing remains a popular event in the United States, the two sports have two very different development histories. Their shared common heritage factor, the race track, defines each sport differently. Tracks built with the sole purpose of hosting automobile races began to appear around the country and the two sports diverged completely.

Open-wheel racing has always had a certain respectability stemming from its own long standing traditions and history. Though it eventually gained a much broader appeal, stock car racing has been long been perceived as a lower class of racing.[3] Articles written

during the early years of stock car racing often used words like “jalopy,” slang for a run down old car, to compare the common stock car to the more elegant open-wheel race cars. While it may not have been as glamorous, stock car racing continued to gain a foot hold in the racing world. The growing number of race tracks which featured stock car races increased as a tangible mark of the sport’s increasing popularity. On the other hand, the most famous track in the United States and one of the oldest, Indianapolis Motor Speedway, is an excellent example of the reluctance of many people to accept stock car racing as a legitimate sport. Built in 1909, it is only very recently, 1994, that stock cars raced at Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

Figure 2: North Wilkesboro Speedway. North Wilkesboro, North, Carolina. The last race of the NASCAR Grand National Series, 1949 season. Red Byron, in the #22 Oldsmobile, has taped up his headlights to prevent the glass from shattering. [*History of NASCAR*, 1949.]

The first race tracks designed specifically for stock car racing used the informal dirt ovals carved in the red clay fields of the South as a pattern. These tracks were short, usually a mile or less in total length. Even though they were still little more than ovals in

the clay, seating areas were set aside and grandstands were built for spectators to sit in. As stock car racing matured, tracks expanded their facilities. Eventually, however, the older tracks which characterized the early development of stock car racing fell out of favor. Smaller tracks were soon unable to host the faster cars and the growing numbers of race fans. Larger, more modern facilities replaced most of those first tracks. Tracks which are closed are said to have "gone dark" and in this modern era of racing, too many of stock car racing's earliest tracks have gone dark.

Run What You Brung; Defining the Stock Car

The term stock car refers to a car that anyone could purchase from an auto dealer, directly from the showroom floor. Stock car racing originally used cars not specifically designed for racing, unlike the open-wheel race cars which featured custom built performance elements. As automobile manufacturers increased their involvement in the sport, they manufactured stock cars specifically engineered for racing. The cars maintained the idea of the stock car by using familiar models while at the same time engineering them with modifications designed for racing speed and safety.

Stock car racing in the United States came into its own as a recognizable sport in the years following World War II. Though it had been steadily growing in popularity, stock car racing did not have a large umbrella organization to manage or coordinate the sport. Often track owners did not have the money to keep their facilities safe for the drivers or fans. For years, stock car races were poorly organized and the rules and regulations differed from region to region. Promoters were notorious for disappearing after a race, leaving the winner with bragging rights but not the promised prize money. Cotton Owens, a driver who raced stock cars before the formation of NASCAR still

remembers promoters who would disappear at the end of a race with the money intended for the race winner in their own pocket.[4]

Before 1947, the American Automobile Association (AAA) sanctioned all forms of automobile racing yet declined involvement with something as "minor league" as the developing sport of stock car racing.[5] The sanctioning of a race means that an organizing body sets up an official procedure to run the races. The sanctioning body organizes the rules, regulations, prizes, and championships for a specific racing series.

Figure 3: NASCAR's 1948 Logo. [*National Speed Sport News (NSSN) Archives,* 1948.]

Bill France, the founder of NASCAR, raced in the pre-World War II stock car races. He experienced first hand look the corruption and disorganization that plagued the races. There was a desperate need for a solid and organized system. In the late 1930's, Bill France created the National Championship Stock Car Circuit, his first stock car series. France attempted to garner the support of the American Automobile Association, hoping that they would change their mind and be willing to sanction stock car racing. The AAA was still unimpressed and declined the offer to sanction stock car races.[6] An

intelligent and ruthless businessman, Bill France took his personal experiences with stock car racing and laid the groundwork to create the first national stock car racing series.

The history of NASCAR is commonly divided into three eras. Important developments and growth within the sport define each of these eras. The Early Years of NASCAR, which include the formation of NASCAR as a sanctioning body and the development of stock car racing as an organized sport, dates from 1947 through 1958. The Era of the Superspeedway, 1959 through 1970, saw the development of larger tracks and a continued expansion outside of the rural South. Finally, the Modern Era begins in approximately 1971 as television coverage began in earnest, and more importantly, when the North Carolina based R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company stepped forward as the sponsor of NASCAR's Grand National Series.

A Southern Sport

Fed by the development of cars designed for whiskey runs in middle of the night and by a working class culture that needed something both exciting and familiar, stock car racing became synonymous with the American South. Fast cars were already a major part of Southern culture and making them faster was a high priority for moonshiners. Speed and handling, how well a car can maneuver through turns and down straight roads, were important to the drivers running whiskey in the middle of the night; mechanics improved the springs, shocks, body design, and made deliberate modifications of their cars. There was one purpose to all of these modifications, out drive the law and get the whiskey delivered. These mechanical considerations influenced the development of stock car racing.

Fast cars were popular across the nation even before racing became well organized. While the whiskey runners were developing cars that could outrun the law in the South, Californians developed their own car culture around the hot rod. An interest in making cars go faster connected the east and west coasts long before NASCAR held its first race. California's hot rod engine development technology even enhanced some of the South's moonshine coupes.[7]

What then defines stock car racing as a southern sport? While early stock car races were held in almost every state, the sport flourished in South. There is no other part of the country that is associated with stock car racing more than the American South. Interestingly, one of the most important elements of NASCAR was its ability to expand beyond the regionalism that was associated with stock car racing. Since NASCAR was a national sanctioning body, rather than a regional one, the relationships with tracks outside of the South were important as well. Drivers from northern and southern states took part in the inaugural events of NASCAR. During these formative years, NASCAR was looking west too. Under direction from Bill France, officials from NASCAR were working with track promoters in California as early as 1949.[8]

Today, NASCAR races at twenty-two different tracks around the United States and there are countless local stock car tracks in every state in the nation. Yet, the stereotype of stock car fans and drivers remains the "bubba" image of the working class white Southerner. The popularity of stock car racing in the South has translated into a stereotypical image of what it means to be a race fan or a race car driver. The wildness, danger, and Southerness of stock car racing portrayed in popular culture are often an exaggerated caricature of a distinct culture.

Modern movies like *Talladega Nights* (2006) portray stock car culture as uneducated, ridiculously religious, and over excitable; while classic movies like *Thunder Road* (1958) depict the South's early racing days as dangerous and unlawful.

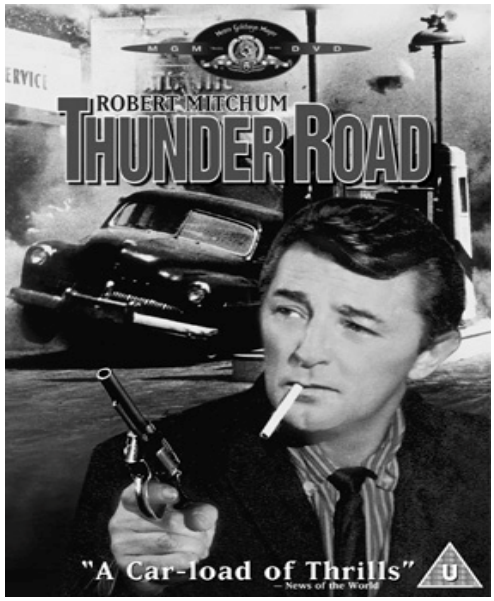

Figure 4: Poster for MGM's *Thunder Road*. Robert Mitchum holds his gun high to show how dangerous the outlaw world of moonshine is. [MGM, 2008.]

Programs on the History Channel explore the cultural roots of moonshine, racing, and the South with a more academic approach, but with the same touch of this story telling tradition, emphasizing the danger and drama of whiskey fed high speed chases. Under the categories of either history or folk lore, the South and fast cars are inseparable.

In fact, much of the South's influence on stock car racing's development came from the fact that for many people, there was very little money. With little else to do other than work in the American South after World War II, racing provided an easy escape from a hard life.[9] Automobiles were an affordable luxury that the driver could use

for both work and play. Stock car racing became an important and inclusive cultural element of the South, for both the spectator and driver, since all members of the community could enjoy racing.

Stock cars were familiar; the same car that one drove down to the next town to pick up groceries could also out pace the neighbor's coupe, if driven well enough. The development of race tracks, the first of which were unused farm fields or pastures, encouraged the development of the sport in rural areas. Since the basic requirements of racing are automobiles and open space, racing rapidly flourished within any interested community. Despite the efforts of Bill France to expand NASCAR away from the South, and the continued modern efforts to separate the racing culture from this heritage, no other sport in America is as regionally defined, without actually being regionally confined.

Defining the South

Using the Bureau of the Census parameters, the South is defined as sixteen states reaching from Texas to Maryland.[10] However, the "South" means many different things to many different people and requires a detailed examination of cultural, regional and historical differences that come together to define this region. The South is often most simply defined as states located below the Mason-Dixon Line or that part of the nation which seceded during the Civil War. The pop-culture reference guide, *1001 Things Everyone Should Know About the South* by John Shelton Reed and Dale Volberg Reed maps out the states which are commonly included when one refers to the "South." The Reeds also map out the South by the states of the Confederacy, the states which have

communities which define themselves as “Southern” and the states geographically located below the Mason Dixon Line.[11]

The entry in *1001 Things* for stock car racing is brief and to the point, describing the sport as a combination of “horse racing and the southern cult of the car.” The entry notes that over forty-nine percent of Southerners have attended a stock car race and that in the mid 1990s (at the time of publication) most professional stock car drivers were still from the South.[12] The entry is accurate, but misses the complex combination of culture and history which defines stock car racing. Many entries in the book for events, people, and places reference the reader back to the entry for stock car racing, accentuating the tight bond between different aspects of the South and stock car racing.

Interestingly, entry number 36 of 1001 in this informal guidebook to Southern popular culture is the town of Darlington, South Carolina. Under the heading of “Eponymous Cities and Towns” and joining ranks with historic Civil War sites and towns which represent civil rights and labor movement events, the Reeds chose Darlington to represent the stock car world of the South.

The home of the Southern 500 is listed alongside other cities which have influenced the cultural direction of the United States. The acknowledgement that a sporting event is a defining characteristic of the region is an indication of the significant impact of stock car racing in the South. Eponymous is defined as “being named for something.”[13] Indeed, there is no more appropriate entry to define the connection of stock car racing and the South than Darlington, South Carolina.

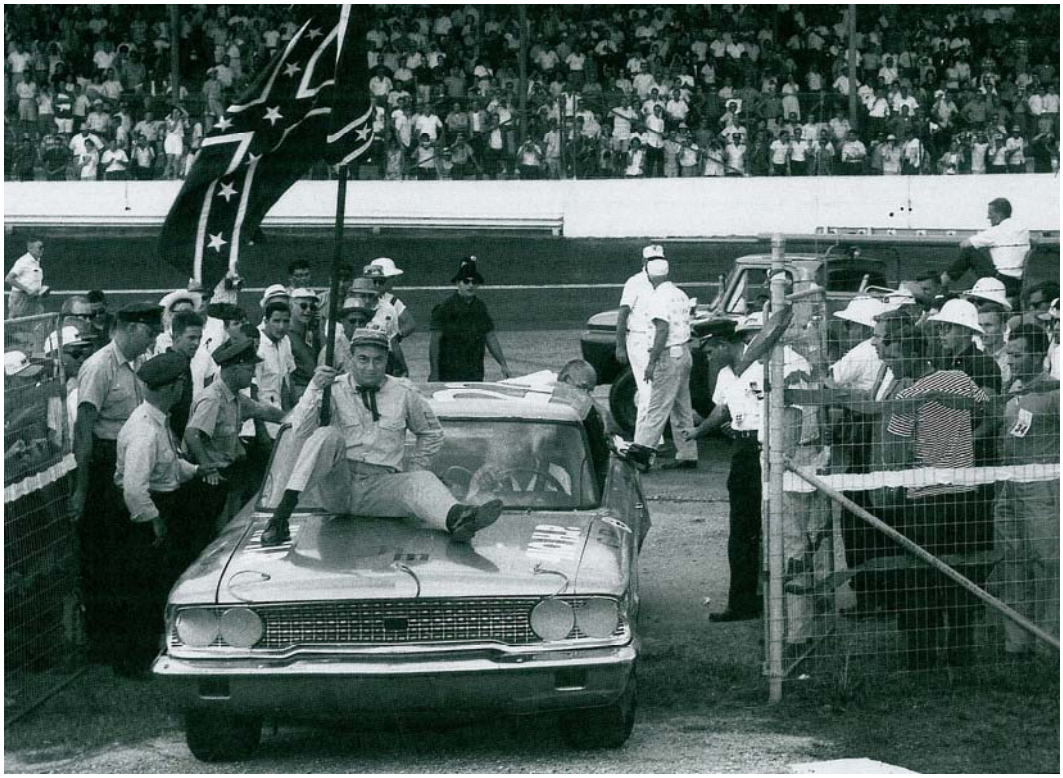

Figure 5: Johnny Reb, the mascot for the Southern 500 at Darlington Raceway from 1962-1967 represents Southern pride and heritage at the Southern 500 as he rides Fireball Roberts' #22 to Victory Lane. The Confederate Flag is still found at many NASCAR races, but is no longer officially endorsed. [MGM, 2008.]

Speed in the South

There is not one state within the South that is easily identified as the singular birthplace of stock car racing. Influences came from the high-speed beaches of Daytona, from the growing stock car culture in North Carolina, and from the bootleggers and early race tracks in Georgia. Each contributed to the cultural legacy of stock car racing. Many other Southern states have their own influential contribution to the collective stock car culture, the following is just a few examples of the ways in which stock car racing developed out of the American Southern states.

The Beaches of Florida

Daytona Beach, Florida is considered the birthplace of speed but not necessarily the birth place of stock car racing. Before the 1930s, the hard packed sand beaches hosted speed trials, land speed records, and some of the earliest organized racing competitions. Daytona Beach is home to one of the most storied race tracks in racing history. The Daytona Beach and Road course presented a unique challenge to drivers; the course ran on both the sand and the paved road. There was actually more than one beach course over the years in Daytona Beach, Florida. It is important to recognize the difference in the heritage contributions of the first beach course, the beach-and-road course, which had drivers racing on both the hard packed sand and the highway which ran parallel to it, and the two and a half mile paved oval track which now exists in Daytona.

In 1903, William J. Morgan began promoting automobile races as part of a winter carnival in Daytona Beach. Famous drivers like Barney Oldfield and William K. Vanderbilt raced at the Winter Carnival speed trials. In the meantime, open-wheel cars had begun racing at Indianapolis Motor Speedway; this changed the dynamics of where and how races were held. Automobiles were racing against each other around an oval track rather than in straight, single car time trials or straight course races between two individual cars. In 1935, the land speed trials moved from the beaches of Florida to the Bonneville Salt Flats of Utah. Many racers and enthusiasts remained in Florida, even after the speed trails relocated. As a modern commercial for NASCAR states, “racing isn’t something you do, it’s who you are,” and it wasn’t long before another race was organized in Daytona Beach.

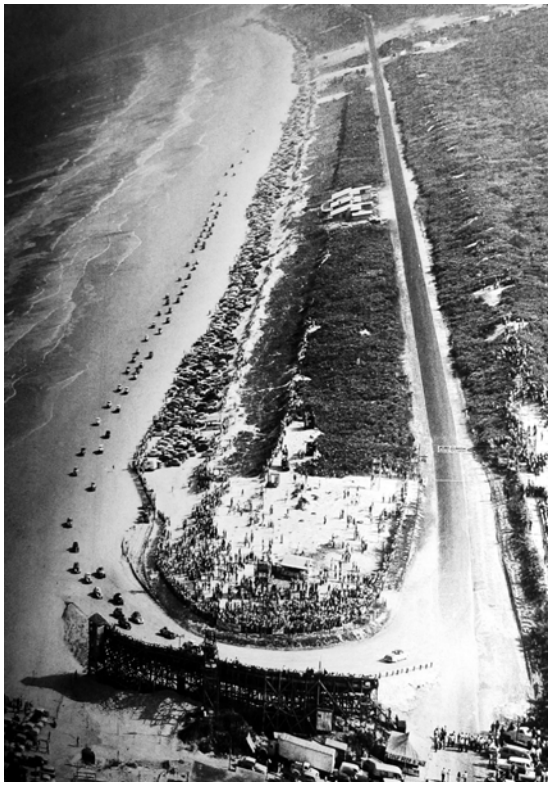

Figure 6: The Daytona Beach-and-Road Course, the A1A Highway is on the right of the image. NASCAR raced on the Beach-and-Road Course from 1949-1958. [Image courtesy of Daytona 500 Experience, Daytona Beach, Florida. c1949.]

It was Sig Haugdahl, holder of the 1922 the land speed record, who devised a race course incorporating both the familiar stretch of Daytona Beach sand and the US A1A Highway parallel to it. In the race, the cars used the pavement and the beach, creating a rough oval shape with two different surfaces. The first race held in 1936 and managed by the city was a total failure.[14] However, two years later under Bill France's direction, the Beach-and-Road Course at Daytona flourished. France invited southern dirt track drivers with whom he had once raced to Florida with an offer to test their skills on the sand. By promoting the idea that racing on sand was not that much different than racing on dirt,

France managed to bring some of the most famous Southern dirt track racers to Florida for his stock car races.

Because of France's successful integration of the Southern racing culture with the beaches of Florida, Florida remained an important part of stock car racing for the next two decades. [15] Eventually, development and the changing nature of the town of Daytona Beach re-directed racing in Florida. Facing complaints from the developers who were building hotels along the beach and encouraged by the success of stock car races on paved tracks, France built the Daytona International Speedway and moved racing at Daytona to a paved oval track in 1959.

Today, Daytona Beach remains an essential part of modern stock car racing. The annual Daytona 500 runs each February at the Daytona International Speedway. Since 1959, this is the opening race for each NASCAR season.

The Red Clay of North Carolina and Georgia's Moonshine Roots

Though Bill France started NASCAR in Daytona Beach, Florida, the heart of stock car racing both past and present, is in North Carolina. In small towns around North Carolina, stock car racing developed organically in the back yard garages of local shade tree mechanics. NASCAR held three out of the first eight sanctioned stock car races on race tracks in North Carolina. The first race featuring Strictly Stock cars ran at Charlotte Speedway in 1948. Today, stock car racing remains centered in North Carolina with more than ninety percent of the offices and shops of the competitive teams located in or near Charlotte.[16] NASCAR has anchored the future of stock car racing within its own regional past, as the new NASCAR Hall of Fame is now open in downtown Charlotte.

Stock car racing was one of the few options for entertainment while making or distributing illegal whiskey was one of even fewer ways to make a living. Benny Parsons, the 1973 NASCAR Winston Cup Champion remembered how difficult it was living in the rural south from the 1930s to the 1950s. "Trust me, there was nothing to do in the mountains of North Carolina…you either worked at a hosiery mill, a furniture factory, or you made whiskey."[17] Some of the young men who became the first stock car drivers of NASCAR had hours of practice, speeding down back roads on whiskey runs.

Though often discounted as a romanticized element of stock car history, the moonshine culture had a great impact on the stock car drivers in the South. In 1956, local revenuers arrested Junior Johnson, perhaps one of the best drivers to ever pilot a stock car, at his father's whiskey still in Wilkes County, North Carolina. He was simply lighting the fires under the stills but as a result, he spent six years in prison for moonshining when he should have been out racing. Today, in an interesting approach to blending history with capitalism, Junior Johnson has his own legal brand of moonshine for sale in Southern liquor stores. In fact, NASCAR's moonshine roots still reappear every once in awhile; a 2009 news article reports that a former NASCAR driver was arrested for maintaining an illegal still in the hills of North Carolina.[18]

Georgia's infamous number of moonshiners and the well known Lakewood Speedway outside of Atlanta formed the base for stock car racing in the state. Since it opened in 1906, Lakewood Speedway hosted open-wheel racing and the track soon became a popular venue for local stock cars as well. Lakewood Speedway hosted one of the first organized stock car races in the United States. Bill France's pre-NASCAR organization, the National Championship Stock Car Circuit, held the first stock car race

here in 1938. It was Lloyd Seay, gifted racer and notorious moonshine runner, who won this first race. The United States government and industry leaders placed a national ban on automobile racing for the duration of World War II, as the resources of both man and machine were needed elsewhere.[19] Lakewood Speedway hosted the final stock car race before World War II, on November 2, 1941. This last pre-war stock car race ran as a memorial event to honor Lloyd Seay. Though he had just won the race at the speedway a month earlier, Lloyd Seay had been shot dead by his cousin during an argument over moonshine revenues.[20] For some, stock car racing and whiskey running were still synonymous.

NASCAR hosted stock car races here from 1951 until the 1959 but the Lakewood Speedway no longer exists. The track is visible at the end of the popular movie *Smokey and the Bandit* but was abandoned and partially demolished in 1989.[21] Today, the only NASCAR Cup racing in Georgia is at the modernized Atlanta Motor Speedway, a one and a half mile speedway built in 1960.[22]

Moonshine and Stock Cars

Prohibition and subsequently the end of prohibition, introduced massive taxes on alcohol. Both laws gave a notable rise to the popularity of distilling and selling illegal, untaxed liquor. Moonshiners avoided taxes altogether by distilling the liquor in hidden stills and selling it to friends, families and other locals. Though making moonshine is not a new phenomenon in the United States, the advent of the automobile gave the bootleggers a new way to transport their goods.

In his book *Driving with the Devil*, Neal Thompson explores in detail the shared legacy of the early southern moonshiners and stock car racing in Georgia. Illegal liquor

did not have a role in the personal history of every early stock car driver, but to dismiss the legacy of moonshine is to dismiss an extraordinary part of stock car racing history. Some of NASCAR's earliest heroes were involved in running moonshine, "learning driving skills and honing instincts that would transfer perfectly to racing."[23] For some, the transition from the dangerous curves of the roads to the dirt turns of a race track came easily. "We didn't have no tickets, no safety equipment, no fences, no nothing," recounts Tim Flock, a Georgia moonshiner and two time NASCAR Grand National Champion, "just a bunch of bootleggers who'd been arguing all week about who had the fastest car would get together and prove it."[24]

It is a continuing argument whether the relationship between the moonshine culture of the South and the early development of NASCAR is an exaggeration of a small facet or whether it was indeed a major influence on the history of stock car racing. In fact, NASCAR has never quite decided whether this is a part of their own history they are interested in acknowledging. A publicity photo for the 1981 Old Dominion 500 at Martinsville Speedway depicts driver Darrel Waltrip, car owner Junior Johnson and track owner H. Clay Earles dressed up as "old time moonshiners ready to protect their load of Mountain Dew."

Waltrip's primary sponsor for his car at the time was Mountain Dew, a brand of soda. In the South, "mountain dew" is also a slang term for moonshine. The image is an interesting portrayal of the moonshine roots of NASCAR. There is a bit of a joke, implying that these guys are willing to shoot anyone who comes near their soda. At the same time, a joke photo with Junior Johnson, who actually was arrested for his involvement with moonshine, acknowledges the sport's sometimes less than legal roots.

Figure 7: Junior Johnson, H. Clay Earles, and Darrell Waltrip guard their Mountain Dew. [T. Tyler Warren, 1981.]

Southern Drivers

Though stock car racing was popular in many different states, most of NASCAR's first drivers were from Southern states. There are some notable exceptions including the winner of the first Southern 500 (1950) Johnny Mantz, a driver from California. The first race of the 1949 season featured fifty drivers, thirty-two of whom were from the South. In 1960, the percentage of Southern drivers to drivers from outside the South was still greater, with forty of fifty drivers from Southern states. By the Modern Era, this balance had still not changed. [25] This changed by 2000, more drivers

were from states like California than from the South. The 2009 Series, however, has shifted the ratio back in favor of the South; listed teams for the 2009 NASCAR Sprint Cup season have Southern drivers outnumbering non-Southern drivers again, by one.[26] This fluctuation of home states of drivers has become a symbolic statistic for the sport rather than an indicator of regional popularity or influence. The return of the Southern driver is a gauge for a return of an appreciation of NASCAR's Southern roots.

Family legacies in racing are an extremely important part of Southern heritage and are extremely significant to NASCAR's history. Multi-generational racing families are a major element in NASCAR. There are some drivers racing in the 2009 season whose grandfathers raced in the races organized by Bill France. The Pettys, the Bakers, the Allisons, the Earnhardts, and the Jarrets are all legacy families of racing, with drivers from each generation racing in NASCAR. In 2009, Jeffery Earnhardt, grandson of the late Dale Earnhardt, Sr. will begin his racing career in the Nationwide Series. He will be the fourth generation of the Earnhardt family to be involved in NASCAR racing. Without exception, the multi-generational racing families in NASCAR are all from the South.

Families involved with racing over several generations are not limited to driving; the France family has passed the stewardship of NASCAR down through the generations as well. In 2009, the current CEO and Chairman of NASCAR, Brian France is Bill France's grandson. His father, Bill France, Jr., took the helm of NASCAR when Bill France retired. Brian's uncle, Jim France and his sister Lesa Kennedy France are both on the Board of Directors for NASCAR.[27] The significance placed on family and family traditions strengthens the core values of heritage within stock car racing.

Stock Car Racing After World War II

During World War II, a ban on automobile racing prohibited all racing. Tracks went bankrupt, drivers went to war, and the racing community and the nation waited for the war to end. Even the *National Speed Sport News*, a newspaper dedicated to covering motorsports, went from a weekly publication to a monthly publication. Track news and driver news still filtered through the presses, but all racing in the United States had stopped. Shortly after the end of World War II, the August 1945 edition of the *National Speed Sport News* announced that the ban on racing had lifted. Speedways around the United States were ready to return to racing.[28]

Before World War II, the majority of articles, racing announcements and stories in the *National Speed Sport News* focused on open-wheel racing. Almost immediately after the war, the stories that featured stock car news grew at a rapid rate until they far outnumbered the news regarding any other form of racing. This reflected the growing popularity of stock car racing after the war. Veterans, who had been race car drivers before the war and soldiers during, returned to the tracks. Four years after World War II halted racing in the United States, Lakewood Speedway hosted the return of stock car racing on September 3, 1945. Roy Hall took first place beating out Bill France to win the seventy-five mile event.

Drivers like Red Byron returned ready to take to the track despite war injuries or their personal experiences in battle. Byron, a flight engineer during the war, nearly lost a leg when he was shot down by enemy fire. He refused to allow doctors to amputate the mangled limb, fearing that he would never be able to race again. Byron returned to racing

in 1946 after two years of rehabilitation. Red Vogt, a Georgia mechanic and car builder for racers and whiskey runners alike, designed a special brace which snapped together and attached Byron's foot to the gas pedal. In 1946, Byron won the first post-war race he entered. He continued his legacy by winning the first officially sanctioned NASCAR race held in 1948 and capturing the 1948 and 1949 points championships.

Of course, it wasn't just the drivers who returned to racing. Bill France came back to organize the first sanctioned national stock car racing circuit, while men like H. Clay Earles and Harold Brasington returned to build race tracks. The passion for speed, set aside for World War II, returned with great enthusiasm from all sides of stock car racing.

Figure 8: Raymond Parks talks with Red Byron. Mud from the dirt track has sprayed up over the front of the car. [*Legends of NASCAR*, 1949.]

At the close of the 1947 racing season, France held a meeting at the Streamline Hotel in Daytona Beach, Florida. France called together thirty-five drivers, car owners, and mechanics who he felt could best help develop a nationwide sanctioning body for stock car racing. He wanted to create an organization that would not only be respectable, but would establish uniform rules and regulations for stock car racing. France believed that the working class people enjoyed stock car races as much as any Vanderbilt enjoyed open-wheel racing. "Plain, ordinary working people have to be able to associate with the cars. Standard street stock cars are what we should be running."[29] It was the very simple idea that everyday American cars were exciting that formed the core of NASCAR.

"Big Bill" France set up an American touring series with a points fund system, a guaranteed purse at the end of each race, and a championship payout at the end of each season. While there were many regional and statewide sanctioning bodies for stock car racing, NASCAR established a uniform series of races and rules for the drivers. Bill France deliberately extended NASCAR beyond regional racing to include race tracks all over the United States.

Another key concept behind France's plan for NASCAR was to legitimize the sport by keeping records and listing winners just as the AAA did for the open-wheel racing. Perhaps the most significant aspect of France's first efforts was that NASCAR crowned a stock car champion at the end of each season. At the end of the 1947 season when Fonty Flock won the first Grand National Championship, he collected a four foot trophy and the promised points fund purse of $1000.00.[30] Unlike most all other stock car

promoters of the time, France proved that he was reliable and that he kept his promises to drivers, fans, and local track owners.

Red Vogt, an ingenious mechanic of early stock car racing was the one who actually came up with the name "National Association of Stock Car Auto Racing." The name was chosen to reflect the breadth of the organization. France wanted to ensure that NASCAR was not limited by the earlier perceptions of stock car racing.[31] Though NASCAR had its origins in the South and Bill France was working with southerners while promoting a southern sport, he still wanted a national organization.

In 1948, the *National Speed Sport News* agreed that NASCAR was fast gaining in both popularity and legitimacy. An article reported that Bill France had sent out a questionnaire to ask the "drivers, owners, mechanics and members" to determine the best way to move forward with the newly formed stock car association. [32] France had again taken a step that no other racing promoter or sanctioning organization had done before; he had asked the drivers what they thought. France's early experience as a driver and independent promoter gave him an advantage which he continued to use to make NASCAR a successful series and organization.

Bill France organized three divisions of stock car racing. The three divisions were modifieds, strictly stock and roadsters. Significantly different from the stock car races to come, which eventually became the most popular of the three, the modified races featured mostly pre-war cars. When he formed NASCAR, France wanted to focus on post-war and new model cars. By 1949, there were finally enough current model cars available to require post-war model cars for entry into the Strictly Stock series. This

series required specific models and year of manufacture as well as set specifications and parameters for engines, body sizes, and other basic aspects of the car.

Bill France named NASCAR's racing series Strictly Stock Series (1947-1949) and in 1950, thinking that Strictly Stock sounded too plain, France renamed the series the NASCAR Grand Nationals, after the British horse racing series. The series has had many names, the NASCAR Grand National Series 1950-1970, the Winston Cup Series 1971-2003, and the Nextel Cup Series 2004-2007. As of the 2008 season, NASCAR's highest racing series has been known as the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series. In 2009, the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series will hold thirty-six stock car races each year to determine its annual national stock car champion.

Color, Speed, and Good Management

As a sanctioning body for stock cars, NASCAR forever changed the landscape of stock car racing in America. By 1950, the AAA, along with many others like the ISCRA (Interstate Stock Car Association), CSRA (Central States Racing Association), and the United Stock Car Racing Club had organized stock car racing series, but none could successfully compete on a national level with NASCAR.[33] In 2009, there are still regional racing series that are not affiliated with NASCAR.

A 1949 advertisement meant to attract track owners, local promoters, drivers, and car owners lists a "national" office headquarters and as well as a National Commissioner. The advertisement declares that the newly forming NASCAR is the only nationally recognized stock car association.[34] Suddenly, the disorganization and uncertainty that had defined the stock car races dissipated; a reliable sanctioning body offered legitimacy that stock car racing lacked until now. Though previous editorial columns wrote with thinly

veiled disdain for stock car racing, in 1949, *National Speed Sport News*' weekly columnist Carl "Pops" Green noted that stock cars, once ridiculed, had now overtaken the racing world, a "dark horse stealing the thunder from the Big Car and Midget circuits."[35] Stock car races were becoming more popular than open-wheel racing at tracks across the nation. Green credits the Southern "Rebels" with the growing and exciting popularity of stock car races.

By 1950, Pops conceded that Bill France had indeed discovered what the public wanted when they attended a stock car race: "plenty of cars, plenty of excitement, color, speed, and good management." [36] Each year France worked to develop better racing by adding new tracks, encouraging new drivers to join and developing rules and regulations which would strengthen the organization. The end goal, a respectable and respected national stock car series was a work in progress. By establishing a singular organization which successfully incorporated racing in states all around the United States, Bill France legitimized the foundations and traditions that define modern stock car racing.

Family Car/Race Car

Widely available and actually having a new model car to race were sometimes two very different things. Many of the drivers brought their own personal cars to race. In the first decades of NASCAR, car builders and mechanics would bring cars to the races to match up with a driver looking for a car, creating some of the early successful partnerships in NASCAR's history.[37] Racing in the later years was very different, team owners like Carl Kiekhaefer used haulers to transport the race cars in the 1950s while drivers like Curtis Turner flew to races in their personal airplanes. Since the races were "stock," there was an abundant field of cars to choose from, in the attendees' parking lot.

Fans were often more than willing to give up their own personal cars to be entered into the race.[38] Stories of race fans who lent the family car to a driver are passed along in the folklore of the sport. These stories are a legitimate part of NASCAR's history and they appear in several biographies and histories of the sport.

The first Strictly Stock race sanctioned by NASCAR was held at the Charlotte Speedway on June 19, 1949. For this race, driver Tim Flock borrowed a car from one of the fans at the track, painted a number on the sides, taped up the headlights, tied the door down, and finished in fifth place. Also driving a car borrowed from a gentleman at the track was racer Glenn Dunnaway, who technically won the race. More than 13,000 people watched Dunnaway take his borrowed Ford through the dirt turns and beat an impressive field including Jim Roper, who came in second, two of the Flock Brothers, the fearless female racer Sara Christian and the patriarch of a stock car racing dynasty, Lee Petty. [39] Dunnaway collected $2,000 in prize money and the dubious honor of being the first driver ever disqualified for cheating in a NASCAR race.[40]

Figure 9: 1949 NASCAR's first Strictly Stock Race at Charlotte Speedway. Red Byron's #22 Oldsmobile runs ahead of Fonty Flock in the #47 Hudson. [*Auto Racing*, 1949.]

Whether or not he knew it, (he argued that he did not) Dunnaway's 1947 Ford was modified to make whiskey runs. The springs had been stiffened with wedges to better corner through the turns, a common and simple modification made by moonshiners. The stiffened springs were not discovered until the post race inspection and Dunnaway was immediately disqualified.[41] Determining that a stock car matched a standard set of official technical specifications ensured that the field of cars was equal. These rules distinguished the strictly stock races from the earlier modified series stock car races. More importantly, the enforcement of these rules made it extraordinarily clear that this was a legitimate racing organization and that it was necessary to abide by the rules and regulations of NASCAR if you wanted to race.

The involvement of manufacturers, Ford, and later Chevrolet, Oldsmobile and many others, played an important part in the development of racing in the United States. As stock car racing became increasingly popular, the automobile manufacturers realized that a car winning a race was the best advertisement they could hope for. NASCAR required entrants to use cars which were available directly from the factories, stock, with no modifications. Soon, NASCAR's requirements influenced the development of the automobiles coming out of the factories. The factory designers, in order to meet NASCAR's stringent "stock" rules adapted their designs to create racing ready engines and bodies.

The changes to design in order to increase the speed, handling, and power of an automobile became "stock" features. Since NASCAR's rules also required that the cars entered into the races were available to the public, the manufacturers were soon

producing high performance automobiles for sale. The high performance cars were produced in limited numbers designed to meet NASCAR's bare minimum public availability requirements but influenced advances in speed, performance, and handling for everyday automobiles. The automobile industry had accepted the fact that stock car racing played a significant part in the marketability of their brand as well as the development of their cars. The familiar adage, "Run What You Brung," indicating that the driver had raced his family car on the track (and would be driving it home again afterwards) was replaced with the manufacturer's desire to "Win on Sunday, Sell on Monday."

Bill France and NASCAR

The history of Bill France and NASCAR's growth is an interesting study of one man's determination, force of will and absolute power over a sport. NASCAR, as its own sanctioning body made its own rules from day one and still does so today, in 2009. Rules were often made on a case by case basis, with recommendations becoming a rule as necessitated by event. There is little about this particular aspect of NASCAR that has changed in sixty years and this management style has at times, riled both mechanics and drivers.

Though there was considerable care given to the well being of the drivers, France fought against two attempts by the drivers to form a drivers' union. In 1961, he banned for life two of NASCAR's most popular drivers for trying to organize a driver's union.[42] Hearing that Curtis Turner and Tim Flock begun to organize a union and that drivers were signing union cards, Big Bill France put an immediate stop to the plans and any attempts at dividing the power within NASCAR. At the driver's meeting prior to the race

at Bowman-Gray Stadium, in Winston-Salem, North Carolina France announced that any union driver was prohibited from racing on any NASCAR track. To back up his words, he then threatened to shoot any driver who thought to try.[43]

Though there were several reasons behind France's rejection of unionizing. Besides maintaining his control over the drivers and the series, France was extraordinarily concerned with the involvement of organized crime in unions and the impact they might have on NASCAR. One end product of the involvement of the criminal mob would have been the introduction of pari-mutuel betting at the race tracks, similar to the organized gambling prominent at horse races. France felt that it would severely impact the integrity of the sport to allow betting on NASCAR races.

It is widely agreed that NASCAR was a benevolent dictatorship of sorts, and that it developed so successfully, because there was no other input allowed. France worked for what he believed was the good of the sport and little else mattered. Few people have recalled Bill France as anything other than ruthless, but all agree that there was no other way in which NASCAR could have succeeded. This has not changed much in 2009; there is no drivers' union and NASCAR makes the rules as they are applicable to the sport. NASCAR also has the final say in any dispute or argument.

Modern Developments in NASCAR

France's hard work brought the sport from its beginnings on dirt tracks to the Superspeedway Era of the 1960s and through the Modern Era. Along the way, France battled to keep the image of NASCAR as respectable as possible. In doing so he removed as much of the remainder of stock car racings humble beginnings as he could. France's attempts to legitimize stock car racing manifested in many ways. He banned alcohol and

women from the infield area.[44] More races were added in the north and west, and NASCAR drivers were not allowed to race in any other series' races.

In 1957, factory support for stock car racing briefly ended. However, NASCAR no longer relied on the automotive world to bring attention to the sport. NASCAR's Grand National Series had developed its own identity and reputation. In 1957, NASCAR held thirty-seven races in twelve states. The construction of the Daytona International Speedway in 1959 caught the attention of the television media. In 1960, CBS broadcast the preliminary races at Daytona into homes across America. Though they did not televise the entire four and a half hour Daytona 500, it marked the beginning of an entirely different audience for stock car racing.[45] After that first broadcast, ABC's *Wide World of Sports* began broadcasting hour and a half segments covering the Grand National Races. At first, television coverage of stock car racing was sporadic and showed only highlights or portions of the races. Even so, in 1976, 19.5 million viewers tuned in for the partial broadcast of the Daytona 500.[46]

It wasn't until the 1979 "flag to flag" coverage of the Daytona 500 that NASCAR fully entered the important medium of the television broadcast. Flag to Flag coverage meant that CBS would broadcast the race from the drop of the green flag, the start of the race, to the wave of the checkered flag, the end of the race. The race aired while most of the nation was blanketed by a snowstorm, encouraging many people who might not have watched an automobile race to tune in. Famously, the race ended with an excitingly close finish and a three man fist fight.

Along with televised broadcasts, the corporate sponsorship of NASCAR by R.J. Reynolds is one of the most significant developments for the expansion of modern stock

car racing outside of the South. Sponsorship is an important element in NASCAR. Individual sponsorship of race teams has a long tradition in NASCAR, but R.J. Reynolds' involvement as the sponsor of the entire series changed NASCAR's history. A sponsor is the individual, local business, or national corporation that financially supports a race team. In return for financial support, the sponsoring companies have their names and logos painted onto the cars. The cars were a unique form of advertisement for the local and automotive companies. R.J. Reynolds was the first corporate sponsor for the entire series, adding its name to every race and every race track in the series.

Originally only looking to sponsor a car to replace the lost ad revenues when laws prohibiting television advertising for cigarettes and tobacco were enacted, the R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company ended up sponsoring the entire series. Headquartered in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, the company was a familiar name in the South. R.J. Reynolds created a successful model for other corporations who would eventually step forward to invest in NASCAR. The relationship between NASCAR, corporate sponsors and the fans remains a key element in NASCAR.

In 1971 NASCAR's Grand National Series was renamed the NASCAR Winston Cup Grand National Series, after the popular brand of R.J. Reynolds' cigarettes. The money which R.J. Reynolds brought into NASCAR improved many aspects of the series. Individual tracks received money to improve their facilities. This meant that basic amenities were improved; plumbing replaced many of the outhouse style restrooms; the grandstands were improved and the tracks themselves were maintained and repaired on a regular basis. R.J. Reynolds also brought uniformity to the tracks using a red and white paint scheme on the walls and facility buildings of each track. This created a recognizable

NASCAR race track, making it easy to immediately identify which tracks were associated with NASCAR and which were not.

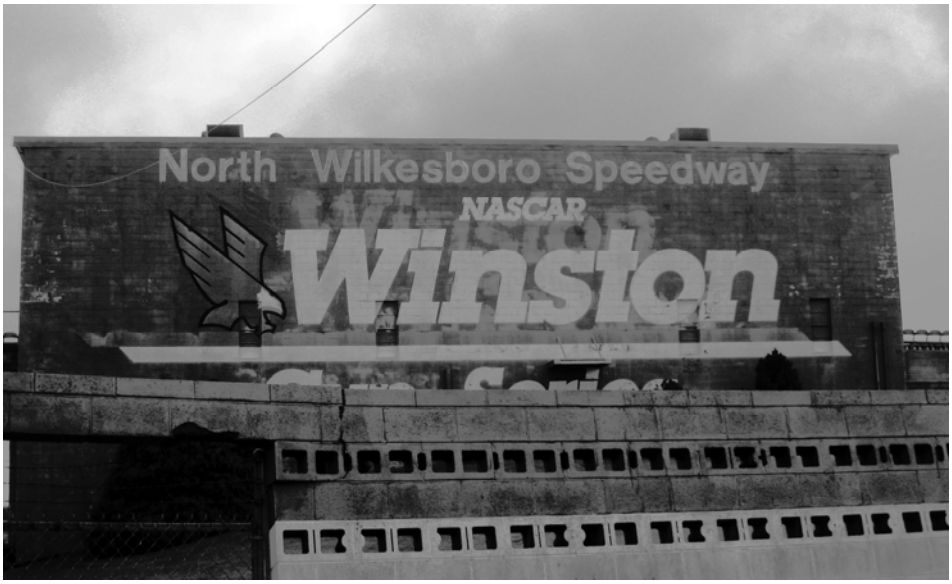

Figure 10: North Wilkesboro Speedway. The red and white Winston paint scheme was once found at all NASCAR sanctioned tracks. Though North Wilkesboro is no longer active, the track is still painted with the distinct color combination. [Author's photo, 2009.]

Before the 1970s, companies associated with automotive products and local garages were the most common sponsors for the individual race cars. R.J. Reynolds' advertising and increased public awareness of the sport brought a diverse range of corporate sponsors to NASCAR. These new corporate sponsors quickly discovered what the automobile industry knew in 1949: what wins on Sunday, sells on Monday.

The Tracks of NASCAR

There are four types of tracks at which NASCAR races are held. The Short Tracks are those tracks which are less than a mile in length. Speedways are tracks which are longer than a mile, but shorter than two miles in length. There are two Superspeedways in

the NASCAR series, which are tracks greater than two miles in total length. The last type of track is the Road Course; these tracks are similar to those raced on by open-wheel cars and feature left and right hand turns, as opposed to an oval track where the cars only circle the track in a counterclockwise direction.[47]

It is important to understand that the phrase "speedway" is also used in the nomenclature of certain tracks. For example, the old Charlotte Speedway was three quarters of a mile long, but used "speedway" as a part of its name to associate it with racing. The same is true of Martinsville Speedway, which is a half-mile track and which uses "speedway" in its name. When discussing general characteristics though, the common definition of "longer than a mile, but shorter than two miles" for a speedway determines a track's classification.

In 1949 eight races, held at eight tracks determined the Grand National Champion. During this time, as today, NASCAR also sanctioned other races around the country, but had a specific schedule of races to determine the Grand National Champion. During the first year of NASCAR, all races, excepting the beach-and-road course at Daytona, were held at dirt tracks. The race tracks featured in the first year of NASCAR stock car racing were: 1) Charlotte Speedway in Charlotte, North Carolina; 2) Daytona Beach and Road Course in Daytona Beach, Florida; 3) Occoneechee Speedway in Hillsboro, North Carolina; 4) Langhorne Speedway in Langhorne, Pennsylvania; 5) Hamburg Speedway in Hamburg, New York; 6) Martinsville Speedway in Martinsville, Virginia; 7) Heidelberg Speedway in Heidelberg, Pennsylvania; and 8) North Wilkesboro Speedway in North Wilkesboro, North Carolina. Four races were held on one-half mile race tracks (Hamburg, Martinsville, Heidelberg and North Wilkesboro), two on one mile

tracks (Occoneechee and Langhorne) and one on the three-quarter mile track at Charlotte.

One year later, Bill France had more than doubled the racing circuit for NASCAR with nineteen tracks including races at tracks in Indiana and Ohio. The number of races and number of tracks which NASCAR features races has changed many times over the years. The immediate success at Darlington Raceway's paved racing surface influenced the construction of tracks like North Carolina Speedway at Rockingham and the superspeedways of Daytona International and Talladega. The last NASCAR race on a dirt track was held during the 1972 season. NASCAR raced at both the newly built tracks and its older tracks for many years. This kept the series balanced between its own past and the future of the sport.

During the early years of NASCAR, Bill France's expansion added new tracks at a rapid pace. As the popularity and success of the sport continued to grow, the schedule was expanded. Before 1971, NASCAR Grand Nationals held more than fifty races during the season. In 1972, NASCAR and R.J. Reynolds announced that the season would consist of only thirty-one races, limiting the schedule to one per week during the season. As a result, many of the smaller tracks lost their feature races, though some were rescheduled into a short lived "Grand National East" series. Races were still held at the three remaining tracks from the first years of NASCAR, North Wilkesboro, Martinsville and Darlington during the 1972 season.[48]

In 2009, NASCAR still schedules each year independently of the last, though there are usually few major changes. Though race dates move from one track to another, new tracks are rarely added to the schedule.

The Early Tracks of NASCAR

As France built upon the popularity of the sport and expanded west and north, the landscape of NASCAR and its tracks began to change. In 1951, the first races west of the Mississippi were held. Since NASCAR never meant to be a regional series, the sanctioning of race tracks outside the southern United States did not diminish its Southern roots, but rather expanded its sphere of influence further. As the years passed, the tracks which held the first NASCAR races were dropped from the series schedule. Until 1996 and the closing of North Wilkesboro Speedway, NASCAR still held races at the last three of its eight original tracks.

Historic Tracks

The tracks which were important to the development of NASCAR, but which are no longer used for racing are considered historic for the purposes of this research. The races held at these tracks moved the development of stock car racing forward into the future as much as Bill France did. These tracks should be recognized as part of stock car racing's collective history. The two best examples of historic tracks are North Wilkesboro Speedway in North Wilkesboro, North Carolina and Occoneechee Speedway, outside of Hillsborough, North Carolina. The North Wilkesboro Speedway held one of the races in the first season of stock car racing for NASCAR. In 1996, the track was shuttered and abandoned. Without any race dates, North Wilkesboro is relegated to NASCAR's past. Occoneechee Speedway, abandoned in 1968, was recently incorporated into a scenic walking path and local museum. These tracks and others are important for their role in the earliest years of NASCAR. The historic tracks are less likely to hold future races. Though this is not an absolute definition, since with the proper upgrade and

interested parties, tracks like North Wilkesboro have the possibility of becoming viable race tracks again.[49]

Heritage Tracks

Heritage tracks are defined as those tracks that were present and active during the developing years of NASCAR, which have played a role in the development of stock car culture and which are still active race tracks today. For the purposes of this research, heritage tracks are the active tracks which actively express both the history and heritage of NASCAR. This thesis research examines three tracks which are the best examples of these criteria. In 2009, only two of these tracks are still a part of the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series.

Martinsville Speedway in Virginia and Darlington Raceway in South Carolina are the only two heritage tracks which are active NASCAR tracks for the 2009 season. This thesis research includes Rockingham Speedway (originally known as the North Carolina Speedway) in North Carolina. Though it was built later than the other two tracks examined by this thesis research and no longer hosts NASCAR sanctioned races, Rockingham Speedway earned a fast reputation as one of the most important races on the stock car circuit.

For the purposes of this research, these three tracks best represent the heritage of NASCAR. There are other tracks which were constructed both earlier than and contemporary to Rockingham Speedway, but those tracks do not necessarily represent the best examples of heritage or preservation potential. Currently, there are fourteen tracks in the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series constructed before 1970. Though there are many which

are of a certain age, not all of them featured NASCAR races every year which they have been operational.

Conclusion

Stock car racing developed out of the South into the popular national sport that it is today. Bill France's organization of local stock car races into a sanctioned racing circuit ensured NASCAR would have a future as a legitimate racing series in the United States. The determination of Bill France and the subsequent support from a nationally recognized company created respectability for stock car racing.

The earliest days of racing in the United States were influenced by the European traditions of open-wheel racing. Stock car racing began to grow in popularity and soon out paced open-wheel racing in popularity, especially after World War II. The ability of the everyman to relate to the form of the stock car increased this popularity. As stock car racing evolved, the cars and the tracks changed along with it. The cars became highly engineered racing machines. Over the years, stock car racing has developed a recognizable heritage and culture supported by the combination of ambition, national recognition, and continued traditions. Stock car racing heritage, while not exclusive to NASCAR, has maintained much of its defining characteristics through NASCAR's management of the sport.

The influences of Southern culture on stock car racing continue to direct the sport today. Popular culture and a unique past structured by the South give stock car racing a culture unlike any other. Since both historic and heritage tracks are still present, stock car racing culture has access to the physical places which define the heritage of the sport. The contributions from the Southern states range from engine and car developments

influenced by moonshine and its illegal distribution to legacy families involved in stock car racing. The distinct Southerness of stock car racing remained tangible despite the nationalization of NASCAR.

While there are fourteen tracks on the current NASCAR schedule that have a certain age to them, there are only two tracks which represent NASCAR's heritage. Martinsville Speedway and Darlington Raceway are the last two tracks which have a direct connection to NASCAR past. Along with Rockingham Speedway, which has its own role in the history of stock car racing, these tracks represent the best options for exploring the ways in which stock car racing culture and NASCAR's heritage come together.

CHAPTER III
RACE TRACKS AS HERITAGE PLACES

Introduction

This chapter will provide an understanding of how stock car heritage, traditions, and life style create a continuum of culture that is uniquely expressed at Martinsville Speedway, Darlington Raceway, and Rockingham Speedway in 2009. In order to effectively examine NASCAR's heritage tracks and how they relate back to the greater culture of stock car racing, this chapter will define some key phrases associated with the preservation of historic resources. Culture, heritage, and traditions are all applicable preservation terms used to explore the significance of heritage tracks. This chapter will explore how the gathering of race fans, race car drivers, teams, and officials at a single track becomes a cultural event, as well as the ways in which a temporary community reassembles each time. This community centered on the race weekend, which this thesis research has termed the Three Day City, is a central element of the temporary and reoccurring heritage experience of stock car racing. Finally, this chapter will briefly explore the modern sports stadium and how NASCAR's tracks convey heritage more than other sports arenas.

Terms and Definitions

In order to understand how heritage stock car tracks convey heritage and to better determine the best preservation approach, it is necessary to define the terms used to explore the tracks featured in this thesis research. It is also important to understand the

ways in which NASCAR races become more than singular events located in separate states, but how the races form continuity within the current race season and within NASCAR's past. Culture, Heritage, Tradition and Continuity are all intangible concepts which define the ways in which NASCAR is more than just stock car racing.

Culture

National Register Bulletin 38, Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Cultural Properties defines culture as "a system of behaviors, values, ideologies, and social arrangements. Culture is learned, transmitted in a social context, and modifiable. Synonyms for culture include lifeways, customs, social practices, and folkways."[50] NASCAR has developed a culture of its own which was present during its earliest period of development in the late 1940s and continues today. After sixty years of racing, there are recognizable aspects of NASCAR which define it as a culture as well as a sport. The culture of NASCAR developed over time and is strengthened as a result of the interaction between the local communities associated with a race track and the broader NASCAR community.

Bulletin 38 also states that culture is "transmitted in a social context."[51] The local community maintains an active identity associated with stock car racing and NASCAR. Their involvement with the greater organization that is NASCAR reinforces the nature of a viable culture. The event of a race is the catalyst for a series of social activities and traditions which are only associated with NASCAR and which can only occur at the race track. The local community reactivates each time NASCAR arrives. This perpetuates the cultural continuum, making the culture of NASCAR both nationally and locally accessible.

NASCAR is a nomadic society. Every race weekend brings NASCAR to a different location in a different state. For the people who are directly involved in NASCAR, this creates a way of life which is comparable to a carnival or traveling tent revival. The entire show reappears in a new town each week; all trailers, haulers, merchandise vehicles and associated persons arrive to set up for that weekend's race. Officials and the dedicated NASCAR media arrive, the garages are prepared and finally the fans appear. Drivers come to the track to take part in personal appearances, practice, and qualifying before the race. NASCAR for the time that it is located in a certain town or community not only brings the same race cars, haulers and systems but brings its entire social and cultural element to that community.

The NASCAR community which travels from track to track each week is different from the one which did so in 1949, technologies, transportation and methods have all been modernized. At its core, however, NASCAR's traveling circuit of drivers and fans has never changed. The weekly revival of the NASCAR race still features the basic elements of stock car racing. The sense of community and sense of place which one finds at the race track has not changed in than sixty years.

Heritage

Heritage is defined as "something transmitted by or acquired from a predecessor."[52] In terms of preservation, heritage is more than a resource which has age, or is a remaining element of a past era. The National Register publication, *My Property is Important to America's Heritage, What Does that Mean?* explains that there are different approaches for managing historic resources as "living parts of communities."[53] As discussed in the previous chapter, a historic site is a static resource and a heritage site is a

historic resource which has an active role within a community or culture. History is something that has age; a heritage resource has a living connection with the past and the present.

Tradition

Tradition combines reoccurring cultural beliefs, actions and attitudes. The *American Heritage Dictionary* defines tradition as "an inherited, established, or customary pattern of thought, action, or behavior" and "the handing down of information, beliefs, and customs by word of mouth or by example from one generation to another without written instruction" and finally as "cultural continuity in social attitudes, customs, and institutions."[54] NASCAR's traditions are based on the experiences at the race track. Each race has a recognizable set of traditions that are revisited each race weekend. Some of these traditions, like camping in the infield, have been long established and some have come to the sport in the last few decades. Traditions which are universal to NASCAR, like the accessibility of drivers are just as important as traditions specific to each track. For example, one of the most treasured traditions at Bristol Motor Speedway is the singing of the National Anthem by the driver's children. Each tradition contributes to the collective heritage of NASCAR.

Continuity

Continuity is the reoccurrence of an event or set of events over time. *American Heritage* defines continuity as "uninterrupted connection, succession, or union; uninterrupted duration or continuation especially without essential change."[55] For sixty years, NASCAR has traveled from track to track with the same essential event, the race.

Traditions within the stock car community as well as traditions at each local community establish a continuum based on both sport and place. The fans and the drivers have specific place memories based on the tracks, reinforced by the race schedule. The return each year to the same track solidifies a connection between the past and the present. This uninterrupted cultural continuum assures that the traditions and heritage of NASCAR are recreated at each race every time NASCAR arrives at that specific track. Heritage tracks have maintained these traditions for a more significant amount of time. By encompassing both the past and the future of NASCAR, the continuum of races at heritage tracks makes these tracks far more significant than the modern tracks which were not a part of the formative years of NASCAR.

What Makes a Place Special?

NASCAR broadcasts several commercials which pointedly remind race fans that they are part of a larger community. A slogan like "Your, My, Our NASCAR" reinforces the idea that each race fan is part of something important. One of NASCAR's most recent commercial for the 2009 season features the tag line "[T]here's a difference between a place where a community gathers, and a place where one [a community] is created."[56] The notion of place seems simple. A location, an area or a point on the map are all "places." A place becomes meaningful when it is associated with something, a person, an experience, or a community. Someone could say, "this is the track where stock cars first ran on paved surfaces" or "this is the track my grandfather and father have been coming to for years; today I'm bringing my son to the race" and a race track is no longer simply a sporting venue, but rather a place with meaning and significance.

The race track is a familiar place made welcoming by the returning community and recognizable architectural and landscape features. The heritage race track, while not necessarily significant because of its architecture, is significant for the association of those who have engaged in the community of stock car racing. J.B. Jackson, one of the most influential scholars of the vernacular landscape, argues in the introduction to *A Sense of Place, a Sense of Time* that architecture is no longer the single most important element of a heritage resource. Jackson explains that it is important to acknowledge the significance which historic resources convey outside of their physical design. A heritage race track does not convey its main significance through physical architectural details even though certain physical elements add to the unique character of each track.

According to Jackson, significance of place is "reinforced by what might be called a sense of reoccurring events."[57] The community instills cultural significance to a place by making it a part of their collective culture. The return to a certain place over time is a necessary element of this process. There is significance in the fact that the race track does have a certain age or sense of history to it, and this is part of what defines the track's lasting significance. The heritage race track is an historic structure and at the same time is the host for a significant reoccurring cultural event. Jackson continues, explaining that there is an inherent desire to create a calendar of significant events and places to which a community can relate.[58] The race schedule offers the community of stock car fans a recognizable reoccurring event. For the racing community, the race schedule is the cultural calendar.

What Makes A Race Track A Heritage Place?

Martinsville Speedway, Darlington Raceway, and Rockingham Speedway are heritage resources essential to NASCAR as a sport. JB Jackson suggests that the "sports arena…is the legitimate successor of the agora or forum; it is where we demonstrate our local loyalties- loudly as the Greeks would have done."[59] NASCAR fans bring their culture from one track to the next. The culture is centralized by the experience and enhanced rather than defined by the space. The local pride and loyalties are shared by the visiting fans who arrive to celebrate the significant contribution of the specific track. The 2009 commercial for one of NASCAR's regional racing series emphasizes the concept of a community which is defined by the experience at a race track. The commercial depicts families, young drivers, race fans and local race tracks; the voice-over tells the viewer that at these tracks, the "sense of community is as close as the racing."[60] A local community associated with a particular race track enhances the identity of the track and supports it as a contributor to the heritage of the sport. A race as an event anchors the track within the community. This is an identity not transferable from one site to another. Sixty years later, these tracks continue to be an integral part of the modern NASCAR season as well as a part of the communities where they are located.

Specific traditions are expressed only at a race track. The race track is an essential element for conveying traditions and heritage; the track is no longer simply a sporting space, but rather a place infused with cultural meaning.[61] It is the culture which make a heritage race track more of a heritage place than a sport stadium.

Aren't they all the same?

There are certain shared architectural elements found at every race track. As a holistic site, a race track focuses inward; the most important feature is the actual track, the oval racing surface on which the event takes place. The terms "race track" and "track" can identify both the racing surface and the entire facility; they are interchangeable when discussing the sport. The basic architectural elements of race tracks have been present in one form or another since the first NASCAR races. A racing surface, a place for fans to watch the race and an infield are always present. The infield is the very center of the track and is where the garages, auxiliary buildings, and infield camping sites are located. The oval track encircles the infield. The grandstands surround the track, providing a place for the attending race fans to sit. Lastly, the landscape which surrounds the track provides the space for parking and other camping lots. These are the most basic elements which create the architecture of a race track; without exception, each heritage track has these features.

Though similar in architecture, each track has its own personality, shape, and character. Football and baseball stadiums differ in their exterior design and locations but the sport requires that the playing fields are uniform. Each football field must be 100 yards long, no matter if the game is in Colorado or Florida. First base and second base are always the same distance apart no matter if one plays baseball at Fenway Park in Boston or at Wrigley Field in Chicago. Heritage race tracks, however, are unique; each track has elements which differentiate it from the other. Each turn and straightaway for each track is different, in length, banking and overall width. There are no two tracks alike. Bristol Motor Speedway and Martinsville Speedway might each be listed as half mile short tracks, but Bristol actually measures .533 miles in total length with 36 degree banking in

the turns, while Martinsville is .526 miles in total length, with 12 degree banking through the turns.[62] The variance of the racing surface is a part of each track's individual character.

Although modernized, Martinsville Speedway, Darlington Raceway, and Rockingham Speedway retain most of their physical characteristics. Not, of course the original structures or original track surface, but rather modified and improved versions of those same features. The track surfaces have not changed in essential form since oval track racing began as informal contests. Variance in the racing surface from one track to another is part of the individual character of each track.

If Things Change, Is It Still the Same Race Track?

Each track in NASCAR's series represents a very different part of the sport. The oval short tracks and speedways were the earliest form of tracks in NASCAR. The heritage tracks are located within the core area of NASCAR's original area of development and are configured to resemble the earliest dirt race tracks. There are newer tracks which have their own personalities but are not able to access the direct connection to the early history of stock car racing. Because a race track's initial identity is established by the location, these three early NASCAR tracks maintain a significant connection to the roots of stock car racing.

Research for this thesis included visits to each of the potential heritage NASCAR race tracks used as case studies. Each track's President was passionate about the part which their specific track plays in the history of NASCAR. The oldest, continually used track on the NASCAR circuit is Martinsville Speedway, in Martinsville, Virginia. Opened before NASCAR was even established, the race track has been active for more

than sixty years. Though it has been through several upgrades, it is still one of the most significant tracks associated with NASCAR. The current President of Martinsville Speedway, Clay Campbell, is the grandson of H. Clay Earles, the man who built the track. Each generation of this family has worked to keep Martinsville a top track on the circuit, and Martinsville has a new or improved feature almost every year.[63] During a tour of the track which included a stop at the media center to admire the new electronic scoring pylon, Campbell quipped, "I like to say we're always under construction." [64]

Rockingham Speedway, originally known as North Carolina Speedway, was built while NASCAR significantly expanded the number of tracks and the number of speedways on their schedule. NASCAR removed the track from its schedule in 2004, but former driver Andy Hillenburg reopened the track in 2007. When asked if the track was the same, even after the changes to the structural elements, his answer was clear. As long as it is still Rockingham, as long as it is a part of the heritage of NASCAR and stock car racing, the physical elements don't matter. "You can change it all. You can change everything at the track, except one thing. You can't change the feeling."[65] The history of a track is not conveyed by the grandstands, but by the overall experience of what happens in the grandstands.

The Race Track

Years of drivers and fans returning to the same site on the same day each season has created a series of culturally significant sites. The track is the focal point for a community reunion. During a race weekend, the race track is the place where both the local and extended community gathers. The race track is where meals are shared and where a significant cultural event takes place. The physical aesthetics of the track become

less significant than the cultural connection which it provides. Fans will happily sit on concrete risers for hours and watch a race. Race fans appreciate the heritage tracks for the stories that the track conveys. The history of both the fans and the track is retold each time NASCAR returns to the track.

A race track is a deceptively simple landscape. The track is not complete without several different physical components. Early tracks have developed over time in response to the needs of the sport. The outlying fields which serve as a parking and camping area, the grandstands, the track itself, pit road, garage area, and the infield are the six basic elements which make up the complete architectural landscape of a race track. The architecture of a race track may be modernized, but the essential form and function remains the same.

The earliest tracks were built away from the town or community centers. The location of the track reflects one of the most basic elements of racing, the automobile. Tracks were built in the outlying areas near industrial sections of town where automotive repair or body shops could be found. Unlike a stadium or arena which can be constructed in the center of a metropolitan area, a race track needs enough land to accommodate all the aspects of a race weekend. The outlying land would have also been considerably cheaper to purchase than any property closer to the town center.

Figure 11: Martinsville Speedway. c1960. The infield is filled with both NASCAR vehicles and fans. The layout of the parking in 2009 has expanded, but is still in the same location. [Image courtesy ISC Archives, c1960.]

The track, the facilities, the influx of cars, RVs, the merchandise and transport haulers all require plenty of room. Historically, there would have been significantly less space used for a race weekend. However, similar to the architecture of the track itself, the essential surrounding landscape and use has not changed. While the number and type of vehicles has changed, the space surrounding the track has always been crowded with race fans.

Similarly, the grandstands maintain the same function, to provide the most basic place to sit and watch a race. The garages and infields, modernized for safety, still resemble the basic structure of an automotive garage area. Changes in the basic architecture of the race track have not influenced the essential function. Race fans from

1949 would certainly be impressed with modern upgrades, but would quickly recognize and relate to the universal elements which make up a race track.

Parking and the Parking Lot Community

The fields which surround the track are empty until the days leading up to the race when thousands of cars and RVs appear. The open area, usually empty except for the tall standing signs which divide sections of the lot into lettered and numbered areas, is barely recognizable before it comes to life on a race weekend. The space around the race track plays an extremely important role, though it appears to be arbitrary. The appearance of the race and the community is what infuses this space with purpose and significance. It is here that the fans park, camp, barbeque and generally prepare for the upcoming race.

Parking areas for the visiting race fans include the privately owned land near the track. Local homes and businesses near to the track sell parking spaces for the visiting race fans. Though parking at all race tracks is free, the convenience of parking close to the track but outside of the crowded general parking areas is usually worth the nominal fee charged. These local parking lots also contribute to the cultural continuum of the race weekend. Small reunions and communities form in these yards and many fans return each year to park in the same yards. This is one more place associated with the race track which has become part of the cultural community. Rather than finding the races inconvenient, the residents are an integral part of that community. Along with parking, the neighbors sell race weekend essentials like ice, firewood, and water from their front porches. Families sometimes sell homemade food and even souvenirs in small tents and booths. This is a symbiotic and welcome relationship between the race track, the fans, and the neighbors.

Figure 12: Front yard parking at Martinsville Speedway, $30. This house is right along the road which takes fans to the designated track parking lots. [Author's photo, 2008.]

Figure 13: Neighbors sell ice and firewood at Martinsville Speedway. The house in Figure 12 is just around the bend to the left of this image. [Author's photo, 2008.]

Where do we sit?

The first visible feature as one approaches the track is the grandstands. The grandstands at a race track are basic and usually without embellishment. Long metal bleacher type benches, concrete risers, or simple metal or plastic folding chairs permanently attached to the larger grandstand structure are the most common type of seating. The seats are usually numbered, as are the rows and sections. The seats are graduated and extend up and back to give the best view of the track as possible. Seats higher in the grandstands offer a better view of the race track, while lower seats might give a less comprehensive view depending on the size of the track. The lower seats, however, place the race fan extremely close to the race track and provide an even more exciting race day experience.

Figure 14: Martinsville Grandstands. Visible in this image is the elevator to the Suites and Spotters' stand, the back of the grandstands and the staircase leading to the grandstand seating. [Author's photo, 2008.]

The tower and suites at a track are located above the grandstands. The tower serves many purposes. It is here that the media center, television and radio broadcasting, race control, and NASCAR's officials who monitor the race are situated. The tower is enclosed and offers a protected and much quieter view, allowing officials to watch all activity on the track below.

The executive or luxury suites for a track are part of the tower section. These private rooms feature large glass windows, separating corporate visitors or other VIPs from the race. These luxury suites offer the same exceptional view of the track as the media center since they are higher than the grandstands. The grandstands of Martinsville Speedway, pictured in Figure 14, have an elevator for access to the tower and spotters' stand. The metal stairway within the tower takes the fans to their seats.

The spotters' stand is located at the very top of the tower or suites, the highest point of the track. Each driver has a spotter who helps them to maneuver through the field. Drivers use spotters to watch everything that is going on around their particular driver and help them avoid wrecks.

The walkway at the very bottom of the grandstands is informally known as Chicken Bone Alley. This name comes from the overwhelming amount of fried chicken bones thrown down from the stands above during a race. Charlotte Motor Speedway in Charlotte, North Carolina even instated a policy that anyone caught throwing chicken bones would be removed from the races.[66] In these bottom rows, a fan can still get gritty from brake dust and watch the cars go by almost close enough to touch.

Figure 15: Chicken Bone Alley at Martinsville Speedway. During a race, fans are not allowed to remain at the very bottom walkway. However, this image demonstrates how close the fans actually are to the race track. [Author's photo, 2008.]

The catch fence and track walls separate and protect the race fans from the dangers of the race. The track walls create a physical barrier and separate the grandstands from the track. Most tracks have upgraded their track walls to SAFER Barriers, which are designed to absorb impact forces, lessen the damage to cars, and decrease the impact of an accident for drivers.[67] The walls run along either side of the track with breaks to allow access in and out of pit road and for safety and emergency vehicles.

Designed as a safety feature, the catch fence is a chain link fence interwoven with steel cables which arches up and out over the track. The catch fence is designed to catch any debris from a wreck on the track which might fly up and into the grandstands. Designed to be strong enough to prevent a race car from crashing into the stands, this safety innovation came about because of several serious accidents which threatened the

lives of race fans. Race fans can easily see the race through or above the fence.

For the fans, the entrance gates open into the area under the grandstands. It is here that a race fan will find an assortment of vendors who sell food and race day souvenirs. This area creates a second midway beneath the grandstands. This is also the access point for the grandstands. Restrooms and services like security and first aid centers are located here. Though there are some commercial vendors, local civic organizations usually sponsor the food booths at the race track. Booster clubs, scouting groups and churches serve a variety of hotdogs, hamburgers, beer, and sodas to the race fans in order to raise funds for their community organizations. This extension of the local community and its presence at the race weekend is another important cultural connection for NASCAR. Encouraging the attendees at a major sporting event to support local civic groups solidifies the connection between the visiting community and that which hosts the race.

The Track

Race tracks are very commonly misunderstood to be in the shape of a circle. In fact, race tracks are shaped in various ovoid forms.[68] Some tracks are closer to true ovals and some have a dogleg through a portion of the track, which creates a tri-oval shape. Martinsville Speedway is shaped like a paperclip; Darlington Raceway is narrower at one end than at the other and Pocono Raceway in Pennsylvania is shaped like a rounded triangle, and has only three turns. [69]

Oval tracks have four turns and two straightaways. The straightaways are the long straight stretches of race track. The frontstretch is the straight section of the track that runs on the side of the start/finish line, flagstand, and the main grandstands. The backstretch is at the opposite side of the track. The corners of the track are numerically

named and the cars drive around the track counter-clock wise. Turn One is the first turn after the start/finish line, with the others following in sequence as the cars turn left around the track. Turn Two is the second corner, Turn Three is at the end of the backstretch, and Turn Four is the final turn before the cars race down the front stretch towards the start/finish line again. Banking is the angle of a race track's racing surface. Both the straightaways and the turns of a track can be banked.

Figure 16: The author demonstrates the 25 degree track banking at Rockingham Speedway. The track's nickname "The Rock" is painted on the track wall and the grandstands and catch fence can also be seen. The stripe at the bottom of the image marks the inner line of the racing surface. [Author's photo, 2008.]

The race track, defined at the most basic level by its shape is also uniquely characterized by banking and the width of the racing surface. The banking of a track angles upwards from the infield; the flat surface of the track is nearest to the infield and

the steepest part of the track is immediately inside the outer wall. The track is flat at the innermost part and where the cars need to come on and off the track. The banking at NASCAR's tracks ranges from the two degree banking at New Hampshire Motor Speedway to the thirty three degree turns at Talladega Superspeedway. Tracks also have variances in the overall width of the racing surface. The width of the track also influences the way in which a race is run, since there are only so many cars which can fit across a section of the track. A large painted stripe along the inside of the track indicates the edge of the available racing surface. Drivers can race extremely close to the wall if they prefer to do so.

Figure 17: View of Rockingham Speedway as the cars come down the frontstretch in 1967. The seats in the grandstands are simple concrete risers. [ISC Archives, 2008.]

The nuances of each track add to the challenge of a racing at that particular track. These details change the race and the ways in which a driver must be able to drive at each individual track. Tracks have unique features which force drivers to "race the track" as well as race each other. The variable elements of each venue are significant in defining the character of that particular race track. When a race track has variable banking at each turn or has a less than symmetrical shape, drivers must know that particular track in order to run well.

A modern oval race track, similar in shape, design, and banking to several other modern tracks, does not offer the same challenges or unique features that the heritage tracks do. The idea of racing is the same at all tracks: drive faster and get to the finish first. Heritage tracks, however, have unique features, making racing there distinctive. The fundamental physical identity of a heritage track is an important part of what makes it different from all the others. It is possible to change the date of a race, moving it from one track to another, but a race is made significant by the track which hosts it.

The start/finish line is the part of the track where the race begins and ends. It is a visibly marked line on the track surface. It is painted in the familiar black and white checkered pattern featured on the flag waved for the winner.[70] The start/finish line reaches from the grandstand side of the track to the wall of pit row. Rising above the start/finish line is the flagstand. It is here that an honorary grand marshal will start the race with the waving or "drop" of the green flag.

The flags used in NASCAR are a traditional feature of automobile racing and represent a significant continuum of culture within NASCAR. The flags communicate the conditions of the race to the drivers on the track as well as to the fans in the stands. The

flags communicate very specific messages to drivers. These messages range from “pay attention to your mirrors, faster cars are approaching” to an immediate “return to the pits” for clear violations of the rules.[71] There are also flags for important moments during the race.

The green flag starts the race, or restarts it, if there has been a caution period. The yellow flag waves for a caution period, indicating that the drivers must slow to a designated speed because of unsafe conditions such as an accident or debris on the track. The black and white checkered flag is perhaps the most recognizable flag, and is often used as an emblem to represent racing. The checkered flag waves to indicate the winner at the end of the race. Modern radio communication has supplemented but not replaced the significant role that these flags play during a race.

The Pits

Immediately adjacent to the track itself, located along the front stretch is pit road. This is literally a road alongside the inside of the track, with numbered stalls marked on the ground to indicate which car goes where. If the track is a short track, the pit area usually extends around to the backstretch as well since there is not enough room along the frontstretch for all forty-three teams. During the race, the cars will pull into their designated pit stall for adjustments to the car, for a new set of tires, and for more fuel.

A low wall separates the teams from the race and pit road. Spare tires, gasoline, and service tools are placed in each team’s respective space for use during the race.

In the modern NASCAR, massive toolboxes on wheels, the “war wagons” hold all the tools and parts necessary to ensure a good day on the track. Pit road is an important part of the race. The faster each pit crew is at servicing the car, the quicker the driver can

return to the race track. While pit stops were once simply service stops, the Wood Brothers, in the early 1950s began to streamline the process, decreasing the time spent on pit road to mere seconds. A good pit crew is an invaluable part of a race team. Their names are familiar to the fans and there is even an organized yearly event for the members of the "over the wall" crew to compete with the other teams.

Figure 18: A pit stop at Darlington Raceway. Extra tires, fuel and tools are all easily accessible. In 2009, cars pit with a safety wall protecting them from the cars still on the track. [ISC Archives, c1960.]

The Infield and Garages

The inner portion of the race track is significant for both NASCAR teams and fans. The team garages are located in the infield, and are easily accessible from pit road. It is here that the cars are tuned for the race and await the official inspection. The garages

are usually little more than open stalls with roofs. There are sometimes no walls dividing one team's garage from the next. This is the center of activity for a race team during the weekend. The pit stall is the extension of the garage during the actual race, but all significant engine or body work occurs in the garages.

The inspection area, where each car must undergo a series of measurements and tests to ensure that they meet all NASCAR regulations, is located in the infield. There are also several auxiliary buildings located in the infield. These include the infield care center, where injured drivers or team members can seek immediate medical attention. Special suites or corporate reception areas are sometimes located in the infield as well.

At most tracks, a section of the infield is set aside for race fans to camp for the race week. As early as 1950, when Darlington Raceway opened the infield to allow fans to camp overnight at the track, the infield has been a significant element of the race track for race fans. Today, fans who camp here are still allowed to watch the race from these spots, this places them at the center of the track, where they have a unique overview of all the activity. Fans stand on top of their motor homes and watch the race happen around them. The small infield at Martinsville, and the large modern haulers used, prevents fans from camping in the infield, but they can still tour the infield or spend part of the time before the race there.

Like many elements of the heritage track, the type of vehicle present in the infield camping areas has changed over the years but the culture has not. The infield is a special place for fans to gather both before and during the race. Drivers also have their personal RVs parked in another part of the infield. This is also where the drivers will spend much of their time during a race weekend. Drivers set up their own mobile community and

much like the fans, host BBQs, spend time with their family and friends, and relax before the race. This sharing of a common space by both the heroes of the sport and the common man is a special cultural element of NASCAR.

Figure 19: Darlington Infield during the 1953 Southern 500 with fans, drivers, and race cars. The numbers painted along the wall help the drivers to find their assigned stall. The race cars are along the back stretch, heading for Turn 3. [*Darlington 50th Anniversary*, 1953.]

Cultural Continuity and the Folklore of NASCAR

There are many things which have changed in NASCAR over the last sixty years. Technology, speed, and safety have improved beyond what could have even been imagined by the first drivers racing on dirt tracks in small towns across the South. The essential elements of stock car racing have remained the same. It is still a group of people coming together for the love of fast cars, good competition, and a sense of belonging.

The essential culture of stock car racing has changed very little at NASCAR's heritage tracks. Drivers still compete on the same tracks where the legends of the sport

once raced. Most fans still sit shoulder to shoulder in the most basic grandstand seating. Significant races within the series, for the most part, occur at the same time each year. A disruption in this respected calendar causes uproar and dismay among the fans and the drivers both. Losing the race tracks that retain a direct connection to the history of NASCAR leaves only tracks which have not yet developed a historical connection and which only function as substitutes for history. The continuum is lessened by the loss of the actual resources which represent more than sixty years of stock car racing history. The manner in which NASCAR revivifies its history becomes superficial when a modern track replaces a heritage track.

Sixty years of racing has generated a history replete with heroes and legends. Storytelling plays an extraordinarily significant role in NASCAR. Every fan can relate the story of their first race, just as every driver can relate his pedigree as he raced through the local series to arrive at the highest level. More importantly, almost any fan or driver can tell of the legends and the races where they triumphed. Immortalized with nicknames familiar to all, drivers like The Intimidator, Jaws, Fireball Roberts, Tiny Lund, The Wonder Boy, Swervin' Irvin, and The King have proved their mettle at NASCAR's tracks. The tracks too, have earned their nicknames. The Lady in Black, The Monster Mile, and The Rock, among others have their own significant roles within the culture of NASCAR. The stories of NASCAR are significant because of the availability of the race track as an accessible cultural resource. A community transfers its history through stories and the tracks are the tangible link for the stock car community between the present and the past.

To watch a race at a heritage race track is to take an active part in the storytelling of stock car culture. Once these stories are removed from the actual forum where they were created, the significance is lessened. Ensuring that these stories remain a viable part of stock car racing culture requires that racing continue at heritage race tracks. Without racing, there is no more shared cultural experience. This ensures that the traditions and history of the sport are tangible, not just remembered.

Where is the Hall of Heroes?

There is no single most important place for NASCAR. Each track becomes NASCAR's hall of heroes for that particular race. A track's own history and the collective memory of stock car racing are intertwined. Wins, exciting finishes and important milestones become the gauge by which the current drivers must be measured. By constantly revisiting the past, NASCAR keeps its own heritage alive. The recognized legends of NASCAR, drivers like Richard Petty, Cale Yarborough, David Pearson, and Joe Weatherly are still significant to the drivers and fans today. Dale Earnhardt Jr. is constantly compared to his legendary father, "The Intimidator", Dale Earnhardt. In 2007, Dale Earnhardt, Jr. won the race at Talladega Super Speedway for the fifth time. In a post race interview, he was asked what it meant to him. He responded that it "don't mean shit right now, Daddy won here ten times."[72] Not intending to completely dismiss his own achievements, Dale Earnhardt, Jr.'s answer reminded the interviewer that in racing, respect for history matters.

Jimmie Johnson, in the 2008 season became the second driver to ever win three championships in a row.[73] At the yearly awards ceremony, Cale Yarborough, the first driver to win three straight championships, (1976, 1977, and 1978) good naturedly

reminded Johnson, and the audience, “Tied it [the record] really, is all he's doing.”[74] Drivers respect the history that has come before them, and have respect for those who have raced before them. The fans share the same respect for the heroes of the sport. At any race in 2009, it is not difficult to find a race fan proudly wearing the shirt of a driver who hasn’t been on the track in years.

In 2010, NASCAR will finally open its own Hall of Fame in Charlotte, North Carolina. This Hall of Fame will centralize the history of NASCAR. Exhibits of different artifacts will celebrate sixty years of stock car racing. Individual tracks already acknowledge the history and heroes of the sport in ways which the Hall of Fame will not be able to. Tracks name sections of grandstands, suites, and tower seating for past drivers and champions of NASCAR. Memorializing and celebrating these drivers by naming seating after them allows the fans to take an active part in this recognition and appreciation of the past. Choosing a seat within a seating section named for a driver is another way fans personalize and honor the past. It is the both the small and large traditions at each race weekend that coalesce into the culture that is NASCAR.

That Car Is Just Like Mine!

The mythology of the stock car is an important foundation of NASCAR. There isn’t a single NASCAR fan who truly believes that the same Chevrolet Impala on the track is at all similar to the one they have in the garage at home. Modern stock cars are highly engineered, extraordinarily complex machines. The connection between the days when stock cars on the track were (essentially) everyday cars and today’s high performance cars is a significant part of NASCAR. Since the cars on the track are recognizable by manufacturer and familiar to the race fan, the everyman connection is

still present. The thrill of watching an identifiable “stock” car race door to door (even if there aren’t doors, per se) at 150 miles an hour has not changed in the last sixty years.

Even though NASCAR stock cars are incredibly engineered machines, the implied simplicity of a stock car appeals to many fans of stock car racing. There are no computerized devices within the car that aid a driver during the race. Computer systems test and for analyze the data from each race, but during the race, it is essentially man and machine alone. There is not even a speedometer in a stock car, only a tachometer, which monitors the RPMs (revolutions per minute) of the engine. Another set of gauges measure engine oil pressure, water temperature, oil temperature, voltage and fuel pressure. It is up to the driver to communicate how the car is handling, so that adjustments can be made during pit stops. Knowing that the driver has only the basic gauges, his awareness of the car itself and his knowledge of the track makes stock car racing exciting for many people. Stock car racing is still, at its core, one man in one car, trying to go faster than all the others.

Is it Cheating If You’ve Outsmarted the Rules?

The garages and pits are constantly humming with teams working on their cars to find the last little thing that will make their car the winning car. It is here in the garage that the official pre-race and post-race inspections take place, and it is here that the fine line between engineering and cheating is tested.

There are many well known sayings about cheating in NASCAR. Quips like “If you ain’t cheating, you ain’t trying,” come easily to mind to anyone familiar with NASCAR. Famous tales of racing innovation and legends of stock cars have grown as much from the garages as from the track itself. There have been many mechanics and

crew chiefs over the years who have been done their best to find a way around the rules which NASCAR lays down. Trying to find the one element of the race car will make the car run better than the others has always been a part of NASCAR. Again, though the technology has improved, there is a direct connection to the first mechanics of stock car racing, and even to the moonshine runners who worked to find the one thing that would make their car go faster.

Figure 20: A post race inspection during a NASCAR race in the 1950s. Though the technology has greatly advanced, the concept is the same. In this post race inspection, one official checks an engine part while another appears to be measuring the body of the car. [*Mechanix Illustrated*, 1951.]

The pre and post race inspections have been a part of NASCAR since its inception. Today, all cars must still pass through rigorous technical inspections several times during each race weekend. Cars are checked before the first practice, before

qualifying, after qualifying if they win the pole (the car on the pole is the fastest in qualifying, and so will start the race in the number one position), before the race and after the race. The winner and usually the top five cars, plus one or two random cars are all evaluated during the post race inspection process.[75]

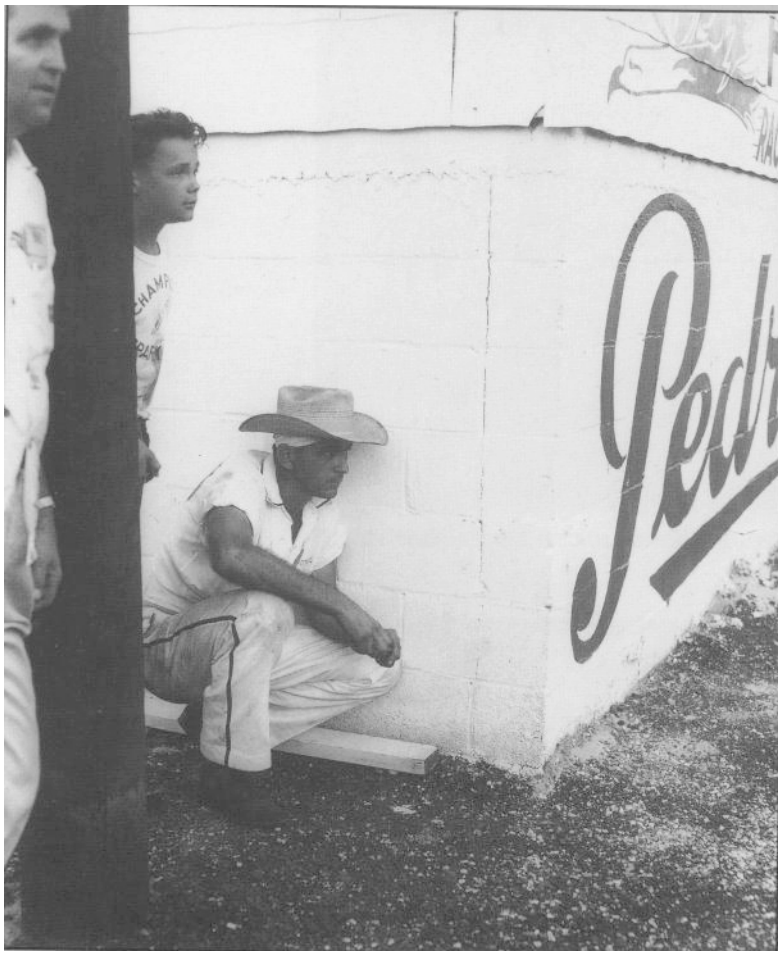

Figure 21: The infamous Smokey Yunick, banned from NASCAR in 1961 watches his car from behind a small brick structure at Darlington Raceway. Without a doubt, Yunick was one of the most genius mechanics to have ever been involved in stock car racing. [*Darlington International Raceway, 1961.*]

The improved technology of the inspection process does not mean NASCAR has changed all that much from when official inspections were held in barns down the road

from the track. After the post-race inspections at the 2008 Tums Quick Pack 500 at Martinsville Speedway, a team was penalized for racing a car with sheet metal that did not meet NASCAR's minimum thickness requirements.

The team had used an acid dipping process to thin the metal, making the car lighter.[76] This trick echoes of master mechanic and car builder Smokey Yunick's legendary rule bending. To one race, he brought a car that appeared to meet all the requirements of NASCAR, until measured, wherein it was discovered that the car was seven-eighths the size of the other cars, but perfectly scaled.[77] A new version of this same trick appeared in 2007 when the team whose driver went on to become the Sprint Cup Champion rescaled as many parts of their car as they could. NASCAR, today, uses a number of templates and measuring systems to try to catch these modern day Smokeys. NASCAR officials measure the frame of the car, test engine parts, and even mark specific parts to try to ensure an equal field at each race. It is not just one or two teams who are trying to find a way to out smart the rule book, they all are. But, like they say, it's only cheating if they catch you.

<u>The Southern Gentleman and Rubbin' is Racing.</u>

There is a very specific set of behaviors and implied values within NASCAR which essentially derive from the ideal image of the Southern gentleman. This is actually a remainder of Bill France's original efforts to establish NASCAR as a respectable sport. This combination of a rowdy, down to earth stock car driver and Southern gentlemen creates an interesting persona for the drivers to form themselves into. Drivers were not always respected or welcome into town; Cotton Owens, remembers having to park the

race car out of town, and then find a hotel, since they couldn't get a room if the hotel manager knew they were with NASCAR.[78]

Drivers today are expected to adhere to a set of behaviors and life styles which reflect positively on the sport as a whole. The drivers are expected to be respectful role models both on and off the track but still race hard on the track; the object is, of course, to win. On the other hand, drivers who race a bit too roughly, who deliberately wreck another car, start fist fights in the garage or, after being wrecked, throw their helmets at the passing offender's car are called the into the "trailer" for a lecture, a loss of points and usually a fine. For spectacular displays of tempers lost, there are press conferences afterwards, so that the driver can say he was sorry for acting like such a jerk. Interestingly, at the end of the 2008 season, Brian France encouraged drivers to show a bit more of their own personalities and to even let their tempers flare a little, indicating that there is indeed something lacking when forty-three gentlemen are politely circling a track.[79]

Though a certain roughness around the edges is encouraged, the level of tolerance for unacceptable behavior outside the track is extraordinarily low compared to other sports. In *True Believers*, Joe Quenaan's evaluation of hero worship in sports demonstrates the differences in behavior between other sports and NASCAR: "To spend one's life fixated on sports is to spend one's life fixated on idiots. Football players who rape teenagers. Basketball players who claim that they were misquoted in their own ghostwritten autobiographies. Baseball players who cannot suit up in certain cities because there is a bench warrant out for their arrest."[80]

In 2007, thirty-five professional football players were arrested; the Portland Trail Blazers, a professional basketball team, became locally known as the "Jail Blazers" for their collective criminal record, and Major League Baseball's recent struggles with steroid use appeared almost daily.[81] In November of 2005, driver Kurt Busch was placed under arrest in Arizona for reckless driving. Busch was subsequently suspended for the last two races of the season, dropped from his team (Roush Racing), and required to return to Maricopa County, Arizona in order to perform community service and speak to young people about the dangers of drunk driving.[82] NASCAR drivers have never been perfect gentlemen, but they are expected to be respectful and answer for their behavior both on and off the track.[83]

Race Week and the Three Day City

NASCAR events begin days before the race cars ever arrive at the track. The track becomes its own city, flourishing for three days, and then moving on to the next venue. The Three Day City is so named in this thesis research for the completeness of the community found at the track for much longer than just the day of the race. It is here that the gathering of race fans, race car drivers, teams, and officials at a single track collectively becomes a cultural event. In 2009, a race will easily draw 100,000 race fans.[84] The track and the surrounding landscape become a populated and fully functioning city with resources and communities forming within a singular location. Many people do not feel the need to leave the vicinity of track during the weekend, as sleeping accommodations, food, friends, and the central cultural event are in one location.

In addition to the fans, support crews for the individual track and concession operators come for the race weekend. NASCAR teams, official merchandise sellers,

teams, drivers, owners, officials, and executives arrive as well. An entire community forms each weekend at NASCAR tracks, February through November along with a functioning society, with recognizable leaders and celebrities, social groups and cultural events. The race track is the center of the physical community and of the event for which the community has together. This is perhaps one of the most significant elements of the culture of NASCAR. It is here, with the gathering of fans, racers, and event that expresses the true essence of the cultural continuum.

The Community of NASCAR

The relationship between the fans and the drivers is unique among sporting events. While there is an obvious social division between race car drivers (especially the more famous drivers) and fans, NASCAR's community gives fans at each race the opportunity to personally interact with the drivers. Every driver acknowledges how significant the relationship is between the fans and the sport. Richard Petty, perhaps the most famous race car driver in NASCAR, has often said that when he signs an autograph he considers it a thank-you note to a fan for supporting NASCAR. Vance Howell, a transport driver with almost twenty years experience with NASCAR, is always glad to see the fans who appear early in the week to welcome the haulers. Many race fans know when the haulers will be traveling through their area and watch the convoy go by. Some communities have special parades for the transport haulers.

The fans are always eager to talk with the transport drivers, making another personal connection with NASCAR. Howell answers their questions and talks to them about racing. "They can't touch the [race] car. But they can touch the truck. They love to

feel that close."[85] Their personal experiences solidify their place within a community that is open, in many ways, to individuals at every level.

The community of NASCAR even comes complete with its own ministry. Motor Racing Outreach and Raceway Ministries work together to provide spiritual and community support for the members of the NASCAR community and their families. Among other things, they provide a "day care center for driver's children, religious services, and organized events for drivers and their families."[86] Founded in 1988, Motor Racing Outreach strives to "support these racing communities so that they may enjoy a more wholesome life together and, in turn, become role models for millions of motor sports fans."[87] While NASCAR is not a religious organization, maintaining a spiritual presence is another important element of the community. There is an invocation at the start of every race and many drivers and their families attend prayer groups while they are at the track. An established church cannot follow along with the race teams, but the MRO ministry with its many branches, addresses the spiritual needs of NASCAR's traveling community.

Early Arrivals

A recent television commercial for football begins with the question "[w]hy do we [the football fans] show up five hours early?" and continues on, acknowledging and celebrating the enthusiasm of the football fan. Race fans don't tend to show up five hours early, they tend to show up five *days* early.

Fans in RVs and campers begin to appear at the track at the earliest day allowed by the track. Local businesses and retailers in the area as far as 15 or 20 miles away from the track, celebrate the return of NASCAR by hanging signs which read "Welcome Race

Fans." Race fans do not come early just for the feature race. Leading up to the race on Sunday (or Saturday night) there are times when cars are out on the track. There are always fans in the grandstands watching. There are several practice sessions and a qualifying session which determines the racing order for that week's race. Many fans attend each of these events with the same enthusiasm that they share for the race itself. Leading up to the Cup race, there are other series' racing at the track. These races are staggered over Friday and Saturday. The track is almost constantly in use with racing related activities.

Figure 22: A group of race fans preparing to enjoy the race at Martinsville Speedway. [ISC Archives, c1960.]

The Race Day Bazaar

Material culture and establishing a recognizable loyalty to a driver is an important part of NASCAR in 2009. Upon arrival at a track, one of the first places that a fan might head is to the midway with merchandise haulers. The merchandise haulers open up their

sides to become temporary shops. Decorated in colors associated with the driver and featuring a large picture of the driver and race car painted on the side, the merchandise haulers become the center for most souvenir purchases for the race weekend. Each team brings its own hauler representing one or more drivers. The merchandise haulers set up around the outside of the track in rows, creating a colorful and exciting bazaar. It is here that the commercialism of the sport combines with a fan's desire to physically represent certain loyalties by donning the t-shirt or hat of their favorite drivers.

The material culture of NASCAR is a very significant element of the Three Day City. Adding to the midway are the sponsored tents for companies that are at the track to promote their own product to the fans. These companies are usually sponsors of one or more race teams. Free give aways, free hats, contests, and sponsored entertainment pepper the area, making the midway almost as exciting as the race. Images in black and white cannot convey the riot of colors of the merchandise haulers. The midway heightens NASCAR's tent-revival or carnivalesque atmosphere when drivers make appearances, a common occurrence during every race weekend. Drivers appear on stages to say hello to the fans and talk about the race coming up.

The midway offers opportunities for personal encounters as well. Meet and greet sessions with drivers are plentiful during the race weekend. Fans line up at the merchandise trailers to meet the drivers and maybe get a signature or picture with them. Fans get to enjoy an accessibility to their heroes that no other sport affords. The chance to meet a driver is a special moment that many race fans are able to experience, not just a few lucky or very wealthy ones. You'll never see Eli Manning of the New York Giants

sitting at a table to shake a fan's hand, but you can walk right up to Bill Elliot and get your picture with him.

Figure 23: Martinsville's Midway. Images of drivers are painted larger than life. A show car version of the #11 Federal Express Toyota, driven by Denny Hamlin, rotates high above the crowd on a motorized pedestal. [Author's photo, 2008.]

T-shirts and stickers featuring a driver's number are not the only souvenirs a race fan can take home. NASCAR's special interaction between the fans and the sport extends to experiential souvenirs as well. Many race tracks allow fans to come on to the track and sign the walls or the start/finish line. Having a photograph of yourself writing "Go #88!" on the start/finish line is a souvenir one can only find at a NASCAR track. The fans can watch the entire race knowing that the cars are driving over their encouraging or disparaging notes.

Figure 24: The author's sister, a new fan, meets driver Robby Gordon. Robby Gordon is meeting fans out of his merchandise trailer with shirts and other items displayed behind him. The case below them has a wide variety of items. [Author's photo, 2008.]

Used lug nuts, tires that have been raced on and even sheet metal from wrecked cars can be taken home as souvenirs. Goodyear, the tire supplier for NASCAR, sells used tires after the race. The used lug nuts are often available from the teams in the garage area after a race. Permission from the teams is required for a fan to be able to leave with a piece of a mangled race car, but it is not an unusual occurrence.[88]

The Infield

The infield is another space that all the members of the NASCAR community share. There are special "pit passes" for sale at most races which allow fans to see the inner world of the garages and pit stalls. They cannot be there during the race for safety reasons, but these passes are one more way that the interaction between the sport and the fans exceeds the experiences of any other sport. A football fan would certainly never be

allowed into the locker room, but a race fan can watch the team prepare the pit box and race car before a race. This also gives the race fan another opportunity to meet drivers or the crews from the teams. Many crew members are friendly and will sign autographs or pose for pictures with fans.

In 2009, the infield retains the same communal and festive atmosphere which it had sixty years ago. The accessible infield, the approachable members of the NASCAR teams and the excitement of being in close proximity to the drivers and race cars extends the cultural connection of stock car racing. The actual division between race fan and race car driver is still immense, but the overall experience is that of one large community.

Race Day

NASCAR races are extremely visceral experiences. There are certainly aspects of all sporting events that are more tangible when experienced in person than, for example, watched on the television. The experience of the race incorporates not only the sights and extraordinary sound but the physical vibration and power that one feels as forty-three, 750 horsepower stock cars roar past the grandstands. Although many things have changed in the last sixty years of NASCAR, the experience of being at a race has not.

The grandstands might have any number of people in them for the practice and qualifying sessions, but race day fills the grandstands of the track with life. Unlike any other sport where two colors represent opposing teams, usually with opposing fans seated on opposite sides of a stadium, a race brings together fans wearing almost every color imaginable, all sitting next to each other. Fans sit without team designation and the neighboring seat might even hold a rival driver's fan. The collective grandstand community is eclectic in its praise of heroes and decrying of villains on the track, but

everyone is welcomed. While the earliest grandstands of NASCAR never filled with fans in brightly colored elaborate t-shirts, even then the fans each had their favorite drivers.

Fans can bring coolers (up to a certain size) and bags into the stands. At first, this seems an unimportant difference between a race track and a stadium, even though it is almost unheard of for a professional sports facility to allow outside food and beverages, especially alcohol, into the grandstands. Race fans can bring in their own lunches, snacks, and drinks. This means that rather than being limited to enjoying a casual meal outside with friends and forced to purchase food from the concession stands inside the track, fans can continue the picnic atmosphere of the pre-race afternoon during the race.

Families are also an important consideration at NASCAR tracks. In recent years, more and more tracks have set aside specific seating designated for family-friendly behavior. This might seem like a way to remove or isolate a certain come-as-you-are element of stock car fans but it actually encourages more families to pass along the traditions of NASCAR to younger children. One can easily find drinking and smoking, cursing and general rowdy behavior in the rest of the stands.

Ceremonies

There are certain events which define the race day, aside from the race. These ceremonies are familiar and occur before each race. The pre-race ceremonies consist of the driver parade lap, during which the drivers are driven around the track, the presenting of the Colors by members of the local military, an invocation, the singing of the National Anthem and the fly-over. The fans stand up and the drivers and their teams line up along pit road for the pre-race ceremonies. Everyone present at the race track takes part in these ceremonies. The only people who freely move about the field during this part of the race

are the members of the media, who take pictures of the drivers and the fans respectfully joining in the pre-race ceremonies.

The invocation is usually performed by a member of Raceway Ministries affiliated with that track, or by a special guest. A celebrity or a local guest sings the National Anthem. The fly-over, which emphasizes the patriotism and American pride ever present at a NASCAR race, is the moment when respect for God and America is replaced with the promise of spectacle and speed. As the last lines of the Star Spangled Banner are sung, military aircraft from nearby military bases make a spectacular appearance and fly low over the grandstands. Fans cheer and wave to the pilots as they go by.

Figure 25: The Martinsville High School Marching Band prepares to play the National Anthem before the start of the Tums Quick Pack 500 at Martinsville Speedway. [Author's photo, 2008.]

Even with the dramatic sight of the fly over, there is one part of the pre-race ceremonies that every fan and driver is really waiting for. It is perhaps one of the most recognizable traditions of NASCAR. Corporate heads, lucky contest winners, movie stars, past racing champions, and even Presidents of the United States of America have all stepped forward to say "the most famous words in motorsports." Guaranteed to bring the loudest cheer from the fans is the simple phrase, "Gentleman, start your engines!"

The Race

A simple narrative cannot aptly describe what it is like to experience the moment to moment visceral excitement of attending a NASCAR race. The flag drops and forty-three NASCAR stock cars come to full speed, roaring past the grandstands impossibly fast and loud, driving within inches of each other. They battle for hundreds of miles, lap after lap and it becomes difficult to avoid superlatives to describe the event. Instead, this section will examine the connection during the race between the driver and the fans. The unique accessibility to the driver during the race is an experience unavailable with any other professional sport.

Eavesdropping on drivers is a long familiar practice at races. NASCAR crew chiefs first used sign boards to communicate with their drivers. Holding up chalkboards that read "THINK!" or "PIT" got any necessary message to the driver.

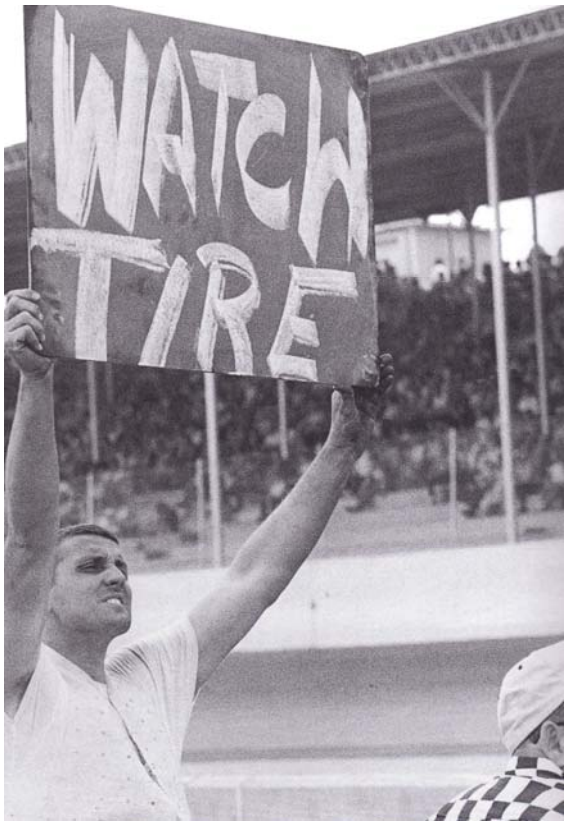

Figure 26: Richard Petty gets some instructions from his pit. The pit crews used the signboards to communicate information before radios were used. [*Darlington Raceway, 50th Anniversary*, Image date unknown.]

Radios became a part of NASCAR team communications in 1952.[89] It was not much later that fans began to listen in, catching the radio communications in order to know what was happening during the race.[90] Each team is assigned a specific radio frequency, and a frequency list is available at the track. Images of grandstands at NASCAR races always show thousands of people wearing what looks like large ear protectors. However, these are actually scanner or radio headsets, allowing the fans to listen to their driver's communication with his team.

Before technology like Nextel's Fan View, which combines a traditional radio scanner and a TV broadcast, and before NASCAR.com and TNT's online broadcasts, fans could only listen to their drivers. Today, up to the minute lap times, speeds, telemetry, position and audio feeds are available both at the track and at home. Internet subscribers to NASCAR.com's Hot Pass are able to access the same information, including the scanner audio that fans can hear at the track.

Practically every aspect of the race except physically being inside the car can be experienced and NASCAR actually extends that experience to race fans too. Thousands of Kyle Busch fans cannot all fit inside the #18 car, but fans both at the track and at home can do the next best thing. Innovative broadcasting allows a fan to view the race from all angles. Cameras placed at all angles in and around the car allow the fans to watch the driver and to even see what he sees through the windshield.

A race fan might never get the chance to pilot a stock car, so these technologies have become the modern version of loaning your car to a driver. Many fans watch the race using more than one of these supplemental technologies. Being able to listen to the scanner chatter at home makes the fan feel as though they are at the track with all the other fans. It also reinforces the idea that there is a communal connection between the race fan and the driver. Access to the very candid thoughts and feelings of a driver during the race creates a personal relationship between the driver and the fan, even if it is a one sided one. A race fan can't be on the track, but he can feel like a part of the race. The yearly improvements in fan friendly technology are an acknowledgement on the part of NASCAR of the significance of this fan connection.

Where is the Home Team?

Most sports fans develop loyalty to a team by virtue of proximity; fandom is often determined simply by physical location. NASCAR is not limited by regional fan association. All the drivers are associated collectively with NASCAR first and then individually with teams, sponsors and automobile manufacturers. Drivers are not directly associated with a particular city, town or state. Unlike any other professional sport, there is no home field in the traditionally understood way. A driver will drive every race, no matter in which state the track is located.[91] The fans of most major sports are limited to witnessing their team at one of two locations. The "home" field (or stadium) associated directly with the team's base of operations or an "away" field, which is directly associated with the opposing team. These are the only places that such sporting events are held. These fans are limited to seeing their team play at a home field one week and an away field the next. This does not in any way lessen enthusiasm or loyalty to a team; a close association or a feeling that a team belongs in one city or another creates a strong bond between teams and their local fans.

It does limit the fan in terms of where they can find their own fan community. If an Oakland Raiders football fan moves to Kansas City, where their rival team, the Kansas City Chiefs is based, the fan would be, in a sense, immediately ostracized. Since football is regionally based, the change in city would mean that this particular fan can no longer be a (physical) part of the community to which he once belonged. He could return to Oakland for a visit, or go to see the Oakland Raiders play at the stadium in Kansas City, but the Raiders' fan community is based in Oakland. While there are certainly fans of teams not dictated by geography, there is generally no continuity of the fan base outside

of a specific team's city.[92] A trip to the Chiefs themed sports bar in a Raiders tee shirt probably won't make that fan a very popular person in their new home town.

NASCAR transcends these regional differences by creating a collective community of race fans defined by an appreciation of the sport first and then by loyalty to a particular driver. A fan who identifies with a particular driver can follow the progression of the season at each track along with all the other fans, regardless of location. Each driver is part of the same circuit throughout the race season. For each race there will be forty-two other drivers at the same track with fans from all over the nation and world cheering for each of them.

Unlike the relocated football fan, the race fan whose favorite driver is Tony Stewart can happily move from Oakland to Kansas City and find a welcoming community of other race fans. Tony Stewart is associated with the #14 Stewart-Haas Old Spice car, not a particular city or state. His fandom transcends regional boundaries. There are heroes, villains and perceived rivalries, but a race fan can usually comfortably root for his driver while each of the other race fans cheer for theirs. This ability to enjoy the race as a member of an extended community, while expressing individual preference is an important characteristic of the racing culture. With forty-three drivers and one winner each week, a universal camaraderie is established at each race. A single winner allows everyone to agree that it was a good race or a bad race while celebrating (or lamenting) the finishing position of their own driver.

A particular track might be geographically closer or easier to travel to for a NASCAR fan, but there are thirty-six stops at twenty-two different tracks on the modern NASCAR circuit. The event and experience of NASCAR continues at each of these

tracks. Each weekend, a new home field is established. Just as during the first seasons of NASCAR, fans follow their driver's performance from track to track. Each track becomes the most important track on the circuit, for that moment.

Losing the Home Field: the Modern Sports Complex

Sponsorship is a familiar and significant aspect of NASCAR racing. A corporate sponsorship supports a team financially and becomes an integral part of the identity of the driver and his car. This is also an extended relationship between the fan, the driver and the product or company associated with that driver. NASCAR as an entity has more than fifty official sponsors.[93] Each driver and team has primary and associate sponsors. The 2009 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series will even see the introduction of the sponsored caution period. At each of the tracks owned by International Speedway Corporation and Speedway Motorsports Inc., the waving of the caution flag will now bring the "ServiceMaster Clean Caution."[94] The race fan is well aware of the ever present corporate sponsorship and accepts any new marketing as part of NASCAR.

NASCAR, well known for its marketing has forty-three billboards driving around a track for four hours. That alone is a lot of advertising exposure. There is one aspect of the sport which remains separated from corporate influence. While stadiums across the country are being re-named for their corporate sponsors, i.e. Qualcom Park, ATT Park, and Oracle Arena, Darlington Raceway is still Darlington Raceway, Martinsville Speedway is still Martinsville Speedway. Tracks are never, with a few exceptions, named for corporations. Charlotte Motor Speedway is now Lowe's Motor Speedway and one of the two road courses at which NASCAR races, was once Sears Point Raceway and is now Infineon Raceway. The acknowledgement that the race track and its connection to the

local community carries a great significance is clearly demonstrated by the decision to continue to name tracks for their locations rather than a corporate sponsor.

What is in a name?

The renaming of a race track with a corporate brand would remove the significant relationship between its actual location and any heritage that might have been associated with it. For example, the new Yankee Stadium, under construction to replace the "House that [Babe] Ruth built" promises multitudes of opportunities for corporate sponsorship, becoming the House that Corporation X built.[95] The name of the stadium itself will not change because it is a marketable entity in itself, but each entry gate will have a corporate sponsor name.[96] Every new stadium currently under construction is named for a corporation rather than for the city or region where it is located. These names change when the corporations' names change, if they go bankrupt, or if another corporation purchases the naming rights to the stadiums.

Race tracks, amidst all the corporate sponsorships that surround and support the sport remain an entity unto themselves. New tracks are named for their communities; seating areas and gates feature the names of drivers or other people important to the sport, not for corporations. NASCAR race tracks, with three exceptions, remain named only by their venue location rather than a corporate brand. Even the most recently built tracks on the circuit continue this tradition.[97] Specific brands sponsor the races, the cars, and now even the caution flag, but the race track maintains its singular identity and respected place in NASCAR.

Conclusion

Heritage tracks play an important role in the overall continuing heritage and traditions of NASCAR. The few early tracks still on the schedule represent both the past and the potential to continue the important traditions of NASCAR. By continuing to hold races at these early tracks, NASCAR retains a direct link with their own past. NASCAR race tracks express a rare cultural continuity and integrity of association that few historic resources can claim. Each track is unique in its form but shares the cultural heritage of stock car racing.

Each track has an identifiable architecture, familiar to the racing community. The significance of the race track is defined by shared experiences and recognizable physical elements which together create a continuum of culture. NASCAR's arrival each week is the foundation for a reoccurring and recognizable cultural experience. Recognizable traditions which occur at each race reinforce the ways in which NASCAR transfers its heritage from track to track. Ceremonies before each race bring the community together in a solemn appreciation of both patriotism and racing. This ceremony is respectful of the traditions of racing, but ends with a celebration of speed and noise. "Gentlemen, start your engines" are the ceremonial words which allow the cultural event, the race to begin. While it may be hard for those unfamiliar with stock car racing to understand how forty-three stock car engines starting can be part of a cultural experience, it is a ritual that has been present for more than sixty years. Stock car racing culture is the culture of the everyman. It has a gathering place for a community, a place to eat together, and the enjoyment of a competitive event. There are heroes and villains and a definable material culture.

The calendar of the racing season as it relates to each track establishes the cultural continuity for that specific track within the greater context of NASCAR.[98] The cultural continuity and reoccurring events of NASCAR are inextricable from the tracks which represent the heritage of the sport. When a piece of this is lost, with the removal of a race date or the shuttering of a race track, the impact is felt throughout the community.

The heritage race tracks are NASCAR's history. They remain vital and significant even in 2009. While modern entertainment and spectacle are interwoven into the race weekend, these tracks are the embodiment of the maturation and modernization of NASCAR. NASCAR has a special relationship with its own history. By returning to the same tracks where the first races were run, NASCAR perpetuates its heritage. Each return to a heritage track reinforces the sport's cultural heritage. Despite this significance of racing at heritage tracks, after sixty years, only three of NASCAR's Cup level races occur at these tracks; there are two races at Martinsville Speedway and one at Darlington Raceway. The future of the sport is important, but the connection to the history of NASCAR carries a greater value. It is necessary to acknowledge the value of the unique heritage value of NASCAR's heritage tracks before it is lost.

CHAPTER IV
AN EXPLORATION OF NASCAR'S HERITAGE TRACKS

Introduction

Three of NASCAR's race tracks which have been part of the sport's earliest eras are excellent touchstones for the formation of a preservation plan which addresses heritage race tracks as cultural resources. It is the cultural continuity which determines these heritage tracks to be worthy of preservation efforts. Within the NASCAR community, permanence of individual structural elements is not the determining factor for significance. These tracks have historic significance and are valued as places within the contemporary culture of NASCAR. Each of these tracks is still active; two of the tracks still feature races for the NASCAR Sprint Cup series and one continues proactive development, most importantly by holding races even though NASCAR's Cup level teams no longer compete there.

Developing a program which maintains historical significance through the physical presence and continual use of the track allows the visitor or fan to imagine the roar of Tiny Lund or Fireball Roberts's engines as they take each turn. As legendary as the drivers are, it is important to remember that one of the most important characters within the history of NASCAR are the tracks which feature the races. The preservation of the heritage race tracks would accentuate the cultural presence of NASCAR's history. This chapter examines the three best examples of heritage tracks, Martinsville Speedway,

Darlington Raceway, and Rockingham Speedway which have the potential to build a strong foundation for a preservation plan for race tracks.

Martinsville Speedway, the Last of the First

In 1945, H. Clay Earles, discharged from the United States Navy after World War II, returned home to Virginia. He worked as a dirt mover and spent much of his free time watching stock cars race around the local oval dirt tracks. The time he spent at the track in Salisbury, North Carolina with his friend, racer Sam Rice, gave him an idea. The growing interest in stock car racing caught his attention and he decided that he wanted to open a new race track. Fewer than 2,000 people probably attended the races at Salisbury, but to Earles, it "looked like there were a million people there." He adds that though he may have "overestimated the crowd, I don't think I did the sport."[99]

Inspired by the racing in North Carolina and the growing enthusiasm for the sport, H. Clay Earles and his business partner Henry Lawrence began to search for a site where they could build a new race track. In 1946, Virginia had about ten operating race tracks. Several were incorporated into fairgrounds and one was located in a horse pasture.[100] Earles found what he was looking for in a thirty acre cornfield about four miles outside of the town of Martinsville, Virginia.

The land was purchased. Earles, Lawrence, Rice, and their fourth business partner, Bill France, began construction on a new oval dirt track. Initially they had planned to invest about $10,000 in the track; however, by the time the track was ready in 1947, it cost nearly $60,000.[101] The dirt track was built to accommodate a railroad track which ran along the backstretch. Construction and planned seating for the track left about eight and a half acres for parking and people. The track is a half mile oval, measuring

exactly .526 mile in total length. In 2009, Martinsville Speedway is the shortest track in the NASCAR series. Martinsville Speedway, like all tracks, has unique characteristics that help give it personality. Unofficially, the track is often referred to as The Paperclip, for its tight turns and narrow overall circumference.

The first race held at Martinsville on September 7, 1947 was organized and promoted by "Bill France Enterprises" out of Greenville, North Carolina.[102] That first race was advertised as dust free but in the end was "the dustiest place I [Earles] had ever seen…it looked like someone had dropped an H-bomb."[103] Though the track had been soaked in water, it dried and created a half mile oval dust bowl.

Figure 27: Martinsville Speedway as a dirt track. The pile of dirt in the foreground is from the grading and preparation of the track. The 98JR driven by Johnny Mantz, which is under repair on the track, won the 1950 Southern 500. [ISC Archives, c.1950.]

For the opening race, only 750 seats of the planned 5,000 were complete. Though there was some initial concern over the lack of completed seating for the race attendees, a local news column in the *Martinsville Daily Bulletin* notes that the race drew the largest crowd ever seen in Henry County, and that the "inconvenience of the dust" was forgotten as soon as the race had started.[104] Many of the race attendees came from church to watch the race and still wore their Sunday best clothes when they arrived. They ended the day covered in dust from head to toe. A *Bulletin* columnist noted that his son was so dirty he could have been mistaken for a dirt clod on the hillside where they sat, and that the tub from his post race bath could have been used to grow turnips.[105] Despite the dust problems, which the track addressed in later years, Martinsville had an extraordinarily successful first race.

Two ticket booths located at the west and north ends of the track sold 6,013 paid admissions for the first race.[106] This count did not include children under 14 years of age, who were admitted free with an adult, or the nearly 3,000 people who managed to find a free view of the unfenced race track. Much like modern day traffic jams following NASCAR Sprint Cup races, it took race fans nearly an hour to travel the four miles back to the town of Martinsville. [107] The drivers, according to the *Martinsville Daily Bulletin*, thought that the track had great potential; they reported that the banking in the corners made for good racing and that Martinsville could easily be one of the best and fastest tracks once the track solved its dust problems.[108]

Figure 28: A crew member carries gasoline in a little red wagon at Martinsville Speedway, c1950. Though crew members now use special canisters to carry fuel, little red wagons are a common sight in the garages. They are still useful for carrying ice or other loads quickly from the suppliers to their garages. The facilities in the background are a far cry from the modern restrooms found at the Martinsville Speedway in 2009, though port-a-johns are still a familiar sight. [*From Dust to Glory*, c.1950.]

Martinsville Speedway soon increased the grandstand seating to accommodate 10,000 fans. A calcium chloride mixture was added to the dirt surface of the track to try to keep the dust down. In 1949, Martinsville Speedway hosted the sixth race of NASCAR's Strictly Stock Grand National Championship series. That same year H. Clay Earles and Bill France became the sole partners invested in the track. Not long after, since the dust still a problem at his race track, Earles began to contemplate the idea of paving the track.

The 1950 season brought two NASCAR Grand National races to the track at Martinsville. Also in 1950, the first paved stock car track appeared in the series at Darlington Raceway. Darlington proved that stock car races were just as thrilling on asphalt. Seeing that stock car racing was indeed successful on pavement, Earles had Martinsville paved in 1955.

Figure 29: Martinsville Speedway, paved but without the forthcoming concrete corners. [*Greatest Races*, 1963.]

Billy Myers won the first paved race at Martinsville.[109] While the dust problem was finally conquered, the pavement on the tight oval had problems of its own. Concrete corners added to the track in 1976 alleviated some of the structural stress on the pavement. The concrete corners combined with asphalt straightaways are a unique feature among the NASCAR race tracks. No other NASCAR track has a combined racing surface of asphalt and concrete.[110]

Figure 30: Lake Speed comes to the concrete corner, Mark Martin in the #6 Folgers Coffee Ford is close behind. The stands are filled and the parked cars are visible behind the track. [*From Dust to Glory*, c. 1990.]

Early additions to the track also focused on addressing the needs of radio and broadcast media. In 1952, Martinsville Speedway almost made the first radio broadcast of a stock car race. Darlington Raceway beat them to it by just a few months. They are quick to point out that even though Martinsville Speedway missed being the very first track to broadcast a race, Martinsville Speedway broadcast their race to seven stations as opposed to Darlington's five.[111] This is a matter of some pride, as the story turns up in many articles about the history of the track. It also represents the beginnings of a change in accessibility for a regional sport which was working hard to expand to a nationwide sport. The first radio broadcast for professional baseball was in 1921, fifty years after the first professional baseball game.[112] Though hardly comparable because of the differences in technology available in 1871, the fact remains that from the beginning, race promoters were looking for ways to increase accessibility to the race day event.[113]

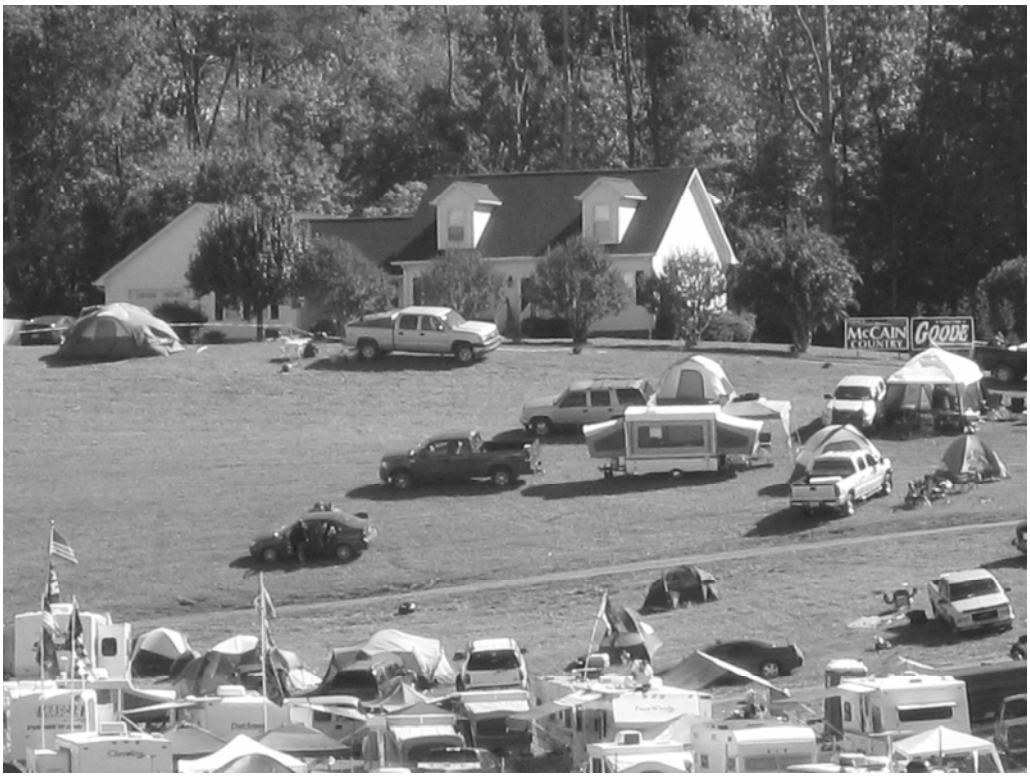

Figure 31: The Campbell family home not only looks out over the Speedway, it serves as a camping area for some fans. [Author's photo, 2008.]

The significance of family in NASCAR is exemplified at Martinsville Speedway. The grandson of H. Clay Earles took over as President of Martinsville Speedway in 1988, having worked at the track since he was in high school. To this day, he carries the same philosophy which his grandfather had: Martinsville Speedway should be a place for the fans to come and make good memories. Working to constantly improve the track is an idea that his grandfather passed along. They have both been quoted as saying that the track is never finished, that there are always improvements to be made.

Figure 32: Parking and camping areas at Martinsville Speedway. The Martinsville Speedway to the right of the image. Corporate hospitality tents for hosted events appear at the top of the rise on the left of the image. [Author's photo, 2008.]

Whether through seating capacity expansion, luxury box additions, new fan friendly technology or concession upgrades, Martinsville has been in a state of continuous change since it opened. A quick glance at the Track Timeline, available at the Martinsville Speedway website, gives a good idea of how much has changed at the track, there is an entry listed for almost every year of operation.[114] Earles envisioned a beautiful, park-like setting for his track, one that would create a pleasant experience for fans along with the excitement of racing and his grandson continues that tradition of constant improvement.[115]

In the last sixty-two years, Martinsville Speedway has added more than 60,000 seats for race fans.[116] Today Martinsville seats 65,000 around the half mile track. The

original 30 acres has now expanded to 340 acres to accommodate fan parking, NASCAR haulers and transport and camping. Despite many changes made over the years to the track, the official Martinsville website reminds fans: “the track itself and the battles that go on there are little different from 1947 when Red Byron won the first race.”[117] Martinsville Speedway is a modern track set into a traditional short track setting.

Figure 33: Martinsville Speedway, 1970. The roof over the frontstretch grandstand no longer exists. [ISC Archives, 1970.]

Glen Wood, of the legendary Wood Brothers racing team remembers the early days at the track. Little has changed, and explains that “[e]xcept for the asphalt on the track, today it looks exactly the same.”[118]

In 2004, Martinsville Speedway was sold to International Speedway Corporation (ISC), a publicly traded company in which the France family owns a controlling interest. Though the purchase by ISC was something of a loss to the idea of the independent and

family owned tracks, it is important to remember that the France family owns ISC. Since Bill France was one of the original stock holders at Martinsville in some ways, the sale kept the track in the family.[119]

Martinsville has the familiar midway and concessions that one finds at every track in the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series. However, there is no other track which has such a distinct foodways tradition as Martinsville. The Martinsville hot dog has been a track staple since the first races. It is not overly large, nor is it flavored with exotic spices or wild flavors. Still the Martinsville Hot Dog is an essential piece of Martinsville Speedway's heritage.

Colored a vivid red and described by some as a "color that should not exist," the Martinsville Hot Dog is a main feature at the track. It comes covered in a mixture of coleslaw and chili and wrapped in a simple piece of white paper. Like at other heritage tracks, local student groups and community organizations sell the Martinsville Hot Dog from booths at the speedway.

This simple foodways tradition of the track is without a doubt important to both drivers and fans alike.[120] Drivers like Dale Earnhardt, Richard Petty sought out these unique Hot Dogs for lunch each day they were at the track. Cale Yarborough ate several before each race, and drivers have sent crew members to pick up boxes of dogs for decades.[121] Race fans who are heading to Martinsville for the first time will be reminded to eat at least one. Columns and articles describing the Hot Dog as an essential part of the Martinsville Speedway experience may use questionable descriptions, but this essential foodways tradition remains strong.

In 2004, after ISC had purchased the track, one change had fans, drivers, and even the legends of NASCAR up in arms. Thinking to modernize the Hot Dog packaging, the track served the Martinsville Hot Dog in a Styrofoam container for the race in 2004. This caused an uproar; fans, drivers and anyone expecting a paper wrap were upset to discover a box around their Martinsville Hot Dog. During a tour of the buildings at Martinsville Speedway, the infamous packaging switch came up. Was it a serious matter to remove the traditional white paper packaging? A deadly serious Clay Campbell nodded, "Oh yes. It was nearly a riot. We had the paper back by the end of the day."[122]

Figure 34: The Danville Cheer Force Booster Club hosts one of the many stalls selling the Famous Martinsville Hotdog. [Author's photo, 2008.]

Tradition is an important part of winning at Martinsville as well. Listening to drivers complain that they had too many trophies gathering dust in their homes, H. Clay

Earles decided that he wanted to create a trophy that would be beautiful and useful, like his track. Rather than a loving cup or traditional trophy, Earles began awarding grandfather clocks with engraved plaques to the winners at Martinsville Speedway.[123] Darrell Waltrip, three time NASCAR Winston Cup Champion, explains that "there is no trophy more cherished than the grandfather clock you get for winning at Martinsville," and more importantly that "[e]verybody wants one."[124] It is certainly not that the drivers need to be able to tell time in their living room. The prestige and honor of winning at Martinsville has been a testament to a driver's skills in a race car since its first race.

Figure 35: Fred Lorenzen took home six Martinsville Grandfather clocks throughout his career. Here he poses with one of his two 1964 trophy clocks and a beauty queen [*NASCAR 1959-1971*, 2003.]

Each year, it seems that both the spring and fall races at Martinsville are surrounded by as much media publicizing the potential loss of a race date as there is to

promote the race itself. Keenly aware of the potential for NASCAR to decide that a media market is more important than tradition, articles extol the virtues of racing and the continuation of NASCAR traditions at Martinsville. Drivers, fans and journalists fret constantly over the two race dates which Martinsville still holds. Articles and testimonials about how important Martinsville is to the sport reflect not only on seemingly silly traditions, like the Martinsville Hot Dog, but on the more serious threat of a total loss of the heritage of NASCAR.[125]

Figure 36: Fans watch as the cars head for Martinsville's frontstretch. In the backstretch the older concrete risers hold advertising billboards instead of fans. [Author's photo, 2008.]

The potential loss of racing at this track is often compared to the retirement and even to the death of significant figures in NASCAR's history. Darrell Waltrip reminds readers in his weekly column at *NASCAR on FoxSports.com*, that Martinsville is a significant part of the collective history of NASCAR. Martinsville is a "part of our sport

that we need to honor, recognize, and preserve." He emphatically adds, later in the same column, "[w]e should never, ever think about leaving there."[126]

Known as the Grandfather track, for both its age and its trophy, Martinsville represents a very important part of NASCAR's history. Starting as a dirt track with seven hundred and fifty wooden seats and transformed to a modern racing facility, Martinsville Speedway is the very embodiment of NASCAR's growth and modernization. Martinsville retains its place as a significant part of NASCAR's heritage. The preservation potential for Martinsville Speedway promotes the inextricable heritage of NASCAR and provides a solid foundation for the preservation of heritage race tracks. Martinsville Speedway is the sole active race track within NASCAR's Cup division from the very first year of the series. Protecting the traditions of the track and the heritage of NASCAR by implementing a preservation plan creates an opportunity to manage the race track as a cultural resource while keep it as a viable part of the modern NASCAR.

The Lady in Black: Darlington Raceway

Perhaps Darrell Waltrip said it best with a little song sung to the tune of *Paris in the Spring*, after a crash ruined his chances of winning the 1989 Southern 500 and the coveted Winston Million, "I love Darlington in the spring, I love Darlington in the fall, I love Darlington in Victory Lane, but I hate Darlington in the wall."[127] Darlington Raceway is one of the most loved, loathed and respected tracks in NASCAR. Darlington Raceway represents sixty years of NASCAR's stock car racing history, and plays an important role in the cultural continuum of NASCAR.

Greg Fielden's comprehensive history of NASCAR records that Harold Brasington, the builder of Darlington Raceway, attended his first race in 1925 when he

accompanied his father to the high-banked boardtrack race in Charlotte, North Carolina.[128] In his youth, he also traveled to Indianapolis Motor Speedway to watch the famous Indianapolis 500. Watching the open-wheel cars race at Indianapolis, Brasington realized that the South had a different sort of people, who would want to watch a different kind of 500 hundred mile race.[129]

The popularity of open-wheel car races before World War II cannot be discounted in the overall history of racing in the United States. The success of open-wheel racing inspired many like Bill France and Harold Brasington to bring automobile racing to an entirely different group of Americans, the working man. Brasington felt, like France did, that stock cars would appeal to the every-day person "the farmer, the worker, the doctor and so forth who drive the same car back and forth to work… and to church on Sunday."[130]

Brasington didn't want to build another dirt track; he wanted to construct a paved oval track for stock cars. But the construction of an Indianapolis Motor Speedway for stock cars would have to wait. World War II placed Brasington's plans on hold. Returning to South Carolina after the war, Brasington focused on his sand and gravel business to support his family. The idea of building the track never wavered and he courted organizations and local businessmen for financial and civic support as he planned the track.[131]

By 1948, Brasington had enough money, the land moving equipment, and a plan; he just didn't have a place to put a race track. Many stories in NASCAR take place as cars race around ovals, this one starts around a card table. Harold Brasington, J.S. Ramsey, and four other men gathered for their weekly poker game one Saturday night.

Ramsey's grandson, who was present at the card game, remembers the conversation that opened the door for Darlington Raceway. The Ramsey family owned a large stretch of farmland four miles outside of Darlington, and Brasington inquired about Ramsey's plans for the plot of land. Ramsey replied that he didn't have too much going on with the land, some tenant farmers, and a few old cabins. Brasington announced that they should build a race track at the east end of the land and Ramsey casually replied, "Sure. Now deal the cards."[132]

There may have been a handshake too. When J.S. Ramsey's wife drove by the property the next week, she noticed there was an awful lot of activity out in the field, which no one knew anything about. Upon the realization that Brasington was in fact, building a race track at the east end of their property, "legal matters and business dealings" made Ramsey Chairman of the Board of the newly formed Darlington Raceway Corporation, and Brasington was granted a 99 year lease on the land.[133]

The oval track originally measured 1.25 miles around the course with the narrow turns banked at 14 degrees. In 1952, structural issues required a slight alteration, and the track was reconfigured to 1.366 miles long.[134] Nevertheless, Darlington Raceway is not a true oval. Like Martinsville's unique paper-clip shaped track, with "two drag strips attached by two u-turns," Darlington has a unique configuration. It is much narrower at one end than the other and is more of an egg shape than a true oval. The track has such an odd shape for a very simple reason; a fish pond dictated the original design of the track. Ramsey was fine with the land being used for a race track, but the minnow pond which he kept stocked with fish would have to stay. Paul Psillos, the engineer for the track, and Brasington constructed the track to accommodate the pond, forcing the track to narrow at

one end. The pond is no longer there but the track retains its tricky egg-shaped configuration.

Until Brasington came along, stock car races held on asphalt were unheard of. Every single NASCAR sanctioned event was held on dirt tracks. Brasington took the idea of stock cars on asphalt one step further; he wanted the event at Darlington to be a 500 mile race; it would be just like the Indianapolis 500, except that it would be a *Southern* 500. Most drivers had never raced on a paved surface (other than a few back roads) and the experience was something they never forgot.

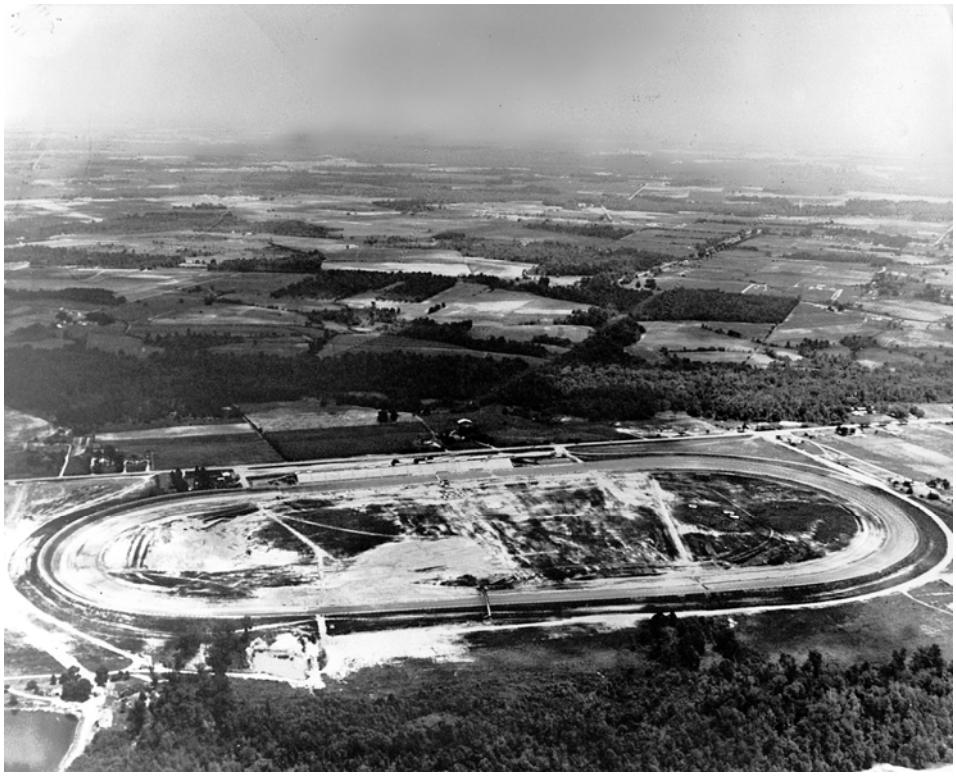

Figure 37: Aerial view of Darlington Raceway. The original front stretch is located at the top of the image. The infamous minnow pond is hidden by the trees in the foreground. [ISC Archives, 1950.]

Originally, Brasington contacted a competing stock car racing organization, the Central States Racing Association (CSRA) to sanction the race. Bill France was interested but was also a little leery of a stock car race that would run for 500 miles. France worried that if the race was a failure it could damage the growing credibility of NASCAR and stock car racing. Brasington approached the CSRA with the details of the upcoming race and the sanctioning organization came on board.[135] However, by the spring of 1950, only half of the tickets had sold, and just five entries were registered. Brasington approached Bill France, asking NASCAR to co-sanction the race; France agreed and soon seventy-five cars registered to qualify for the inaugural Southern 500.

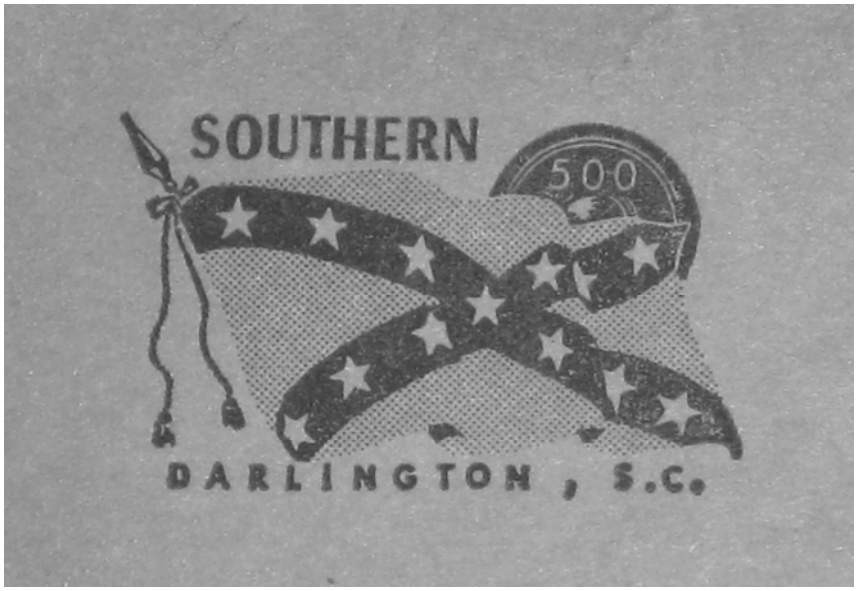

Figure 38: An advertisement for the 1962 Southern 500. Note the Confederate Flag, which is no longer an image used in association with the Southern 500 [*National Speed Sport News*, 1962.]

A new series of articles in the Darlington local newspaper focused on the development of the track and the excitement of the upcoming race. Before 1950, only occasional notes on stock car racing were included in the paper. The *Darlington News*

and Press announced the unprecedented number of cars qualifying for the race, and that the Mutual Broadcasting System would broadcast the race to nearly seventy-five thousand listeners.[136]

Darlington Raceway held the first Southern 500 on Labor Day Monday, September 4, 1950. Blue laws in South Carolina prohibited any racing on Sunday, so the holiday was a perfect match. Bill France was impressed by how many people (30,000) turned out for the race, especially since it was on Labor Day weekend.[137] In fact, until the Southern 500, Labor Day was an uncelebrated holiday in the South. The Southern 500 instilled the Labor Day holiday with significance in the stock car racing world and in the South, rather than the other way around.

At the first Southern 500, the local highways became jammed with people traveling to the race. Brasington expected 10,000 people and nearly 25,000 reportedly arrived.[138] Track officials decided to open the infield to the fans so that they could camp over night. The track asked the campers to return outside the gate in the morning to buy their race tickets, and they did.[139] Local Jaycees opened up all night hot dog stands to feed the crowds. This impromptu "event" was NASCAR's first fan friendly infield campout, a common site at almost every race track today.

Local families opened up their homes for visitors to stay, since there was only one hotel in town. Dot Owens, wife of driver Cotton Owens, remembers sleeping on a mattress in a stranger's living room before the race.[140] Newspaper columns covering the Southern 500 describe how the local families had started offering visiting fans a chance to park in their yards. The practice of sharing one's home with the extended family of

race fans has a long history with racing. Parking in local driveways and front yards, remains a significant aspect of attending a race today.

Figure 39: Even the dogs love Darlington's infield. In 2009, family dogs are still part of the race track community. They can be seen along the midway and throughout the infield, but dogs are not allowed in the stands. [ISC Archives, c1950.]

The Southern 500 represented NASCAR's stock car racing future when it opened and represents its past today. In 1950, the sport had taken a step away from its rural dirt track roots but had not yet left them behind. The new race at Darlington Raceway became associated with both the unproven world of stock car racing and with other significant national sporting events. The Southern 500 melded the traditions of open-wheel racing with the identity of the South, creating a prestigious event for racing history. Darlington Raceway is the track which "will give them something they can't get anywhere else on the NASCAR circuit. She'll give them the feeling, the Darlington feeling. The kind of

deep-down feeling you carry with you for the rest of your life."[141] Dale Earnhardt was talking about drivers, but he might as well have been talking about fans too.

Figure 40: The original frontstretch of Darlington Raceway, c1956. The spotters' stand has the American flag flying from it. The photographers for the race are standing along the inside of the infield wall. [ISC Archives, c1956.]

Martinsville is known as the Grandfather of all stock car tracks, Darlington Raceway is known as The Lady in Black. The nickname came about when the first drivers arrived and saw the unusual black asphalt track. Drivers, fans, and motorsports writers noticed the speedway's "fickleness and treachery [which] grew with each race there."[142] Drivers speak respectfully of the track; it is easy to find quotes from any driver from any era of NASCAR speaking of being "slapped by the Lady" or how they quickly learned to respect her. Darlington Raceway's slogan is "The Track Too Tough to Tame" another fitting nod to the difficult and dangerous track.

The black asphalt is one of the most recognizable features of the track; the concrete wall is the other. The "Darlington Stripe" is something of both an honor and a lesson for drivers on how difficult racing can be at Darlington Raceway. As soon as it opened, drivers quickly learned that the fastest way around the track was to ride extremely close to the outer track wall, actually scraping along the wall. The trick of being able to drive along the wall and then use the unusual banking and shape of the track to create a faster line, or path along which the race car travels, is a skill that only some drivers ever master. Even in 2009, at the end of the springtime race at Darlington Speedway, only five cars out of a field of forty-three were without a Darlington Stripe and this was mostly because most of them knew they couldn't drive along the wall. All the other cars had lost most of the paint from the right side of the race car, and leaving a dark smear along the Darlington wall. Those familiar with Darlington Raceway know that there are two kinds of drivers, "those who have hit the wall, and those who will."[143]

Articles appear each year when NASCAR returns to Darlington which tell the tales of the rookie driver (a driver in his first year of NASCAR Sprint Cup level racing) who thought that he knew how to drive at Darlington, and how instead, he "earned his stripe." The track's configuration is part of its essential nature and sixty years of drivers earning their own Darlington Stripe reminds drivers, both rookies and veterans, that the track has been there a lot longer than they have.

Figure 41: Fred Lorenzen shows off his Darlington Stripe. [*Darlington International Raceway*, c1960.]

Figure 42: The Darlington Stripe, visible along the wall behind the #25 GO Daddy Chevrolet, driven by Brad Keselowski. The wall starts out clean and ends the night with the remains of forty-three paint schemes along it. [Image courtesy of Darlington Raceway, 2009.]

Like all race tracks, Darlington has undergone a series of changes and upgrades to not only increase fan comfort but driver safety as well. In 1954, the track added additional seating areas to accommodate the number of race fans coming to Darlington Raceway.[144] In 1956, the track constructed an entirely new section of grandstands along the original backstretch. This section of seating, now called the Wallace Grandstands is named for driver Rusty Wallace. David Pearson, who holds the record for most wins at Darlington, was honored with the David Pearson Tower in 1997.[145] Like a historic building with a new coat of paint, Darlington Raceway remains the same track despite its repaving.

Figure 43: Darlington Raceway, c.1955. The covering over the grandstands no longer exists at the track [ISC Archives, 1955.]

Driver safety and track conditions are always a consideration, even though a track develops a certain character as the yearly races wear down the racing surface. Preserving the unique character of the track at Darlington Raceway was so important that in 2006, the Sanborn Map Company, Inc used a high-tech 3D computer program to survey the track in order to ensure that the repaving matched the dimensions of the original track. Maintaining the historic character of the track was the most important aspect of the job and "accuracy and reliability were extraordinarily important." During the project, the scanners measured and recorded the surface every 250 feet.[146]

The potential to use this type of technology in race track preservation is very exciting though cost prohibitions and time constraints may add challenges. Reproducing the original surface of a heritage track preserves the very essential character of the track. In 1998, after an earlier repaving of the track, driver Buddy Baker said that the new asphalt at Darlington was nothing more than a "tuxedo on a rattlesnake" and subsequent repaving has changed nothing at the challenging track.[147]

Losing Traditions

One major change to Darlington Raceway has had no impact on the track's character. The track moved the start/finish line in 1997 prior to the Mountain Dew Southern 500 to accommodate expansion plans for new grandstands and parking. The orientation of the track was reversed; the old turn three was the new turn one, the old turn four became the new turn two and so forth. The larger grandstand holds more fans but the Colvin Grandstands, the original frontstretch maintains its original character and is still in use. While the orientation was changed, the track itself was not. The walls, the track surface, and the banking remained the same.

Changes to the Darlington Raceway have not affected the racing or the reputation of the track at all.[148] In fact, the "Track Facts" sheet takes care to point out that despite this change, "track officials would never interfere with tradition."[149] Harold King, who has been working for Darlington Raceway in one capacity or another since it opened, he now gives the invocation at every race, agreed that the practicality of adding more grandstands was far more important than where the start/finish line was. The landscape around the track influenced the relocation of the start/finish line and grandstand expansion, as it had once dictated the laying out of the original track. Darlington Raceway is located immediately adjacent to Harry Byrd Highway, and there was no room to expand the original front stretch and grandstands. Since the track owns the property along the back stretch, the logical expansion plan called for a restructuring of the track's internal configuration.[150]

Keeping History

In 1965, after the tragic death of Joe Weatherly (who died of a head injury at the track in Riverside, California) Darlington Raceway installed the Joe Weatherly Stock Car Museum to honor the history and heritage of the sport. "Little Joe" Weatherly had visited the racing museum at Indianapolis and felt that stock car racing deserved to be honored in the same fashion. Before his death, Weatherly discussed the possibility of a stock car museum with Bob Colvin, then president of Darlington Raceway.[151] Weatherly felt strongly that the history of stock car racing was important. Darlington Raceway, aside from the formal museum, has other ways that NASCAR's past is still accessible.

Along the wall near the old tunnel entrance at (what is now) Turn Two, recent renovations revealed Pure Oil advertisements painted in the early days of the track. The

advertisement had simply been painted over and forgotten as the years passed. Today, this part of the wall offers a glimpse into early corporate sponsorship and track improvements programs. Tangible remnants of the track's early years in NASCAR are an exciting part of the track's physical heritage. The retaining wall, white and seemingly unimportant has carried part of the track's history for the last several decades.

Darlington has also recently installed the Legends Walk Memorial, featuring granite monuments carved in the shape of Goodyear tires. Placed behind the Taylor Grandstands, these monuments celebrate milestones in the history of Darlington Raceway. Track President Chris Browning hopes to install four new tires each year to continue to celebrate the remarkable history of the track.[152]

Figure 44: A Goodyear tire Legends Walk monument commemorating David Pearson, the "Silver Fox," who has the most wins at Darlington Raceway. [Author's photo, 2008.]

The Legends Walk monuments are locally designed and created by Michael Richardson and honor the heroes of the sport. The monuments also acknowledge the community involvement with heritage tracks like Darlington Raceway. Richardson's father worked selling ice at the first race, while Michael's grandmother was in charge of the Eastern Star group which sold food and concessions at the track. His grandfather's granite monument business had a chain hoist strong enough to lift engines in and out of the cars, and was often used to remove and replace engines.[153]

Darlington Raceway has always been careful to maintain its traditions even while changing the track; NASCAR has not always had the same philosophy. In the middle of the 2003 season, NASCAR announced "Realignment 2004" and major changes in the schedule began; tracks lost dates, races were moved from track to track and a literal abandonment of its own heritage occurred. NASCAR insisted that they were not "removing roots but rather gaining new ones," but NASCAR removed one of the most significant races and tracks which represent the heritage of stock car racing from their schedule: Darlington's Southern 500.[154] The removal of the Labor Day race date meant that the Southern 500 was no longer a part of the NASCAR schedule despite the role it had played in developing the sport. Rather than retain a significant NASCAR tradition, NASCAR moved the Labor Day race on the schedule to the California Speedway in Fontana, California. Darlington Raceway would have one race a year, in the spring.[155]

The displacement of a well respected NASCAR and Southern tradition was a blatant statement that the heritage of the sport is not the first consideration for NASCAR. The single reason for moving the race to California was not to build upon Bill France's

original desire to see a nation wide stock car series, but rather to capitalize on the fact that "[California is] smack in the middle of the nation's No. 2 media market."[156] The dismissal of a piece of NASCAR's heritage was both a tangible and symbolic wound to the history of the sport.[157] Even though Darlington's first Southern 500 is listed in the Media Guide (a primer for members of the media on all things NASCAR) as a milestone in the history of the sport, it was not enough to keep it on the schedule.

Darrell Waltrip, who sang the previously mentioned ditty to the tune of "Paris in the Spring" continues to push the significance of Darlington and the Labor Day weekend Southern 500 to anyone who will listen. While NASCAR's 2004 press releases extolled the virtues of change at Darlington, using weak examples to sugarcoat the abrupt removal of a significant race like the fact that the original Monday race eventually moved to Sunday, Waltrip states clearly that the Southern 500 should never have been taken from the track. "We need to put the Southern 500 back at Darlington Raceway, because that's what Darlington was known for. Five-hundred miles at Darlington on Labor Day weekend was special. Those are significant pieces of our history that we should improve, cherish, and hang on to."[158]

In 2008, Darlington Raceway announced the return of the Southern 500 to the track. Despite the fact that the 2009 Southern 500 would run on the track's single springtime date in May, Darlington Raceway proactively moved forward to recapture some of the tradition and heritage of sixty years of racing that had been lost with the Labor Day race date. The 2009 Southern 500 will be an interesting study in the realignment of a very significant tradition for NASCAR. This is a very important step by

a single track, looking to find a way to remind NASCAR of its place in the larger heritage of the sport.

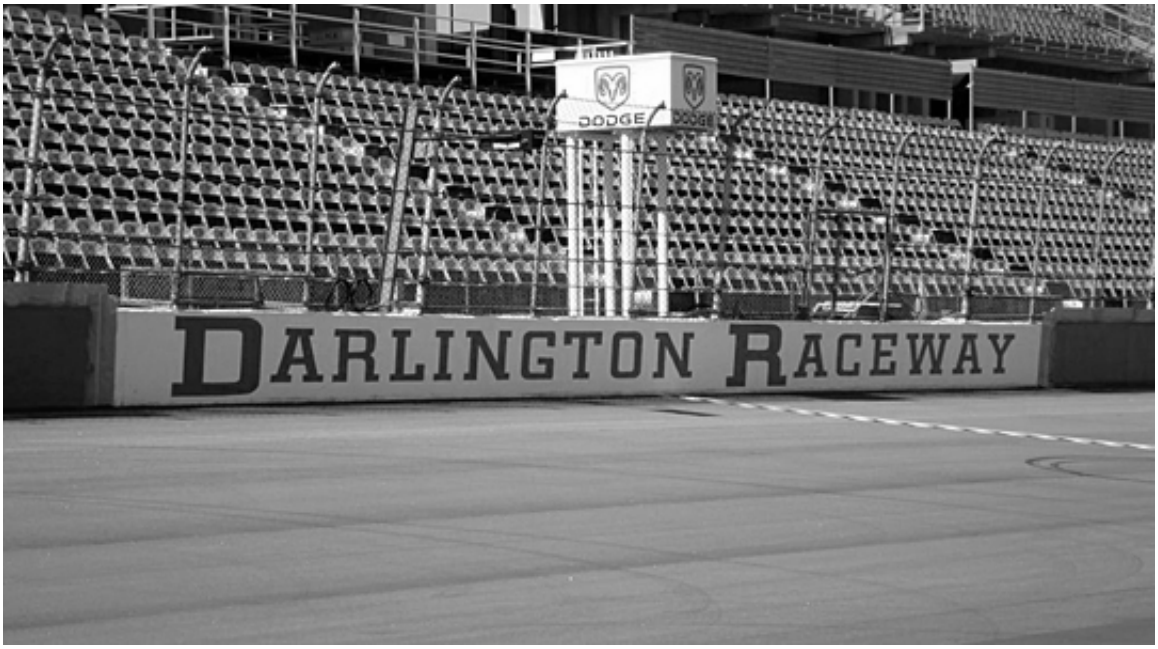

Figure 45: Darlington Raceway, 2009 springtime Southern 500. The lettering is painted in "retro" style letters, meant to recall the earlier races and the red and white scheme that was found at all NASCAR tracks during the years of R.J. Reynolds' sponsorship. Notably absent is the race sponsor's logo, giving prominence to both Darlington as a race track and the Southern 500 as a race. [Author's photo, 2009.]

For the return of the Southern 500, Darlington Raceway also revived a tradition that has been just recently lost to NASCAR. The red and white paint scheme that R.J. Reynolds brought to the Winston Cup tracks is gone, replaced with plain white walls adorned with race sponsor graphics and other painted advertisements. For the re-introduction of the Southern 500, Darlington Raceway revived the red and white paint scheme, bringing a familiar and traditional feel to the track once more. Darlington Raceway made a deliberate effort to recall the traditions and heritage of the track,

reminding the entire NASCAR community what they had nearly lost forever to "realignment."

In 2008, fans had the opportunity to vote on what they believe is the most significant moment of the track's history using a poll on Darlington Raceway's website. Among the list of records set and million dollar purses won, the first choice offered is for the inaugural Southern 500. Additionally, in March of 2009, the South Carolina Senate and House of Representatives passed a Concurrent Resolution declaring that the race week prior to the Southern 500 on May 9, 2009 will officially be Darlington Raceway Week in South Carolina.[159] These are small but important steps in the process of ensuring that the significance of the original Southern 500 is not lost when the name of the Southern 500 transfers to the Mother's Day weekend date.

Figure 46: Darlington Raceway's infield. In 1953, no one wore t-shirts depicting their favorite driver. But couples like the one strolling down the pit stalls, hand in hand, can still be seen today. [ISC Archives, 1955.]

While first races are significant for all tracks, the Southern 500 and Darlington Raceway are significant to both the history of stock car racing in the United States and to NASCAR. Darlington paved the way for the Super Speedways at Daytona and Talladega and facilitated the move of stock car racing from dirt tracks to paved tracks. As a heritage track which lost its most significant race date and which must contend with the continued threat of schedule realignment, Darlington Raceway is an essential track to any heritage preservation effort. The track is a monument to some of the greatest racing in NASCAR's history and marks a significant milestone in stock car racing. As driver Fred Lorenzen once said of The Lady in Black, "Darlington, to me, is the greatest race track in the world. Darlington lets you know if you're a driver or not."[160]

The Rock: Rockingham Speedway

In 2003, NASCAR's decision to "realign" the series schedule also dropped North Carolina Speedway's races, leaving the track without a race date at all. The track went dark, no races were held there. The Mayor of Rockingham, aware of the many impacts this would have on the community at large, spoke to the loss of heritage, "NASCAR has made a decision to move beyond its roots… [M]aybe neglect is a too strong a word, but I don't think so."[161]

When Andy Hillenburg bought the track in 2007, it was saved from total abandonment and dismantling. Affectionately known as "The Rock" (short for Rockingham), Hillenburg renamed the track one more time. Originally known as the North Carolina Motor Speedway, it became the North Carolina Speedway in 1997 after a merger with Penske Motorsports. Shortly after he purchased it, Andy Hillenburg christened the track Rockingham Speedway. This track, though younger than either

Martinsville Speedway or Darlington Raceway represents not only a turning point in NASCAR's history when the Speedway Era truly began to change the face of the sport, but one of the last tracks in North Carolina, the core of NASCAR's heritage. It is also an important example of a track, rooted in NASCAR's history which is now divorced from that specific heritage and yet continues to thrive within the greater culture of stock car racing.

A Modern Speedway in North Carolina

After building Darlington Raceway, Harold Brasington developed race tracks in Fayetteville and Randleman, North Carolina. As the 1950's came to a close Darlington Raceway continued to inspire development of new race tracks, Bill France built the two and a half mile, high banked super speedway at Daytona Beach in 1959 and two more speedways were built the following year, one in Charlotte, North Carolina and one in Atlanta, Georgia. In 1962, happy with his success, Brasington began to look for another place to build a race track.

Unlike Brasington's first venture with reluctant investors and card game handshakes, Brasington built the North Carolina Motor Speedway outside of Rockingham, North Carolina in 1964 with the support of twelve serious investors, a Chairman of the Board and "money-man" for the new track.[162] This new speedway was a one mile track with sixteen degree banking in the turns. In 1969, the track was altered, turns one and two were banked to twenty-two degrees, while turns three and four changed to twenty-five degrees each.

North Carolina Motor Speedway was the first race track in North America engineered using a computer. North Carolina Motor Speedway used 8,000 tons of asphalt

to pave its surface, becoming the first track in North Carolina to use an asphalt base. [163] The sub-base was primed with asphalt, upon which a mixture of asphalt, sand and stone was added. A layer of tack-coat and then a final paving layer composed of forty-five per cent crushed gravel, fifty-one per cent sand and four per cent mineral filler gave the track a rough paved surface. This surface was well known for its ability to wear out racing tires quickly. [164]

Site plans for the new track included an "ultra modern" air-conditioned press box that could hold ninety newsmen in tiered seating. This would ensure that they all had a clear and view of the action on the track. The grandstands promised the same unobstructed view to the fans. The grandstands could hold 26,062 fans in reserved seating and the infield was set to hold 24,000 more. Fans in the grandstands had access to modern restrooms, concession vendors and a view of a new scoreboard, ready to give up to the second information on the lap leaders.[165] The track and grandstands made up a total of eighty-five acres and another one hundred acres provided for parking and camping areas. Then, as now, the parking was free for race fans.

By 1965, Richmond County was well aware of the number of people and the excitement a NASCAR race would bring to their community. Brasington built his speedway ten miles outside of both Rockingham and Hamlet, centered between the two communities. Each argued that they had the right to claim the track as part of their communities and more importantly, have it named after their respective town. A local columnist good naturedly reported the feud, "Rockinghamlet? No Thank You!"[166]

In February of 1965, the track announced its formal name as the North Carolina Motor Speedway. However, in order to appease both towns, the track's physical address

was listed in Rockingham, the track phone number was listed in Hamlet, and one grandstand bears the name of each of the towns.[167] In Figure 47, the Hamlet Grandstands are at the right, located along the backstretch, while the Rockingham Grandstands are along the frontstretch.

Figure 47: North Carolina Motor Speedway, a few weeks before the inaugural race in 1965. [Rockingham Speedway, 1965.]

The local paper featured news articles on the construction of the track before the track officially opened. An entire week's worth of celebrations, festivities, parades, and track activities like qualifying and practice runs were announced to celebrate the first American 500 at North Carolina Motor Speedway. The Mayor of Rockingham declared that it was "American 500 Week" and the chamber of commerce and local businesses erected signs welcoming race fans to their community.

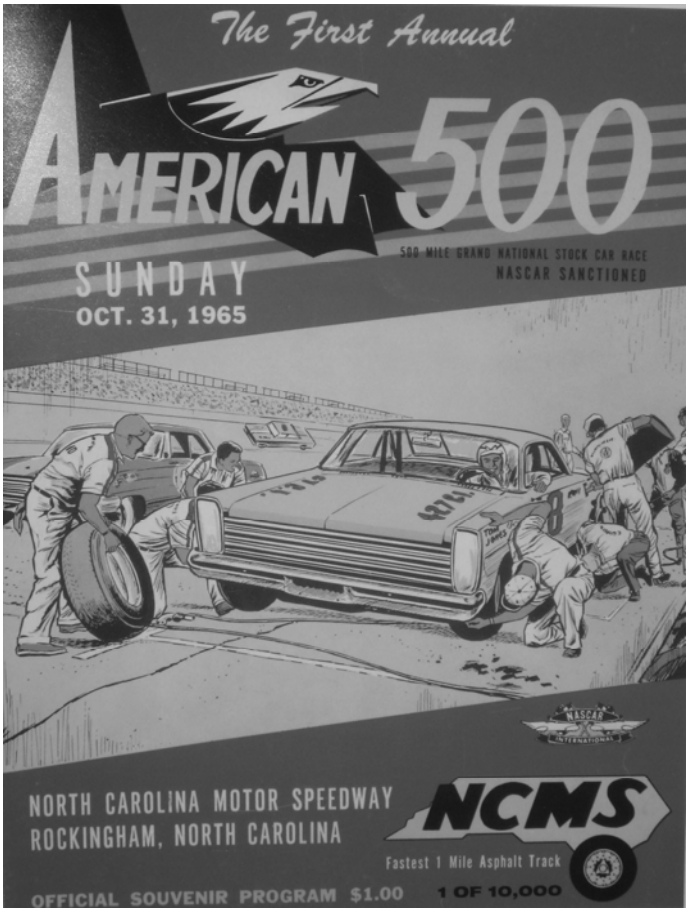

Figure 48: A reproduction of the Inaugural American 500 Official Program, courtesy of Rockingham Speedway. The brochure features all the cultural elements that make up a race, the fans, the crew, the race car driver, and the race going on in the background. The banking of the track is even accentuated in the illustration. [Rockingham Speedway, 2008.]

The "Miss American 500" beauty pageant was part of the festivities. The pageant was most likely fashioned after the very successful beauty pageants held for the Southern 500 each year; twenty two young ladies entered into the competition for the first coveted crown. Local businesses anticipated the coming race fans and began to adjust to make their services more fan friendly. An advertisement for Wood's Restaurant in the

Richmond County Journal proclaimed that they would be open all Saturday night before the race in order to serve race fans. Both the town of Hamlet and the town of Rockingham scheduled parades to celebrate the inaugural race at North Carolina Motor Speedway.

The coming race was so significant for the local economy that even Rockingham's lifted the local Blue Laws for the race, allowing businesses to operate early Sunday morning.[168] The first American 500 drew 48,000 spectators to Richmond County. In 1966, a spring time race at North Carolina Motor Speedway, the Peach Blossom 500, was added to NASCAR's schedule, bringing 40,000 fans to the track.

North Carolina Motor Speedway represents an exciting transition in NASCAR's history. When first built, the track was only one of four oval speedways that NASCAR used, yet its construction and size called to mind earlier stock car racing tracks. In 1965, racing historian and original Secretary to NASCAR, Bill Tuthill, in a brief introduction to the track for the *Richmond County Journal*, wrote that the track was a mile long, the traditional significant length for any racing competition. Recalling that the measured single mile is the distance marking land speed records and is the length of many older tracks of the stock car circuit, he noted that North Carolina Motor Speedway was the natural successor to this tradition.[169] Dick Bergren, a motorsports announcer and commentator for more than thirty years, called Rockingham a track where "truly great drivers are separated from the just damn good drivers."[170]

Figure 49: Racing at North Carolina Motor Speedway, 1967. In this image, a low rail separates the pit road from the race track. This change reflects one of many safety conscious changes that have occurred over time at race tracks. [ISC Archives, 1967.]

North Carolina Motor Speedway featured two races each year until 2003, when NASCAR's "Realignment 2004 and Beyond" removed the fall race date from the track. This same program removed the Labor Day race from Darlington Raceway and "realigned" the Labor Day race to the track in Southern California[171]

One of the main concepts behind the Realignment was to relieve a perceived saturation of the Southeast market. A study released by the investment banking firm Bear Sterns "expressed concern" over the regional focus of NASCAR, despite the fact that NASCAR held races in nineteen states across the US.[172] The "obvious solution in [their] view would be to move races from southeastern tracks that have two [races] per season to tracks in the less concentrated western region of the United States."[173] An article on the

firm's evaluation of NASCAR points out that in their opinion; places like Rockingham have "short comings" which include "limited cultural amenities." As this thesis argues, NASCAR created its own culture based on the rich heritage of stock car racing; moving a race to a race track in a community with an unrelated cultural base does nothing to enhance the sport. NASCAR's Realignment, the Bear Sterns report, and a lawsuit involving the ownership of the track resulted in the permanent closing of the track in 2004.[174]

The track was used intermittently for testing and as a background for movies until 2007 when it was put up for auction. There had been little scrap metal salvaging at the track and it remained in good condition. The owners removed 30,000 seats along the backstretch when the track closed, but did not dismantle any other part of the track. The track owners took the grandstand and seats to Charlotte to provide seating for a new drag strip next to Lowe's Motor Speedway.

In 2007, North Carolina Speedway was put up for auction. Former driver Andy Hillenburg bid for and won the shuttered race track. With every intention to return racing to the track as soon as possible, Hillenburg saved one of NASCAR's heritage tracks. Hillenburg placed great importance on returning races to Rockingham Speedway as soon as possible and reconnecting with the community. Unlike Bear Sterns which felt that Rockingham had little value as a place, Hillenburg wanted the track to be "an important part of the community…I love this sport a lot, and I want to make a difference."[175]

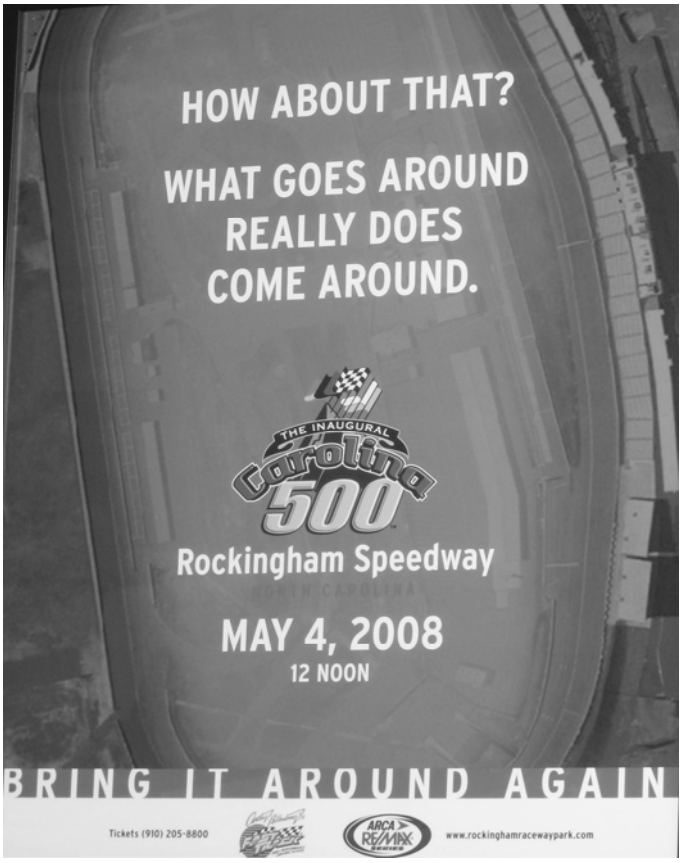

Figure 50: Promotional poster for 2008 Carolina 500, the first race held at Rockingham Speedway under Andy Hillenburg. [Rockingham Speedway, 2008.]

By May of 2008, racing had returned to Rockingham Speedway. Hillenburg also returned the traditional race names to the track. The 2008 inaugural ARCA race held at Rockingham was the Carolina 500; the race featured the same name of the traditional spring race for the North Carolina Speedway.

Hillenburg maintained Rockingham's identity as a historic track while at the same time moving towards the future of the "new" speedway. The new name, Rockingham Speedway honors its familiar nickname, "The Rock." By renaming it Rockingham

Speedway, Hillenburg did not replace the historic identity of the track with a modern one, but rather ensured that the track's past and future were both acknowledged.

Figure 51: Rockingham's two Rocks stand at the entrance to the Speedway. Each driver's named is carved into the granite after a victory. The Rock on the right hand side is the first Rock, representing the North Carolina Speedway, the Rock on the left is for the track's future as Rockingham Speedway. [Author's photo, 2008.]

Hillenburg reestablished another important tradition at the track. A large granite boulder marks the entrance to the speedway, a namesake monument taken from a local quarry. Past drivers who have won at Rockingham have their names carved into the face of the Rock to honor their wins. A new rock now stands alongside the original. This new Rock symbolizes both the past, by echoing the original and the future, its surface ready to receive and memorialize those who can best the rest of the field at the track. Like Darlington Raceway's repainting of their track walls and the reintroduction of the

Southern 500, Rockingham Speedway and other heritage tracks must struggle to keep a foothold on their own contributions to the history of the sport as NASCAR modernizes and leaves tradition behind.

Figure 52: The Papa Joe Hendrick Garage at Rockingham Speedway. Each element of the track plays an integral role in the overall operation. Honoring those who have contributed to the sport is important. [Author's photo, 2008.]

In the tradition of honoring those who have left their mark on the sport by naming features of the track after influential individuals, Rockingham Speedway renamed the tower, garage, and grandstands in 2008. The newly christened Benny Parsons Tower, Ricky Rudd Grandstand, and Papa Joe Hendrick Garage celebrate those who have made significant contributions to the track and NASCAR.

Figure 53: Turn Two, Rockingham Speedway. The base of the missing backstretch grandstands are visible on the left side of the image. [Author's photo, 2008.]

The future of the Rockingham Speedway lies in its ability to maintain a presence in the stock car world without the support of NASCAR. With races scheduled and a strong relationship with the community, Rockingham Speedway is moving forward. Using their past as a stepping stone, the track is reasserting itself within the stock car racing world. The empty backstretch, where the grandstands once were, will become a new part of the track. Hillenburg, instead of replacing the grandstands, has created a motor home lot; this change allows fans to watch the race from the higher vantage point on top of their RVs. Improvements to the track also include the construction of a half mile track behind the backstretch. This short track, designed to resemble Martinsville Speedway, plays an important role in Rockingham Speedway's future. The short track

provides an arena for NASCAR's teams to test their cars and equipment; it is one more source of revenue and racing for Rockingham Speedway.

Figure 54: A crew member gives some helpful advice to one of the Allisons at North Carolina Motor Speedway. [ISC Archives, 1967.]

Rockingham Speedway has always been a driver's favorite. Ricky Rudd stated that if one was to ask any driver who ever raced there, "they [the drivers] never wanted to see it leave the schedule."[176] This imbalance between the ways in which the sport must function as a business and the loss of heritage tracks needs to be addressed. Hillenburg's private efforts to save Rockingham Speedway can not be replicated at all the race tracks which are in danger of being lost forever, but examining the successful model of race track preservation which he has created will certainly aid future preservation efforts.

Rockingham Speedway represents a transition in the sport as NASCAR grew into the Modern Era. As a race track which built during the upswing of NASCAR's popularity and growth, Rockingham Speedway is a track rescued from demolition by someone who believed in the value of bringing racing back to a historic track. Racing at a heritage track is the best form of active preservation. Rockingham Speedway provides an excellent example of the ways in which preservation can be an active combination of the past, present and future of stock car racing.

Rockingham Speedway provides a tangible example of the idea that racing is the best form of preservation for any heritage track. Andy Hillenburg is well aware of how significant Rockingham is to stock car racing. In a recent interview about the progress he has made at Rockingham Speedway, he recounted the reaction of many drivers. "Q: Many current Cup drivers say they'd still love to be racing on your 1.017-mile oval. How does that make you feel? Hillenburg: That's the first thing they say when they go out there and do some testing. Every driver except one or two has gotten out and said, 'Gosh, I wish we still raced here.'"[177]

Conclusion

There is not one "most significant" NASCAR heritage race track. Each early track plays an important part in the development of stock car racing. By celebrating and exploring the heritage that each track brings to NASCAR, stock car racing is fully realized as a part of American history. A preservation approach which supports the tracks as functioning facilities as well as heritage sites allows NASCAR's heritage tracks to continue to be a part of the sport's future.

Each of the tracks explored in this chapter could develop into a model preservation program for stock car tracks. These three tracks maintain a balance between their own past, NASCAR's past, and the future of stock car racing. Though it may fall to the individual tracks to emphasize their role in NASCAR's past, each of these tracks has established a heritage identity. Martinsville Speedway, NASCAR's oldest active track, still has two races on the yearly schedule. Emphasizing the way in which the track developed from a dirt track to the oldest track in the series, Martinsville Speedway has the potential to proactively promote NASCAR's heritage. Darlington Raceway, with its revisiting of important NASCAR traditions like the Southern 500 and the paint schemes of the early Winston Cup days is a testament to how strongly people who are involved with the track and NASCAR feel about tradition. The reintroduction of the Southern 500 could have easily been derailed with enough criticism; instead, it was hailed as one of the greater things to have happened to the sport in a long time. Finally, Rockingham Speedway offers an example of successful race track preservation. Rockingham Speedway also provides a positive model for the preservation of a NASCAR heritage track after NASCAR abandoned it. For shuttered tracks like North Wilkesboro, the successful reopening of a track without the direct support of NASCAR bodes well for the future of heritage tracks. Though there are few Andy Hillenburgs in the world, Rockingham's continued place in the stock car racing world is a promising start for heritage race track preservation.

In 2009, there are fewer heritage race tracks that there ever were. The three race tracks explored in this chapter serve as excellent examples of preservation in action and preservation potential, both usable in developing a long range and successful preservation

program. These are not the only potential NASCAR heritage race tracks and they are not the only important historic stock car tracks in the United States. Rather, Martinsville Speedway, Darlington Raceway, and Rockingham Speedway serve as models from which preservationists can develop ways to ensure that heritage tracks have a future.

CHAPTER V
PRESERVATION OPTIONS FOR NASCAR'S HERITAGE RACE TRACKS

Introduction

Although independently significant, NASCAR's heritage race tracks are more than singular sites of history. Preservation programs must address the challenges that heritage tracks present as dynamic and interrelated resources. These tracks share a distinct connection to each other, to the larger entity that is NASCAR and to stock car culture. Each track holds a special place within the living history of the larger NASCAR culture and loses some of its meaning when considered singularly. Consequently, NASCAR's heritage tracks deserve a preservation approach that acknowledges their place within NASCAR's history and its cultural community, while at the same time honoring each track's specific regional significance. Rather than isolate these tracks as individual historic sites, it is important to understand their collective role in the greater story of stock car racing in America.

Preservation should not fossilize heritage resources but should instead play an essential role in cultural resource management. Preservation approaches should reflect not only the age and place value of a resource but also the continuum of the culture which it represents. A preservation evaluation process which measures only enduring physical significance but does not fully address the significance conveyed by cultural continuity cannot truly address the preservation needs of a dynamic resource.

There are many preservation options available for cultural resource management, this thesis research briefly examines three of the most familiar options and introduces a fourth preservation approach. The four preservation options considered by this thesis research are: 1) listing a historic resource in the National Register, 2) the creation of museums, 3) heritage site management, and 4) establishing a national heritage area.

Each of these preservation options offers a valid approach for the conservation of historic resources. However, there are several factors to consider when looking for preservation solutions appropriate for heritage race tracks. First, the operating heritage race track is a dynamic resource and much of the original fabric is no longer present. Second, the heritage race track is defined not merely by its structural elements, but rather by the cultural continuum which has become associated with it over the last sixty years of stock car racing history. Finally, the heritage race track is a heritage resource which is significant to the local community to which it belongs and is significant in the greater overall context of the history of NASCAR and stock car racing. A heritage race track does not exist as singular, disconnected heritage site. To fully address the preservation needs of a heritage race track all these elements must be considered.

A Listing in the National Register

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of resources in the United States determined to be historically significant. The National Register was created by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and is administered by the National Park Service. Inclusion in the National Register presupposes that a structure, landscape, or site maintains significant original physical integrity associated with its determined period of significance. The National Register nomination process requires a formatted

evaluation which relies on seven aspects of integrity.[178] All resources must be evaluated using the same process and criteria. This method ensures that each resource is evaluated with a limited personal bias on the part of the nominating party. However, determining the overall physical integrity of a site with regards to a fixed point in history does not always effectively address the significance of continuous use of a heritage resource.

National Register Bulletin Number 15, How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation clearly states that a resource must retain "the essential physical features that enable it to convey its historic identity. The essential physical features are those features that define both why a property is significant and when it was significant."[179] The National Register does not consider the continual use of a heritage site as a part of the determination of significance. Determination of historic significance based solely on physical integrity limits changes which are an essential process of an active heritage race track. Alterations to the physical architecture of race tracks are necessary, especially as owners upgrade and modernize facilities in order to meet the demands of the sport.[180]

Darlington Raceway once featured a wooden press stand, where reporters could watch the race, high above the track. In 1965, driver Earl Balmer hit the stand during a wreck on the track. Damages to the tower were so severe that the press feared for their safety at future races. A modern tower replaced the original wooden structure.[181] The reporters are still watching the race and the lap times for each driver are still recorded, just from a safer vantage point. Like the much later change to the location of the start/finish line at the same track, the physical changes to the structure have no impact to the integrity of the traditions or reoccurring events.

An insistence that a heritage track retain its exact original physical features would condemn the track to fossilization, not only because of safety concerns for both drivers and fans, but because the track must be able to maintain viability as a racing facility. This process requires changes to the facility. Heritage tracks must be able to compete with newer and more modern facilities. This means that the facility overall must be made comfortable, functional and ADA accessible. Even with alterations, the architectural form and function of the track retains the physical aspects necessary to facilitate the heritage of NASCAR. Changes to the physical elements of the track diminish the architectural integrity but do not impact its cultural significance.

The local constituency which identifies with the race track as a part of their community history would lose a considerable heritage site if the track were to be demolished. In this way, the upkeep and modernization of the track ensures that it remains a viable part of the community.

Nominating Race Tracks to the National Register

Though the physical features like grandstands or auxiliary buildings are not the most significant elements of a race track, under the current requirements for listing in the National Register, they are the basis for determination of overall significance and integrity.

In 2006, the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR) conducted a preliminary study to determine the eligibility of Martinsville Speedway to both the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places. The study evaluated the Martinsville Speedway for regional significance using Criterion A: "associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of

our history" with a period of significance from 1947-1957.[182] The Virginia DHR determined that the Speedway did not retain enough historic integrity, i.e., original fabric and "intactness of the property," to be considered a historic resource.[183]

Though the track was determined ineligible for listing in either the State or National Register, the evaluation made an important point about reliance on physical features. The evaluation only considered the structural integrity within the boundaries of the track and not cultural significance or as a resource which retains diverse elements of cultural significance. While there are only a few original structural elements remaining at Martinsville Speedway, the significant contribution to stock car racing's heritage as well as being the only remaining active track from NASCAR's first racing season should have been considered as an associative value during the evaluation of the track.

A nomination to the National Register offers a cultural resource respectability and prestige; it is an official validation of a cultural contribution. The familiar program is also a valuable tool for promoting heritage tourism. Grant programs are available to resources listed in the National Register and eligibility to the National Register can also provide preservation support through the Section 106 process, which reviews federally funded projects for impact to potential resources. Perhaps most importantly, the National Register is a tool which encourages preservation by documenting historically significant properties and legitimizing them as resources. However, a listing in the National Register is only a symbolic acknowledgement of historic significance and there is little actual preservation protection offered with this process. There are no laws which prohibit the owner from modifying or changing a listed resource.[184]

Individual nomination of heritage race tracks to the National Register would not effectively convey the collective significance of these tracks. A listing also fails to address the preservation issues of a resource which must continue to modernize its facilities in order to survive. While the National Register recognizes multiple resources under historic districts and multiple property listings, this does not properly address the interconnected nature of the multiple race tracks within the NASCAR series. A collective listing for race tracks as multiple resources encounters the same limitations that an individual nomination might. The race tracks would be individually significant if the appropriate integrity values were available in the National Register criteria. Each of the early race tracks hold a special place in stock car racing history, and are in turn, a part of NASCAR and the larger framework of American history. A National Register listing is not the most effective preservation approach for heritage NASCAR race tracks.

Museums and Exhibits

Museums approach resource preservation in a much different way, often focusing on elements of material culture, displaying these artifacts in organized exhibits. As a place where visitors experience history within a fixed space, museums are an essential attraction for heritage tourism. Museums operate as individual heritage entities. Various types of management, including private organizations or state, local and federal governments, operate museums. Since a museum is associated with a specific resource, there may be little interaction between multiple individual organizations.

There are several motorsports related museums in the South. Some museums are part of a specific team's garage or shop and some museums are not affiliated with a specific team, but rather focus on the broad history of the sport. Historic racing teams like

the Wood Brothers and Richard Petty Motorsports have museums which document the history of these legacy teams. Both the Petty Museum and the Wood Brothers Museum showcase trophies won, photographs, old race cars, and many different types of memorabilia. The Joe Weatherly Museum at Darlington Raceway not only displays cars and memorabilia relevant to the track, but has an interactive audio tour which allows visitors to listen to oral histories. Once it is complete, the NASCAR Hall of Fame in Charlotte, North Carolina will feature an extensive museum dedicated to the history of NASCAR. It is important to note that while the Hall of Fame will provide an excellent centralized site for the heritage of NASCAR, it is not located at a race track. The Hall of Fame is independent of any race track which allows it to be significant in its own right as an independent curator of NASCAR's history.

A fixed exhibit in a museum can be both a positive and negative contributor as a heritage tool. An exciting exhibit with interesting artifacts and displays can draw crowds and visitors through the years. On the other hand, there is the possibility of museums becoming outdated, with exhibits that visitors no longer find relevant.

Attendance at local NASCAR related museums increases during weekends with race day events since fans in the same geographic proximity for a race are more likely to visit. Museums offer the heritage experience regardless of the calendar. Joe Weatherly's shoes, Richard Petty's collection of belt buckles, Bill Elliot's Winston Million car, and exhibits of cheated race car parts tell the history of stock car racing. These little parts of stock car history encourage visitors to see the details of the lives of the drivers and add to an understanding and appreciation of the history of the sport.

A museum component could be included in any heritage race track. However, much of the significance that a heritage race track conveys is in the experience of the race. The track as an outdoor or open air museum would reduce the track down to its very basic architectural elements, without retaining the cultural, experiential element. Museums are usually managed by an organization or entity that does not have a cultural connection outside of its own resources. The management of a museum is directed solely to the operation and promotion of the museum as a singular cultural resource. Revitalizing an individual heritage track as a museum would not retain the cultural connection with the other heritage race tracks.

A visit to a museum along with a race weekend creates a more comprehensive heritage experience for the fan. Exhibits which display the memorabilia and trophies from past races have one significant limitation. The experience of attending a race is still missing. The connection between the driver's race suit or his old car need to be relatable to the tangible heritage that a visitor experiences watching this generation's NASCAR heroes.

Historic Sites

Private preservation and grassroots efforts have been the foundation for historic preservation since the Mount Vernon Ladies Association gathered together to save George Washington's home in the mid 1800s. It is the personal passion and enthusiasm of an individual which serves as the catalyst for the preservation of an historic site. Often, private preservation efforts become the most active when a resource is threatened. Local non-profit preservation organizations dedicated to a common cause are present in almost every local community and the racing community is no different. Several private

preservation groups exist which are dedicated to stock car race tracks and stock car racing heritage. The ways in which private preservation approaches preservation resource management are as varied as the resources and the people who work to preserve that heritage.

Save the Speedway is an organization dedicated to the preservation of the North Wilkesboro Speedway. The track, one of the original eight tracks from NASCAR's inaugural year, is located in North Wilkesboro, North Carolina and has been dark since 1996. The organization hosts fundraising events and sells memorial t-shirts to help promote the preservation of the race track. In May of 2008, *Save the Speedway* worked with the North Carolina Office of Archives and History and sponsored the installation of an official highway marker. The marker, placed to honor North Wilkesboro Speedway's place in NASCAR's history would also "ensure for generations that the history of North Wilkesboro Speedway will be preserved."[185] North Wilkesboro Speedway remains inactive as a race track but *Save The Speedway* is working hard to develop a positive, racing oriented plan which will not only preserve the track, but which will allow racing to return. North Wilkesboro Speedway is currently up for sale but has no perspective buyers.

In 2009, the producer of a reality television program expressed interest in using the track for a series based on women race car drivers. At this time, however, it appears that the track conditions will not allow the filming of the series. Though abandoned for several years now, North Wilkesboro is still a relevant and usable race track. With the proper repairs and an interested party, the Speedway has potential as a recreational

facility, as a heritage site and visitors' center. Even in 2009, North Wilkesboro retains potential as an operational race track.

In Hillsborough, North Carolina, another track from NASCAR's past has been preserved in an entirely different fashion. The Occoneechee Speedway, also known as the Orange Speedway, was a dirt track abandoned in 1968. Over the years, the natural growth of the landscape overtook the form of the race track until only remnants were visible. The grandstands are still present alongside the front stretch and twenty years of stock cars wore a permanent oval groove into the red dirt which is still visible today.

Preservation North Carolina purchased the site in 1997 from Bill France and sold it with protective covenants, to the Classical American Homes Preservation Trust (CAHPT). The CAHPT incorporated the race track along with the surrounding forty-four acres into the Historic Occoneechee Speedway Trail (HOST). This heritage trail, winding along the Eno River for three miles, is a successful combination of natural conservation and cultural heritage preservation. The nearby historic home, Ayr Mount, The Poet's Walk and the Occoneechee Speedway create a diverse heritage landscape. CAHPT also is working with the Friends of the Mountain to Sea Trail, a program which encourages the exploration of North Carolina via hiking trails, to include Occoneechee on their trail list.[186] Unlike North Wilkesboro, the Occoneechee Speedway track could never be used for racing again. The natural changes to the landscape are more conducive to preserving the site as it now is, rather than struggling to revive it as a viable race track. Private preservation efforts have created an exciting preservation program which incorporates a historic race track with many seemingly unrelated elements.

Occoneechee Speedway is one of the two automobile race tracks listed in the National Register of Historic Places; the other listed track is Indianapolis Motor Speedway. The fixed nature of the Occoneechee Speedway ensures that little will change to the track itself. The collaboration of heritage resources and preservation options at Occoneechee Speedway is an excellent example of the creative preservation of heritage race tracks. Visitors who might not necessarily have an interest in racing history or culture, i.e. the visitors who are interested in touring the historic house or simply enjoying the nature walk; are introduced to stock car racing's historic presence in the area. It is a successful method of increasing the awareness and appreciation of stock car racing heritage. Visitors learn about the early days of stock car racing simply by enjoying a nature walk. The preservation resources incorporated into the Historic Occoneechee Speedway Trail establish the site as both individually significant and significant as part of the culture of the region.

One final example of private preservation incorporates the fundamental drive behind race track preservation, that racing continues at these tracks. Andy Hillenburg's purchase of Rockingham Speedway was one of the most significant race track preservation events in recent years. Hillenburg literally saved the race track from demolition. His determination to host events at the track within a year proved that he understood the significance of returning racing to the track.

Hillenburg's conscious decision to rename the track and the races with titles historically significant to the track established strong ties to the track's own past. Unfortunately, Rockingham Speedway is a rare example of what private preservation can accomplish. The hard work and finances that must go into the revitalization of a race

track makes the project daunting at the very least. Rockingham Speedway in 2009 opened a small paved oval track named the “Little Rock.” The track was built behind the backstretch in an area which was once part of the parking area.

This has become an especially important opportunity for both Rockingham Speedway and NASCAR teams. In 2009, teams were no longer permitted to practice on tracks which are included in NASCAR Sprint Cup Series. Since NASCAR no longer races at Rockingham Speedway and has never raced at the Little Rock, the perfect opportunity has been created. Rockingham Speedway remains a viable and important part of NASCAR and the local stock car racing community. The Little Rock allows teams improve driving skills while Rockingham Speedway provides exciting races for other series like the Automobile Racing Club of America (ARCA), another stock car sanctioning body.

Hillenburg’s enthusiasm and local community support are the driving force behind this successful preservation effort. Proactive approaches to promotion and the preservation of the track have brought success to Rockingham Speedway. Hillenburg has created a forum for active preservation by revitalizing the traditions at the track. In some ways, he has created the ultimate experiential heritage site. Rockingham Speedway, one of NASCAR’s heritage tracks, was abandoned just like North Wilkesboro. Even cut off from the core support of NASCAR, Hillenburg returned the most important element to the track, racing. Rockingham has incredible support, both locally and within the greater stock car racing community. Developing support programs for heritage tracks which emulate Hillenburg’s successful model community would encourage the active preservation at other tracks.

The National Heritage Area Program

Heritage race tracks could be preserved with differing levels of success using any one of the preservation methods discussed in this chapter so far. How then can all the above elements of preservation be utilized to create a comprehensive heritage program which addresses heritage race tracks? NASCAR is a traveling series with its own culture and heritage. The culture travels with the sport across state lines from track to track; there is no single site representing stock car racing as a whole. NASCAR forms a discontinuous district, extending from track to track. Race tracks are located in different states but the schedule forms a very distinct pathway connecting each venue to the others. The tracks are simultaneously individual entities and part of something much greater. While it is the most visible and by far the most successful, NASCAR is but one aspect of the greater culture of stock car racing. Preservation practices must address each of these issues in order to successfully preserve stock car race tracks and stock car racing culture.

A relatively new option for preservation and cultural resource management is the development of national heritage areas. The National Heritage Area Program works to combine preservation, recreation, conservation, economic development, heritage tourism, and education.[187] National heritage areas focus on the stories of America which are significant to the heritage of America without being limited to or defined by a single resource. One of the purposes behind a national heritage area is to bring together communities which have a shared cultural investment. The three heritage tracks examined in this thesis research form a solid core for a stock car racing themed national heritage area. Evaluation as individual heritage resources would fail to encompass the original design of Bill France's NASCAR, which never intended to focus on one

particular track or make one more significant than the other. The series was not meant to be relevant in only one place, but was organized to interconnect the stock car tracks within a collective community. A national heritage area successfully incorporates multiple resources in many different places.

Established by the National Park Service in 1984 as a means to "expand on traditional approaches to resource stewardship," heritage areas create a special bond between multiple resources, communities and the National Park Service that strive to preserve both the "physical character and cultural legacy of the United States."[188] Heritage areas encompass large landscapes, multiple resources, and cultural elements so that preservation has an active, cultural continuity rather than a snapshot of history. The collective umbrella of national heritage areas includes folkways, industry, cultural traditions, vernacular landscapes, and community involvement.

The National Park Service defines a National Heritage Area as a "place designated by Congress where natural, cultural, historic, and scenic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally distinctive landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography. These patterns make heritage areas representative of the national experience through the physical features that remain and the traditions that have evolved in them. The continued use of the national heritage areas by people whose traditions helped to shape the landscapes enhances their significance."[189]

The purpose of the program is to ensure that the stories of America are told and that historic preservation includes living landscapes.[190] The dynamic connection between people, places, and their history is what make them special as preservation resources. As of 2009, stock car racing has not been examined as a legitimate contributor to the greater

fabric of American culture. NASCAR and its significant contributions to the development of stock car racing have been overlooked. Heritage race tracks are precariously balanced between remaining viable centers of culture and being abandoned for modern race tracks. It is imperative to recognize stock car racing as a valid part of American history. In order to ensure that the heritage race tracks are preserved, a Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area needs to be established.

NASCAR's heritage and traditions are not limited by geographic boundaries, but the traditions which define the sport originated from the South. Traditional preservation processes which address heritage resources as singular sites cannot fully capture the interconnected nature of NASCAR tracks and the culture of stock car racing. Museums, while they preserve physical elements and material culture do not relate the cultural experience of a stock car race. Developing historic or heritage tracks into privately run heritage sites may be a promising option, but would focus on the track as a singular entity. A national heritage area program which is not limited by geographic boundaries and is defined by a heritage theme is the best preservation approach for these tracks.

Guidelines for a National Heritage Area

The National Park Service does not have a standard set of rules which define a potential national heritage area. No uniform system for determination and evaluation has been implemented, in order to ensure that a standardization of eligibility does not lead to a homogenization of heritage areas. Unlike resources listed in the National Register, there is no nomination process for a national heritage area. Each proposed region is designated a national heritage area by an act of Congress and must have proactive support from the communities involved.

The most important element for a national heritage area is community involvement. A shared heritage among various groups of people determines the scale and scope of a heritage area and so the boundaries often cross county and sometimes even state lines. Cultural resources included in a national heritage area are a living part of communities. In addition, the themes and boundaries must be relevant and each community must be willing to take an active role in the initial designation process as well as the continued stewardship of the heritage area.

The preparation of a feasibility study is the first step in determining the possibility of establishing a heritage area. The purpose of the feasibility study is to "define the region's story, identify significant assets, and show local support for the initiative."[191] After the initial feasibility study, the Park Service lists three other "critical steps" which must be undertaken before a national heritage area can be designated by Congress. The three steps are: 1) a demonstrable involvement with the public during the initial feasibility study 2) a clear demonstration of public support for the designation, and 3) a commitment from "key constituents which may include governments, industry, and private, non-profit organizations, in addition to area residents."[192]

Ten components help determine overall eligibility. These components address the shared heritage and resources of the potential heritage area. Resources both historic and natural are required; these must express the central theme of the heritage area within a proposed boundary. There must be support for the preservation of resources within the parameters of the proposed heritage area. The identified traditions and culture must tell part of the national story. Opportunities for recreation and heritage education must be present, encouraging heritage tourism in the different communities. A comprehensive

financial, management, and community involvement plan is required. This plan must have the support of the various entities in the proposed heritage area. A successful working partnership between the different communities, governments, and private entities who are interested in the national heritage area is also required. The national heritage area relies on the individual heritage resources working together to maintain the viability of the national heritage area. It is a collective effort, completely different from the management of a singular historic resource.

Once established, the National Park Service reviews the national heritage area after three years to ensure that cultural resource management goals are being met. The National Park Service acts as a guide and supporting entity; they provide direction but not stewardship. National heritage areas are also eligible to receive matching grants from the federal government and funding for a set period of ten to fifteen years.[193]

Thematically Connected

National heritage areas unite a diverse set of heritage resources using a common theme. Rather than a single historic resource which may not have any remaining contemporary associations with the surrounding landscape, a national heritage area incorporates the elements of living history. By including diverse contemporary elements which tell a complete story, history and heritage become much more accessible.

As of 2009, the United States Congress has designated forty national heritage areas. The themes of the National Heritage Area Program range from the Mormon Pioneer Trail which explores the communities established by the people of the Mormon faith to the Oil Region National Heritage Area, centered on the drilling of the world's first successful commercial oil well in 1859.[194] The first heritage areas were established along

waterways, canals, or specific roadways, essentially establishing definable heritage corridors. However, “heritage areas are mapped in the mind not on the ground,” and there is no set criteria that states there must be a single accessible thoroughfare.[195] Communities are sometimes connected more deeply through a shared heritage than they are with a single highway.

A national heritage area allows preservationists the chance to address changing dynamics within communities as they relate to heritage resources. When speaking of changing communities and heritage tracks, this means both the local communities where the tracks are located and the changing elements of NASCAR and stock car racing as the sport matures. Heritage becomes a threatened commodity when the demographics and interests begin to drift away from the traditionally significant elements of a region. Unique community celebrations and an appreciation for the cultural landscape are not always passed down from generation to generation. This is especially true if new residents are not introduced to or familiar with local heritage or traditions. If the history of the region, landscape, or resource is not made accessible, enjoyable, or tangible, it becomes impossible to create a continuum of the culture that can be passed down, either to younger generations or new race fans.

In many ways, NASCAR’s continuous move away from its traditional roots in the South is similar to new residents not knowing the traditional stories of their new community. As new locations outside of the Southern heritage region for stock car racing are added to the circuit, the stories associated with the heritage tracks become disassociated from the history of the sport. When there are no longer heritage tracks which directly connect the present day races to those run in the past, the stories become

little more than sports trivia. Preserving the physical places of NASCAR's heritage ensures that history is continually expressed and appreciated, and that the past becomes inextricable from the future of the sport.

Heritage Race Tracks and the National Heritage Area Program

Developing a national heritage area requires that the area have an "assemblage of natural, historic, or cultural resources that together represent distinctive aspects of American heritage."[196] NASCAR's heritage tracks contain all three. The natural resources preserved as part of a heritage area designed around stock car racing easily could include the scenic and open spaces around each race track. Though used for such mundane purposes as parking, this open space around tracks is not only a functional part of the track but is sometimes quite beautiful. As an example, H. Clay Earles designed Martinsville Speedway to resemble a park, enjoyable for families and race fans alike.[197]

The historic resources are the heritage tracks with their associated structures, the historic tracks within the region and the racing shops of each team. Museums provide a more traditional approach to historic education within a national heritage area. Local fairs, festivals and celebrations which occur around each race weekend provide elements of tradition associated with racing to the tourists and locals who attend a race.

Cultural resources come from the actual races; the traditions and stories of NASCAR are incorporated into the familiar events of each race weekend. The cultural experience of the race weekend is revisited each time a race occurs at a track. Foodways, traditional ceremonies and the revisiting of the past ensures a continual culture expressed by the community at the race track.

Telling a Nationally Important Story

After 60 years of racing, NASCAR has become a significant part of the American story; auto racing and the love of the automobile combined with the spectacle of speed truly reflect important American traditions and heritage. The development of the automobile in America has been a significant element in the development of the nation. It is important to explore America's historical connection to the automobile and to acknowledge that a large part of the American love of the car involves racing. The *Motorcities National Heritage Area* already recognizes one aspect of the automobile's contribution to American history with a focus on the region which was the center of American automobile manufacturing. It is, then, justifiable to create a Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area celebrating the region from where stock car racing first emerged.

Outstanding Opportunities for Preservation

Preservation of heritage tracks not only works to protect the physical elements of the structure, but also the surrounding open space. The National Park Service requires that a national heritage area preserve elements of natural, cultural, historic, and scenic resources. This reinforces the concept of a comprehensive preservation approach. A national heritage area supports preservation by offering a common goal for many different types of heritage resources. With NASCAR's heritage race tracks as the anchor, the multifaceted history of stock car racing can be preserved using the diverse resources of a heritage area.

Historic tracks and abandoned tracks are an important element to a Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area. North Wilkesboro and Bowman Gray Stadium are two

excellent examples of other tracks which could be included. Other elements such as memorials, historic markers, and memorial highways named for legendary drivers in NASCAR are physical reminders of presence of stock car heritage. Heritage parkways, including the Junior Johnson Highway, the Richard Petty Freeway, the Richard Childress Freeway, and a stretch of freeway renumbered in 2002 to "3" to honor the late Dale Earnhardt, would help create a thoroughfare within the heritage area.[198]

One of the most interesting potential elements of a national heritage area is the inclusion of "ghost tracks." Abandoned and reclaimed by the natural landscape around them, the remnants of the actual tracks are still visible; grandstands, light poles and the physical imprint of the tracks mark the speedway's location. The grooves have run so deep into the ground that they are like the visible remains of the Oregon Trail across the state of Wyoming; the tracks have left a permanent mark of early Southern stock car racing. Perry Allan Wood's *Silent Speedways of the Carolinas* is an excellent study and photographic exploration of these footprints, as it were, of stock car racing. Incorporating these tracks into a stock car themed national heritage area would ensure one more piece of stock car history remains.

Occoneechee Speedway demonstrates one of the ways that the stock car heritage can be incorporated into successful preservation of natural landscapes. The speedway was active from the first year of NASCAR and held its last race in 1968.[199] Restored by the joint efforts of the Classical American Homes Preservation Trust and Preservation North Carolina, Occoneechee Speedway is now part of a forty-four acre site which includes three miles of walking trails.[200] There are in fact many other ghost tracks throughout the region which have not been incorporated into preservation programs as of yet. Visitors to

the national heritage area could enjoy guided scenic walks around abandoned oval tracks and imagine what stock car racing used to be like.

Outstanding Opportunities for Education and Recreation

The fourth criterion states that a national heritage area should provide "outstanding opportunities for education and for recreation."[201] The most obvious recreation activity is participation in the races themselves. The many ways which a race fan can experience the race weekend allow for a variety of activities, all of which culminate in the enjoyment of the race itself. Camping, reunions, and family gatherings take place at the track instead of a park or campground.

Elements of education and recreation also exist outside the tracks. Race shops and museums are open to the public. An open invitation to see the working race shops is an exciting chance to see teams that are on the track each weekend as they work in their garages. Many shops have window areas where visitors can watch teams prepare the cars for the upcoming races. The shops at Hendrick Motorsports have two kinds of viewing areas. One shop features a large floor to ceiling sliding glass door allowing a full view of members of the team performing any engine tuning, body work or engine diagnostics on the actual race cars. In their second shop, there is an indoor replica of a catch fence separating the work done on the cars from the visitors. Visitors can also see and sometimes meet the people who work on the cars, an extension of the close relationship shared by fans and NASCAR teams.

Festivals that incorporate the heritage of stock car racing in the region, but are not directly associated with the tracks would add to a Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area. North Wilkesboro's "Shine to Wine" festival held each May involves the local

wineries while at the same time acknowledging the history of liquor making in the region. Events which coincide with NASCAR's Victory Junction Gang Camp and other charitable events strengthen community ties to the track. There are also celebrations of the "classic" car and the history of racing which should be a part of the national heritage area program. Classic car shows, exhibition and charity races are a common occurrence at many tracks. Festivals like the Darlington Historic Racing Festival or the celebration of historic stock car racing held at the Occoneechee Speedway are exciting ways to connect tourists and locals to the history of stock car racing.

Ensuring that Resources Retain Historic Integrity

The heritage tracks presented as case studies in this thesis retain historic integrity by their continued use. While there are physical changes underway at the tracks, these tracks maintain the stories which are integral to the history of stock car racing.

One of the most exciting aspects of creating a national heritage area anchored by heritage race tracks is the cultural experience which is still alive and accessible each time a race is held. Many traditions must be recreated; traditional dances or celebrations are interpreted through living history exhibits or volunteers dressed in period costume in order to demonstrate a lost traditional culture. The simple act of attending a race transfers the culture of stock car racing. A new fan is easily immersed into the culture; they are immediately surrounded and included in the community at the race track. The new fan takes part in the ceremonies and traditions, just as the fan who has been going to the race for years does. The new fan is welcomed, is perhaps adorned in the material cultural elements, a new t-shirt or hat, and stands with everyone present to sing the National Anthem. Tourists might arrive as visitors, but will leave as a member of the community.

The experience of attending a stock car race in 2009 is very similar to attending one in the early years of NASCAR. There are fundamental differences, but the thrill, the spectacle, and the culture are still very much the same.

Economic Consistency

Communities which have heritage race tracks as a part of their local economy are very aware of the positive economic impact of a single race weekend. Economic impact studies have clearly documented the great amounts of money which come into the community and surrounding area during a race week.

In general, motorsports is an important economic factor in the South, especially in North Carolina. Contributing nearly $5 billion to North Carolina's economy, and creating nearly 13,000 jobs (both direct and induced), motorsports is a significant industry in the region. There are other states outside of the South where the motorsports industry has a positive economic impact, though there is nowhere which it is so concentrated.[202] The race teams and race tracks support the local foundations of the industry. The motorsports industry also includes suppliers, support staff of other companies, real estate investment, the broadcasting industry, and travel industry. Positive economic impact also comes to the community by way of tourism dollars, sales tax, retail, and hospitality tax.[203]

The inclusion of heritage tracks and the community which surrounds it into a collective Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area encourages a more consistent flow of revenue into the region. A 2009 economic impact study, prepared for Martinsville Speedway examines the relationship between the speedway and the community. Leigh Cockram, Director of Marketing and Recruiting for Martinsville Economic Development agency, responded to an inquiry about the study. "Our community and region benefit

greatly from the two Sprint Cup weekends held in Martinsville each year – hotels are full for a 50-mile radius and restaurants busy (not to mention groceries and gas bought from these 60,000 visitors to our area)."[204] There is no comparison to the economic impacts of a single race weekend; but a heritage track which brings tourism to the area outside of those specific race dates would measurably benefit the community.

Community and Business Support

The National Park Service requires an organized management and financial plan by a dedicated management entity for any national heritage area. This thesis does not closely examine the financial or managerial criteria of a potential national heritage area. A non profit organization that works with historic race tracks would be an excellent facilitator in the initial organization of a Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area. Several viable non-profit organizations have devoted their time and efforts to preserving historic race tracks and the traditions of stock car racing. A collaboration of these groups or an organization more generally focused on the history of stock car racing might serve as the managing entity for the potential national heritage area.

Local and state governments are well aware of the significance of NASCAR to their communities. The working relationship between the local governments and the motorsports industry is a long standing positive partnership. The Chairman of the Mooresville, North Carolina Convention and Visitors Bureau admitted that they did little directed advertising to draw tourists because "the presence of the [NASCAR] team shops is virtually all the tourism draw this area needs."[205] The Visitors Bureau is well aware that fans are willing to search out these shops and stock car racing affiliated sites on their own. This shows great promise for a future cooperative heritage tourism program. Since

both private and government entities are already aware of the powerful draw of stock car racing, a pro-active approach to promoting and creating a program like a national heritage area needs to be a priority. Like NASCAR's original expansion from a localized collection of stock car races into a national series, a national heritage area has the potential to look backwards to the tracks which still make up the local cultural base. Utilizing NASCAR's heritage tracks as models for resource management, heritage is brought full circle and reconnected. In the end, a Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area would expand the awareness of stock car heritage beyond the race fans and add it to the greater notion of what makes American history.

NASCAR's Support

NASCAR should step forward to support a national heritage area which focuses on the contributions of stock car racing in America. As the largest, most recognizable and organized facet of stock car racing, NASCAR has the opportunity encourage a mutually beneficial support system which would accentuate all levels of stock car racing. Similar to the original development of NASCAR, which started with grassroots racing, a national heritage area relies on local support to remain viable. Active support of a Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area is a way for NASCAR to acknowledge and promote all levels of racing, past, present and future. These tracks are the physical embodiment of stock car racing's history and culture and their preservation needs to high placement on the NASCAR list of priorities.

Promotional information should be available at races to encourage race fans to visit the tracks and the exciting areas which surround them. Since there is an acute awareness of the racing season, creating a supporting relationship between the modern

tracks and the heritage tracks makes sense. A well thought out guide to the heritage tracks could include the tracks themselves, points of interest, and heritage facts.

Maintaining an essential connection between the past and the future is a certain way to ensure an appreciation for the "future past" of the sport. Encouraging the stewardship of the heritage resources of NASCAR today creates a pattern of mutual appreciation between the heritage tracks and the more modern tracks.

NASCAR Hall of Fame

In the spring of 2010, the NASCAR Hall of Fame will open in downtown Charlotte, North Carolina. Although there are other museums which celebrate the collective history of motorsports, there is not a Hall of Fame dedicated exclusively to NASCAR. The design of the Hall of Fame will incorporate many different elements of NASCAR's history and heritage. It will have museum exhibits, theater presentations, and special displays to celebrate the heroes of NASCAR.[206] A ramp which leads from the first floor to the second floor of the museum, dubbed "Glory Road" will have variable banking, from zero to thirty-three degrees, collectively representing the banking of each track. This section of the museum will feature pieces of each of NASCAR's tracks, so that fans can see up close the difference in each track surface. Any exhibit which celebrates the history of NASCAR would be incomplete without an acknowledgement of the significance of the heritage tracks discussed in this thesis research.

Support, whether financial or promotional, from the new NASCAR Hall of Fame would be an invaluable component in the implementation of a successful preservation effort focusing on NASCAR's tracks.

Successful National Heritage Areas

In her 2006 graduate thesis on national heritage areas: "Seeking Higher Ground: Determining Factors of Success in Appalachian Heritage Areas," Goucher College alumna Kim O'Connell examines the potential success of a newly established heritage area and the basic factors which increase the likelihood of continued success.[207] O'Connell establishes three basic factors which suggest future success. The first is a community willing and actively continuing the cultural traditions associated (or that will be associated) with the national heritage area. Southern stock car traditions continue in the shops and at the tracks in the region. NASCAR's traditions and heritage reassert themselves each race weekend and are more significant at the heritage tracks on the circuit.

Second, a strong preservation element and community support is imperative. Existing preservation efforts are essential to the future success of any national heritage area. Professional preservation organizations, local historical societies, online speedway preservation organizations like SaveTheSpeedway.net and locally organized groups are all potential supporting elements for a Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area. Perhaps the most important function of the national heritage area is to nurture traditions while managing necessary change. Having already established that heritage race tracks are a dynamic resource, it is important not to lock these tracks into preservation programs which do not allow for change and growth. As a preservation collective rather than a preserved site, the national heritage area balances both the modern needs of individual resources while retaining culture and traditions.

Lastly, a network which encompasses both natural and cultural elements that can effectively carry the themes of the national heritage area must be identified.[208] As previously discussed, NASCAR creates its own geographic and cultural parameters within which the heritage tracks form a solid core. Scenic, natural, and cultural elements centered on these heritage tracks create a defined network of heritage resources.

In 2005, a comprehensive sustainability report on the Blackstone River Valley Heritage Corridor in Rhode Island determined the impacts, successes, and short comings of the national heritage area and the commission which managed the corridor. The study examined the varying levels of engagement from the communities included in the heritage area, the individuals responsible for the management of the area and the residents who were living within the borders of the heritage area. The report documents both management and organizational short falls and the overall success of creating a multi-dimensional preservation program. A preservation method which encompasses sites, experiences, landscapes, and living culture is an invaluable tool to the National Park Service, the field of historic preservation and the nation as a whole. The inclusive nature of the national heritage area forms partnerships with civic and private organizations that may not have worked together productively outside of a system like the national heritage area.

For example, one survey respondent was impressed with the heritage area process because it managed to create a goal important for both the local land trust and Economic Development Committee.[209] Providing a holistic system within which many different preservation minded groups can work together is a positive step for preservation. Rather than creating a preservation plan which heavily favors one advocacy group over another,

the national heritage area brings together any number of interested parties and creates a singular positive goal. A positive cooperative experience reinforces the identity of a community. A positive experience strengthens pride of place which then encourages a greater level of participation.[210]

The national heritage area is a self-perpetuating preservation approach. Recognizing multiple resources within the heritage area as significant reinforces the sense of pride and place. This encourages tourism, growth and an ability to appreciate the culture and unique nature of the community from both the resident's and the visitors' point of view. Ultimately, this appreciation leads to an even greater pride and sense of place based on the significance which the national heritage area process has helped to facilitate. To ensure the successful creation of a national heritage area which emphasizes the cultural contribution of stock car racing, a concerted effort must be made to reconnect the grassroots communities and the greater entity of NASCAR. There is no doubt that those who are involved already with heritage elements of stock car racing would be interested in the preservation of the culture. Finding a successful platform which would allow discussion between the highest racing entity, NASCAR and lesser known heritage resources, like the Winston Cup Museum, in Winston-Salem would be the first step to creating a successful heritage area.

O'Connell writes that part of the catalyst for the national heritage area program was a growing fear of potential homogeneity of preserved resources.[211] If preservation only focuses on the historic resources which are famously significant, such as renowned architects' buildings or well known cultural sites, much of the unique cultural contributions of local communities are in danger of being overlooked. It is just this type

of argument which underscores the need for a proactive approach for the preservation of working class cultural heritage and traditions. With support for more diversity in preservation growing, the time has come to acknowledge an overlooked cultural contribution of the South, stock car racing.

NASCAR has acknowledged both the passing of their 50th and 60th anniversaries with varying degrees of fanfare. The heritage tracks and the history which they represent are the foundations of NASCAR. A comprehensive approach will ensure that the traditions and meaningful heritage of NASCAR and Southern stock car racing is accessible for future race fans, starting with the preservation of these three heritage tracks.

Conclusion

The multi-faceted layers of a national heritage area address the complex nature of heritage race tracks. The National Heritage Area Program offers the best preservation solution for the preservation of stock car racing culture and its most important resource, its race tracks. In the last week of January 2009, one of the oldest race tracks in America was demolished to make way for a new indoor swimming center. Birmingham International Raceway (BIR) was built in 1925; the website for Birmingham International Raceway now only reads: "Thanks for the memories, 95 years of racing! Only 2 others can make that statement."[212] NASCAR ran at this track for ten years in the late 1950s through 1968.[213]

Birmingham International Raceway is an example of a racetrack that could have been incorporated into a community oriented preservation program like a national heritage area. Helping local communities celebrate, appreciate, and benefit from their

own heritage is a significant aspect of this preservation method. Birmingham International Raceway lost its value as a place because there was not enough support from either the local community or from NASCAR. “That's how it usually goes. Buildings of historical significance are preserved only as long as they retain their mystique to the people who live around them. Birmingham International Raceway lost that years ago.”[214] Cultural management programs like museums or adaptive use approaches do not offer the best preservation option for a dynamic and diverse landscape like a heritage race track. The preservation movement in recent years has expanded from its original notion of preserving individual historic houses to preserving entire rural historic districts, Main Streets in towns all across America, cultural landscapes and developing heritage tourism programs. These programs are perfect for multiple resources but would be inefficient as a preservation method for the interrelated but geographically independent race tracks.

A strong preservation framework which incorporates as many elements of place based heritage into one system is key for the preservation of heritage race tracks. Listing single tracks in the National Register of Historic Places, creating a museum or individual historic site does not begin to take into account the continuum of stock car culture which is present at each of NASCAR’s heritage tracks. As an isolated resource, these heritage tracks are not able to convey their significance within the greater frame work of stock car history in the South. A national heritage area brings together the people who are most interested in managing cultural resources and encourages communication and creative methods of preservation. In this manner, cultural resources are not islands of history but rather part of a heritage community. I believe a national heritage area, which fosters a

sustainable and inclusive future for stock car heritage resources and their associated communities, is the best preservation approach for heritage race tracks.

CHAPTER VI
NASCAR'S HERITAGE RACE TRACKS AND THE PRESERVATION OF STOCK CAR CULTURE

Introduction

The best preservation option for NASCAR's heritage race tracks is to ensure that the tracks still host races. This is the end goal for any preservation method concerning heritage tracks. When developing a preservation plan, incorporating abandoned historic tracks, ghost tracks, and tracks on the edge of vanishing is also essential to capture the history of stock car racing outside of NASCAR's heritage tracks. Preserving NASCAR's heritage tracks is the first step in developing a comprehensive preservation plan which incorporates all elements of Southern stock car history. The first purpose built stock car tracks were echoes of the ovals carved into farm fields and their design and organization encouraged legitimating stock car competition. As stock car racing developed, Bill France stepped in and formed NASCAR, the first well organized national stock car series. NASCAR's influence incorporated the race tracks which had been unassociated with a series, sanctioning them as NASCAR tracks to legitimize their place in stock car racing. Though it is not the only stock car sanctioning body in the United States, since 1948, NASCAR has defined stock car racing. In 2009, sixty one years later, responsibility now falls to NASCAR to serve as the stabilizing base for stock car racing history and heritage.

Perhaps the most up to date internet site for NASCAR news is Jayski.com. The site provides an extensive array of news that focuses on drivers, teams, tracks, and events.

One of the subheadings is entitled “Sad News” (Sad News/Tragic News/Deaths and Memorials) and is updated when someone within the NASCAR community has died. Naturally, as time passes, the drivers who raced in the first years of NASCAR will no longer be around to tell their stories. At the same time, almost all of the earliest NASCAR tracks are already lost. NASCAR is at a turning point, if the heritage tracks are lost, the forums for their earliest stories are lost. This is the time for NASCAR to make a definitive statement about the significance of these tracks and the stock car racing heritage which they embody. It is imperative that proactive preservation solutions are found now to ensure that the tangible history of stock car racing is not lost. Without these tracks, only old movie reel footage and photographs will convey the history that once roared through the turns. Without these tracks, the legends and history of stock car racing simply become intangible stories.

NASCAR’s Historic Impacts

The National Association of Stock Car Automobile Racing changed the way in which people related to their own automobiles. In December of 1947, Bill France established NASCAR, organizing the chaotic and sometimes outright dishonest world of regional stock car racing into a nationally recognizable series. Though not always viewed as respectable in the formative years, today NASCAR racing is one of the most popular sports in the United States. In the last sixty years, NASCAR has brought stock car racing forward to become a significant part of the American cultural landscape literally and figuratively.

NASCAR is fortunate to have elements of its early history still present in 2009. NASCAR’s heritage tracks are an important aspect of the history of stock car racing,

requiring a preservation option which addresses the complexity of dynamic resources that have changed over time. Herein lays the difficulty for historic preservation which is so comfortable with registering only identifiable physical historic features. The preservation of heritage race tracks entails acknowledging significance not in the physicality but in the continuous use by people for an event. The people change and the name of the race changes, but it is the same race track and the cultural continuity of stock car racing heritage makes it significant.

A living cultural landscape requires a comprehensive preservation approach addressing significance of place rather than integrity of structure. The research for this thesis examined two of NASCAR's heritage tracks which exemplify the idea that the best preservation for a race track is to continue to hold races there. The third track, Rockingham Speedway, though no longer a NASCAR track, still carries the traditions of stock car racing forward. Martinsville Speedway, Darlington Raceway, and Rockingham Speedway are three tracks which effectively demonstrate the Southern culture of stock car racing.

Heritage Tracks as Significant Places

Communities define which landscapes and resources are significant to them. Traditions and cultural continuity instill significance to resources not easily recognized by those outside of a certain community. Traditions associated with events and celebrations are passed on to new generations. Recognizable architectural features define the tracks physically, but it is the continuity of the culture of stock car racing which defines these tracks as heritage sites. The traditions of stock car racing today center on the race track.

Preservation Options

Heritage race tracks are not isolated historic resources. They have place value and are significant within the greater context of NASCAR and stock car racing history. Since there are other race tracks listed in the National Register of Historic Places, this is a valid preservation option for race tracks. However, since heritage race tracks are more significant when considered within a holistic cultural community, listing each track individually in the National Register would not fully acknowledge their significance. Museums also are important to preserve the physical pieces of history associated with stock car racing; they provide an opportunity for visitors to gain a greater appreciation of stock car racing. Championship cars, trophies, and personal memorabilia from drivers are all accessible at museums. Museums, however, cannot provide the actual experience of attending a race, a key element of NASCAR's culture.

Individuals and communities which come together to support and save historic resources are an invaluable part of historic preservation. Historic sites actively preserve cultural resources by keeping them accessible. A historic site provides an experience ensuring that history is not forgotten. However, historic sites generally focus on one specific heritage resource. Limited funding and support, especially in small communities can sometimes make it difficult to sustain individual heritage programs. Tracks like North Wilkesboro struggle to find economically viable approaches to preserving the facility because they have become isolated from the collective culture. Rockingham Speedway provides an excellent example of a successful private preservation approach, but this example may not easily apply to every heritage track in need.

When considering the most effective method of preservation for heritage race tracks, it is important to remember that the tracks are part of a larger collective cultural community. Consequently, an effective preservation program must acknowledge present use and past significance as well as the cultural community at the track. A national heritage area incorporates all methods of historic preservation. Historic preservation often faces many challenges, not the least of which is convincing those who not directly invested in a heritage resource that a resource is indeed, significant. Cultural prejudices which sometimes prevent serious consideration for popular culture, sports heritage, and vernacular architecture could present challenges for the creation of a preservation program based on stock car racing. Free of such prejudices, the National Heritage Area Program, dedicated to the preservation of the unique stories of America allows a forum to appreciate the history of Southern stock car racing.

The Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area

The framework for a preservation program already exists within NASCAR's growing appreciation of its own heritage. A national heritage area would encourage and facilitate a better understanding of the place of stock car racing within the greater context of American history. Using Martinsville Speedway, Darlington Raceway, and Rockingham Speedway as core preservation models, it is possible to develop a Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area which appropriately addresses the heritage of NASCAR, stock car racing, and the American South.

NASCAR is an extremely self aware community and the community support for a national heritage area is a key component for a successful heritage area. With an introduction to and education about the possibilities, not only for preservation but for the

continued promotion of the heritage and history of NASCAR, a national heritage area offers an extraordinary opportunity for the stock car racing community. Opportunities like the opening of the NASCAR Hall of Fame exist which could coincide with the development of a preservation plan for heritage stock car race tracks.

Time is of the essence. The most basic elements of NASCAR's cultural heritage are threatened by the sport's own expansion. If NASCAR neglects to preserve its own heritage by failing to continue racing at these race tracks, that heritage will surely be lost. In a recent interview, Brian France, CEO and Chairman of NASCAR noted that NASCAR "is a fixture in American culture."[215] It is now time for NASCAR, as the leader in American stock car racing culture, to take action and preserve the heritage tracks of NASCAR.

The creation of a Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area would create a unified and cooperative preservation system that would have a positive impact on countless communities. This national heritage area would initially encompass portions of Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina, uniting them with a theme familiar and significant to the region. Two of the three heritage tracks discussed in this thesis have the established support of NASCAR. The third, Rockingham Speedway, has a strong independent support system, as well as support from the stock car racing community. All three tracks have the support of the NASCAR cultural base.

A Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area would also expand the awareness of less frequented heritage sites within the established geographic boundaries. The benefits of a heritage area would multiply over time as more organizations, heritage sites and communities become involved. National heritage areas are self perpetuating; active

participation provides benefits to all. Increasing heritage tourism would benefit local economies and encourage attendance at stock car races. Economic impact studies from other national heritage areas should provide information in order to determine the best ways to approach economic support and development. A Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area is the key to heritage race track preservation.

Future Research

My research has shown that NASCAR's traditions and culture have a valid heritage in the larger story of our nation. The research also shows that the race tracks are the gathering places at which these traditions are revisited and that they are invaluable to stock car culture. While researching the suppositions of this thesis, countless biographies on drivers and general histories were available. There are, however, few resources or documents dedicated specifically to the tracks themselves. It is important to collect the histories of the individual tracks in order to understand more fully the overall history of stock car racing and NASCAR. The three heritage tracks examined in the research for this thesis would benefit greatly from well documented and researched individual histories. Establishing a method to document each heritage track's contribution to the history of stock car racing would initiate future preservation for other tracks.

It is imperative to not simply use this thesis research to celebrate these three tracks, but rather to expand outwards so that other tracks, communities and racing related heritage entities can benefit. This thesis research and the conclusions which have come from it form a base for a proactive dialogue about the preservation of local race tracks. These local tracks are another important part of stock car racing culture. The Southern

Stock Car National Heritage Area presents a way for smaller tracks and to be included within the greater context of stock car heritage.

Appendix I to this thesis research briefly examines the details of a Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area. The information in this Appendix begins the process of organizing a feasibility study as required by the National Park Service. Careful evaluation of the resources present in the general geographic area bounded by Martinsville Speedway, Darlington Raceway, and Rockingham Speedway will lead to the creation of a diverse and exciting Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area. This appendix does not cover all of the available stock car related resources in the area, but rather provides a foundation from which an organized preservation program can grow.

Appendix II depicts a potential promotional brochure for a Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area. The brochure, like the resources mentioned in Appendix I, does not cover all design possibilities, but instead shows one potential method for promoting the Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area.

Preservationists cannot discount the contribution of a distinctive cultural history simply because the subject matter is automobile racing. There are stock car race tracks in every state, even Alaska. Though each track is different, they all play an important role in the collective history of stock car racing in America. An active and legitimate culture, present for more than a quarter of the collective history of the United States, deserves recognition. As preservationists, we must continue to widen our perception of what is important to actively preserve. If we only apply preservation practices to historic buildings and cultural landscapes which comfortably fit into a preconceived notion of cultural spaces, we have lost half of what makes America's history so interesting. The

generations of race fans and race car drivers who maintain a connection to racing's past by experiencing the weekly stock car race are the unknowing, pro-active preservationists. It is time then, for the professional preservationist to step forward and guide the efforts to preserve America's stock car racing history. A first step in recognizing the value of stock car racing's culture is to establish the significance of NASCAR's heritage race tracks. As preservationists and as those who are familiar with the cultural importance of stock car racing, it is our responsibility to ensure that racing at these heritage tracks can continue.

Maintaining the continual culture presence through heritage tracks establishes a vital base for stock car heritage. The heritage of stock car racing is inextricably associated with NASCAR. NASCAR is not the only stock car racing series in America, but it has come to define the sport. Stock car racing needs an identifiable and accessible focus point; NASCAR combines the resources of a major professional sports operation with a part of American culture which has yet to be fully appreciated.

Preserving the heritage of stock car racing does not mean just the recordation of facts and statistics. Race tracks have an irreplaceable role in the continuing heritage of stock car racing. The creation of a Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area is essential to ensure the preservation of NASCAR's heritage race tracks, to not only encourage active preservation of race tracks but to facilitate a greater appreciation for America's stock car racing history. These tracks are the fulcrum points for the events, the traditions, and the people of stock car racing. Without them, stock car racing loses its heritage and its culture and becomes nothing more than cars turning left.

NASCAR celebrated its sixtieth year of racing in 2008 and some of the tracks are approaching their own important milestones. It is time to recognize the cultural

contributions of stock car racing in the United States. It is also time to acknowledge that there is a legitimate culture associated with stock car racing. My research shows that NASCAR's heritage tracks require a comprehensive preservation approach that acknowledges their place within NASCAR's history while at the same time honoring the specific regional significance and the cultural continuum of the stock car racing community. Creating a Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area using NASCAR's heritage race tracks as a foundation is the answer to preserving stock car racing's significant contribution to American history.

APPENDIX I
DEVELOPING A SOUTHERN STOCK CAR NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

An Introduction to Other Heritage Resources

The National Park Service's *Critical Steps and Criteria for Becoming a National Heritage Area* helps determine whether a heritage area is an appropriate preservation method for a region. The first of the *Critical Steps* described by the National Park Service requires a feasibility study to determine the support of community leaders, residents, and organizations throughout the proposed region. Encouraging public involvement and determining public support for the feasibility study are the second and third steps. Though it seems repetitive, a strong community foundation is required to not only designate, but ultimately maintain the national heritage area. The final step is to establish a firm commitment from organizations, government leaders (local and state), and community members to actively support the national heritage area once it has been established. Using the information that follows, the process of establishing a national heritage area which celebrates the culture of stock car racing in the South could begin, providing the first step towards a pro-active preservation solution for heritage race tracks.

A Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area encompasses all of the traditions of stock car racing. Race weekends, communities, and events essential to the culture of NASCAR would clearly be accessible and supportable by the Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area. Within the geographical boundaries of the initial proposed Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area, there are approximately sixty-five active

race tracks. Aside from the heritage tracks discussed in this thesis, this number includes two other NASCAR sanctioned race tracks, dirt tracks, paved ovals, drag strips and karting tracks. Establishing a working relationship between these local tracks and the heritage tracks to support a heritage area will form a dynamic and strong, thematically related base from which to operate. Increased visitor awareness would most likely encourage a reciprocal support of the heritage area from each of these tracks.

The local tracks are an important element of stock car racing history. The regional series and race tracks which are the local roots of NASCAR are still active today. Those smaller race tracks which do not host NASCAR races, but are still host local races, are an important part of the proposed Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area. Local racing and local tracks, once incorporated into the Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area, would have the resources to begin to develop individual programs to promote their track. Development of this heritage area would offer regional and national support to race tracks at all levels. The incorporation and support for the local tracks would then provide a model for stock car race track preservation throughout the United States.

The national heritage area would be an excellent opportunity for NASCAR to increase their support for the local element of stock car racing. Fiscal support would not be necessary but should be encouraged. A promotional program to simultaneously support the proposed Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area and the local tracks is a chance to strengthen relationships with the grassroots of racing.

There are a number of museums and other heritage resources related to stock car racing within the geographic boundary of the proposed heritage area. In 2009, the Richmond County Historical Society in North Carolina will be featuring an exhibit on the

county's stock car racing roots. Richmond County is where Rockingham Speedway is located. If a Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area was already active, it would be one more positive heritage contributor to the heritage area, but also to the local historical society. Local historical societies sometimes struggle with attendance numbers; this provides another way to increase tourism to these heritage sites which are sometimes over looked.

The schedule for NASCAR is printed in each program, track information guides and on many different promotional handouts at each track. Including information on the heritage tracks, even a website address and other contact information for race fans to explore in the future would help promote a national heritage area. The Hall of Fame is working hard to acknowledge the history of the sport, and the heritage tracks are an essential part of this. Not only could the Hall of Fame work to promote a preservation program like a National Heritage Area, it would be an obvious and significant stop on any heritage tour or travel itinerary.

Scenic and cultural resources are not only incorporated into the national heritage area as scenic highways. The tracks are the central resource for the proposed heritage area, and it is imperative to incorporate them into as many elements as possible. Including tracks which are struggling to retain their local significance will prevent another lost track. Tracks like Bowman-Gray Stadium in Winston Salem, North Carolina which hosted races for NASCAR from 1958 through 1971 and continues to host races for NASCAR's Whelen Series would greatly benefit from a network of support. The track boasts that it is the site of NASCAR's longest running weekly race and racing's heritage tourists should celebrate this.

Likewise, the ghost tracks found through North and South Carolina, and those in Virginia provide an exciting and unusual heritage tourism opportunity. These tracks provide something which no other sport can. The past is still literally etched on the ground. To be able to visit the very roots of the sport, before there even was such a thing as NASCAR provides an immediate and visceral connection to the past. The fan of racing history can seek out these tracks with the help of a guide or a guided tour and literally visit the ghosts of racing's past. With permission from the property owners, this preservation also promotes open space preservation and natural resource management. The opportunities to develop open space, wilderness, and rural preservation programs along with the proposed national heritage area are limitless.

For those heritage tourists who are just a little braver than other, Halloween themed tours of the ghost tracks in the heritage area might provide seasonal chills and thrills! The roar of ghostly engines might even still be heard along those long vanished straightaways. Stock car racing is a thrilling, exciting, and fun event. The national heritage area needs to reflect these characteristics. Though serious about preservation, the national heritage area should be about experiencing the visual, audible, visceral event that is a stock car race. There are many other opportunities for promoting stock car racing and its unique heritage within the parameters of the Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area. Local universities which have courses focusing on stock car racing, both cultural and technical, can be included. The development of educational programs, tours, and technical experiences all offer up interesting and diverse experiences.

The Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area offers unlimited potential for cross promotion of local communities, local resources, and local economies.

APPENDIX II
SOUTHERN STOCK CAR NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA BROCHURE

Promoting the Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area

Heritage tourism is an important part of any national heritage area. Information accessibility needs to be current and professionally executed. The internet and a good website are invaluable tools for the advertisement and promotion of a heritage area. Information also needs to be easily accessible for those who do not have immediate access to the internet. A promotional brochure is a colorful and easy way to deliver information about the national heritage area.

A brochure should have very simple elements which emphasize the exciting and dynamic historic and cultural resources of the Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area. The following brochure is an example, using a simple three fold design, of what such a brochure might look like.

The first page of the brochure might show an image of an historic race at one of the tracks within the heritage area as well as list the title of the heritage area and brief contact information. The very back page of the brochure might feature a map of the area and full contact information, including an active and up to date website, phone numbers, and physical address of the working commission office. The inner panels should feature highlights of the Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area as well as offer some ideas for day trips, festivals, and activities. In the example brochure, one of the pages introduces the idea of the national heritage area in the context of Southern stock car

history. It is very important to differentiate the broad cultural opportunities of the heritage area as opposed to the single site resource. All of the panels should have engaging and exciting images to encourage visitors to explore the area. The last inner panel of the example brochure features two quotes about stock car racing and a contemporary image of race fans enjoying a race. This reminds visitors that even today, in 2009, they too are a part of stock car racing heritage when they visit the Southern Stock Car National Heritage Area.

ENDNOTES

1 An interesting introduction to Board Track racing can be found in Allan E. Brown's *The History of the American Speedway: Past and Present.*

2 Marc P. Singer, and Ryan L. Sumner, *Images of America: Auto Racing in Charlotte and the Carolina Piedmon*t (Charleston: Arcadia Press, 2003), 23.

3 It is surprising to find that even in 2009, the stereotype of NASCAR and stock car racing as a low class sport still exists. The perception of the everyman is not as common as is the stereotypical race fan: white trash, redneck, loud, and stupid. Like many people who are judged without reason, I believe that many people who think so lowly of the stock car culture would be surprised at the people they meet at a race. It is easy to find criticisms of stock car racing, questioning the skill needed to drive a car, in a circle, only turning left. This simplification reflects how many people perceive stock car racing. This attitude towards stock car racing has changed very little since the pre-war years when stock car racing was first gaining popularity. The drivers who came out of the Appalachian Mountains or the mining towns of Virginia and the Carolinas might not have had the money to dedicate to developing the fastest machine in the world, but they had the skills to wrench a car to be faster than the revenuers, or less romantically, faster than their neighbors. The open-wheel racing world had Sir Malcolm Campbell, who set land speed records in his Bluebird, as well as members of the Vanderbilt and Hearst family. Stock car racing has The King Richard Petty, from Level Cross, North Carolina, who raced alongside of Million Dollar Bill Elliot, from Dawsonville, Georgia. It may be a different class of people, but stock car racing is no less legitimate for its down home roots.

4 Cotton Owens and Bud Moore, interview with the author. Spartanburg, SC. October 2008.

5 Leo Levine, *Ford: The Dust and the Glory, A Racing History* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1968), 118.

6 Ibid.

7 Neal Thompson, *Driving with the Devil: Southern Moonshine, Detroit Wheels, and the Birth of NASCAR* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 2006), 76.

8 Edgar Otto and Joanne Biondi, *Ed Otto: NASCAR's Silent Partner* (Newburyport, MA: Coastal 181 Publishing, 2008), 45.

9 Junior Johnson, interview by Pete Daniel, June 4, 1988, interview C-0052, transcript, Southern Oral History Program Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC.

10 http://www.census.gov/geo/www/us_regdiv.pdf. The US Bureau of the Census also considers Washington, DC as part of the American South.

11 John Shelton Reed and Dale Volberg Reed, *1001 Things Everyone Should Know About the South* (New York: Double Day, 1996), 6.

12 Ibid.

13*American Heritage Dictionary*, 3rd ed., s.v. "Eponymous."

14 Ed Hinton, *Daytona: From the Birth of Speed to the Death of the Man in Black* (New York: Warner Books), 64.

15 The history of the beach-and-road course is an interesting study in the development of Bill France as a race promoter. The first races were not overly successful and much of what made the beach-and-road course were the Southern dirt track racers who Bill France invited to compete in his races.

16 Mooresville Convention and Visitors Bureau, *Rev Up with Our Racing Attractions*, http://www.racecityusa.org/racing.html. Also: Cabarrus Country Visitors Bureau, "Raceshops," *The Racing Side of Charlotte*, http://www.visitcabarrus.com/listings/index.cfm?action=showSub&catid=217&subcatid=513&notify=1.

17 Dan Pierce, "The Most Southern Sport on Earth: NASCAR and the Unions," *Southern Cultures* 7, no. 2 (Summer 2001): 9.

18 Greg Engle, "Former NASCAR Driver Busted For Making Moonshine," *NASCAR Daily News*, March 9, 2009, http://cupscene.com/blogs2/2009/03/04/former-nascar-driver-busted-for-making-moonshine/.

19 Greg Fielden. *NASCAR: the Complete History* (Lincolnwood, IL: Publications International, Inc, 2007), 8.

20 Ibid., 10.

21 The Lakewood Speedway is now the Lakewood Amphitheatre. A section of the grandstands is still visible, but the track itself is lost. Please see: "Lakewood Fairgrounds;

Smokey and the Bandit, Then and Now"
http://www.atlantatimemachine.com/smokey/48.htm.

22 Atlanta was originally an oval track. An alteration to the track added two "dog-legs" transforming it into a squared oval (quad-oval) shape. Atlanta Motor Speedway. "Track Facts," http://www.atlantamotorspeedway.com/media/facts/.

23 Thompson, *Driving with the Devil*, 62.

24 Peter Golenbock, *American Zoom; Stock Car Racing-From the Dirt Tracks to Daytona* (New York: Macmillan, 1993), 217.

25 Driver data compiled from list of drivers who placed in the points standings for each year. All statistics on drivers compiled from Racing Reference Info.com. Driver Database http://www.racing-reference.info; Alan Boodman, e-mail message to author, January, 6 2009.

26 Terry Blount, "A Little Research Turns Up Some Interesting Trends in NASCAR," ESPN, http://sports.espn.go.com/rpm/nascar/cup/ columns/story?columnist =blount_terry&page=BlountsBlitz.

27 "NASCAR 101: The Frances," NASCAR, http://www.nascar.com/news/features/families.france/index.html.

28 "Race Ban Lifted. Many Speedways Ready," *National Speed Sport News*, August, 1945.

29 Pierce, "The Most Southern Sport," 11.

30 Fielden, *Complete History*, 19.

31 Golenbock, *American Zoom*, 71.

32 "NASCAR Enjoys Big Season!" *National Speed Sport News*, December 15, 1948.

33 A 1950 advertisement for NASCO, the National Association for Stock Car Organizers calls for all racing organizations to come together and protect "Stock Car Auto Racing Drivers, car owners, promoters and last but not least, the racing public" from inferior race meets and "hit and run promoters." Though the advertisement says that NASCO is composed of every major stock car racing organization in the United States, there is one very obvious organization missing from the list, NASCAR. NASCAR, as an organizing and sanctioning body had set a successful example which others felt the need to emulate.

34 “Important Stock Car Series Now Being Formed,” *National Speed Sport News*, July 6, 1949.

35 Carl Green, “Stock Car Racing,” *National Speed Sport News*, April 13, 1949.

36 Carl Green, “Stock Car Racing,” *National Speed Sport News*, January 11, 1950.

37 Carl Kiekhaefer owned NASCAR teams in 1955, 1956 and 1957. He is considered the first multi-team owner in NASCAR. He brought a Mercury to the Daytona Beach and Road course in 1954 without a driver. Though retired, Tim Flock took the wheel for the 1955 season.

38 There is no official documentation for the borrowing of the cars of the fans attending races. Stories from Tim Flock and other drivers do mention these instances. Car parts were borrowed as well, most notably at the first Southern 500, held at Darlington Speedway. The track was so rough on tires that the teams ended up borrowing tires from the cars in the parking lots. From personal correspondence with Buz McKim, NASCAR Historian, NASCAR Hall of Fame. January 2009.

39 Racing-Reference Race results Database Race 1 of 8,” (June 19, 1949, Charlotte Speedway, Charlotte, NC) http://www.racing-reference.info/race?id=1949-01&series=W.

40 This race also sets an interesting precedent of NASCAR having the final say as a sanctioning sporting body. Westmoreland sued NASCAR and Bill France for $10,000 for disqualifying his car. The court determined that NASCAR made the rules and had the final say. This was often repeated in the history of NASCAR and is still an issue today. Now, as it was then, NASCAR makes its own rules as it sees fit.

41 This incident is widely recounted in many texts. The most accurate and complete history of NASCAR can be found in Greg Fielden’s *Forty Years of Stock Car Racing*.

42 Bill France allowed them to return to racing four years later.

43 In 1969, eleven drivers formed the Professional Drivers Association. One of their major concerns, resulting in a boycott, was the newly constructed Talladega Superspeedway in Talladega, Alabama. The track was extremely fast, far too fast for the cars to safely race on. The PDA pulled out of the race and Bill France promptly replaced the absent drivers with twenty-three drivers from the NASCAR Grand Touring series. (The Pony class series raced cars like Mustangs and Cameros.) The concerns of the drivers eventually were addressed and the drivers who had boycotted the races returned to NASCAR.

44 The ban on women did not extend to women drivers, or to owners. The ban on women is no longer upheld. Today there are many women officials and pit crew members, as

well as wives, girlfriends, female fans and race track historians in the NASCAR garages Alcohol is still prohibited within the garage and team area.

45 Fielden, *NASCAR: The Complete History*, 126.

46 Mark Yost, *The 200 MPH Billboard: The Inside Story of How Big Money Changed NASCAR* (St. Paul: Motorbooks, 2007), 127.

47 NASCAR, "NASCAR101: Tracks," http://www.nascar.com/races/tracks.

48 Greg Fielden, *Forty Years of Stock Car Racing: The Modern Era, 1972-1989*, vol. 4 (Pinehurst, NC: Galfield Press, 1990), 7-45.

49 A recent example of this is the revitalization of the Stockton 99 Speedway in Stockton, California. Stockton 99 is the oldest NASCAR sanctioned track in California. The track was shuttered and the site was purchased for a housing development. In 2008, the housing development went bankrupt and the track was repurchased and saved. Though demolition had begun, the new owners repaved the track and have a full 2009 racing season.

50 U.S. National Park Service, *National Register Bulletin 38: Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Traditional Cultural Properties*, http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb38/nrb38%20apendix%201.htm.

51 Ibid.

52 *American Heritage Dictionary*, 3rd ed., s.v. "Heritage."

53 Beth L. Savage and Marilyn Harper, "My Property is Important to America's Heritage What Does that Mean?" (Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1993) http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/myproperty/.

54 *American Heritage Dictionary*, 3rd ed., s.v. "Tradition."

55 *American Heritage Dictionary*, 3rd ed., s.v. "Continuity."

56 NASCAR, 2009 Television Commercial. Viewed Fox, 2009.

57 John Brinkerhoff Jackson, *A Sense of Place, a Sense of Time* (Yale University Press: New Haven, 1994), 152.

58 Ibid., 160.

59 John Brinckerhoff Jackson, *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984), 20.

60 NASCAR Camping World, 2009 Television Commercial. Viewed ESPN, 2009.

61 Seth M. Low, "Cultural Conservation of Place," in *Conserving Culture*, ed. Mary Hufford. (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 66.

62 NASCAR, "NASCAR101: Tracks," *NASCAR*, http://www.nascar.com/races/tracks.

63 Clay Campbell, personal interview with author. September 17, 2008.

64 Ibid.

65 Andy Hillenburg, personal interview with author. September 16, 2008.

66 At Lowe's Motor Speedway, nee Charlotte Motor Speedway, Humpy Wheeler finally painted the warning "No Throwing. You Will Be Removed" to try to stem the practice of throwing bones and other trash to the bottom of the grandstands. Image available from LaidbackRacing.com at http://www.laidbackracing.com/files/JJ1.JPG.

67 Diandra Leslie-Pelecky, "The Science of G-Forces," *Stock Car Science*, http://stockcarscience.com/blog/index.php?cat=55.

68 Also, this does not include road courses. For this thesis, all tracks referred to, unless specifically noted, will be those in a traditional oval.

69 Visual depictions of each of the tracks can be found at: NASCAR. "NASCAR101: Tracks," *NASCAR* http://www.nascar.com/races/tracks.

70 Interestingly enough, there does not seem to be a consensus or single answer concerning the origin of the checkered flag. Waving the checkered flag to signal the end of a race is a tradition with most racing series.

71 NASCAR. "NASCAR 101:The Flags of NASCAR," *NASCAR*, http://www.nascar.com/kyn/101/flags/index.html.

72 October 2004. NBC Television broadcast; EA Sports 500. Talladega Superspeedway.

73 Racing-Reference, Drivers Database. http://www.racing-reference.info/driver?id=yarboca01 (Cale Yarborough,).

74 Jeff Gluck, "NASCAR Honors Jimmie Johnson," *NASCAR*, December 6, 2008, http://www.scenedaily.com/news/articles/sprintcupseries/NASCAR_honors_Jimmie_Johnson_Cale_Yarborough_makes_surprise_appearance.html.

75 Mark Martin, *NASCAR for Dummies* (New York: Wiley Publishing, 2000), 83.

76 NASCAR. "83 Crew Chief, Car Chief Suspended Indefinitely," *NASCAR*, October 22, 2008, http://www.nascar.com/2008/news/headlines/cup/10/22/bvickers.penalties/Index.html.

77 Golenbock, *American Zoom*, 50.

78 Cotton and Dot Owens, personal interview with author. October 23, 2008.

79 Steve Ginsburg, "NASCAR Chief Pleads For Drivers To Show Emotion," *Reuters*, December 2, 2008, http://www.reuters.com/article/sportsNews/idUSTRE4B18LM20081202.

80 Joe Queenan, *True Believers*: *The Tragic Inner Life of Sports Fans* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2003), 159-160.

81 David Wharton and Sam Farmer, "Bullet Proof," *Los Angeles Times*, February 9, 2007, http://articles.latimes.com/2007/feb/09/sports/sp-nfl9.

82 Andrew Bagnatto, "Kurt Busch Becomes Honorary Deputy in Arizona," *USA Today*, November 9, 2006, http://www.usatoday.com/sports/motor/nascar/2006-11-09-busch-deputy_x.htm.

83 Martin, *Dummies*, 74.

84 Jayski, LLC., "Track Capacity," *Jayski's NASCAR Sprint Cup Silly Season Site*, http://jayski.com/pages/tracks-seating.htm.

85 Vance Howell, personal interview with author, March 15, 2009.

86 Martin, *Dummies*, 115.

87 Motor Racing Outreach. "The History of MRO," http://www.go2mro.com/history.htm.

88 Martin, *Dummies*, 250.

89 Peter Golenbock and Greg Fielden, *The Stock Car Racing Encyclopedia*, (New York: Macmillan, 1997) 64.

90 Mike F (last name unknown). personal email to author. “Frequency Fan Club,” January 20, 2009.

91 The points and qualifying system of NASCAR allows a full field of forty-three cars per race. Active drivers in the top thirty-five spots in the points race are automatically included in the field for that week and qualify knowing that they will race no matter how they qualify at that race. The remaining positions are filled with the racers who are considered “Go or Go-homers.” These drivers qualify against each other for the open spots, with a few drivers unable to compete in the race.

92 This of course, is not an absolute example and certainly, there are fans of sports franchises not based in the team’s home town.

93 For a comprehensive list of Official NASCAR sponsors, see Jayski.Com “NASCAR Official Sponsor News,” available from http://www.jayski.com/teams/nascar-sponsors.htm.

94 “ServiceMaster Clean Named Caution Period Sponsor at ISC, SMI Tracks” *Scene Daily*, January 15, 2009, http://www.scenedaily.com/news/articles/sprintcupseries/ServiceMaster_Clean_named_caution_period_sponsor_at_ISC_SMI_tracks_.html.

95 Jeff Blair, “New Yankee Stadium Set to Be a Cash Cow,” *Globesports*, September 24, 2008, http://www.globesports.com/servlet/story/RTGAM.20080924.blair25/GSStory/GlobeSportsBaseball/home.

96 Ibid.

97 Lowe’s Motor Speedway in Charlotte, North Carolina; Infineon Raceway in Sonoma, California and the recently renamed Auto Club Speedway in Fontana, California.

98 In every interview for this thesis, North Wilkesboro was cited as one of two examples of race tracks which NASCAR erroneously walked away from. The Southern 500 at Darlington Raceway was the other mentioned in every interview.

99 Bob Myers, “Silver Anniversary; Martinsville is Celebrating 25 Years of Racing in 1972,” *Stock Car Racing* (June 1972): 55-57, 75.

100 Allan E. Brown, *The History of the American Speedway: Past and Present* (Marne, MI: Slideways Publications, 1984), 316-325.

101 International Speedway Corporation, “Martinsville History: Track Facts,” *Martinsville Speedway Official Track Web Site*, http://www.Martinsvillespeedway.com.

102 Myers, 55. It is also interesting to note that Clay Earles and Bill France met while they were both competing at a local race track.

103 Ibid.

104 "Here and There about the City." *Martinsville Daily Bulletin*, September 9, 1947.

105 Ibid.

106 International Speedway Corporation, "Martinsville History: Track Timeline," *Martinsville Speedway Official Track Web Site*, http://www.Martinsvillespeedway.com.

107 "Here and There about the City."

108 Ibid.

109 International Speedway Corporation,"Martinsville Speedway: Track Facts.".

110 The only other oval track NASCAR uses, which can be considered to have a mixed surface is the track at Indianapolis Motor Speedway. The track has preserved a three foot section of the original brick surface of the track. That section marks the Start/Finish line for the track and also serves as a monument to the track's history.

111 International Speedway Corporation, "Martinsville Speedway: Track Facts."

112 Lou Schwartz, "Sportscasting Firsts, 1920-Present," available from http://www.americansportscastersonline.com/sportscastingfirsts.html; Mr. Schwartz does not seem to think that the first broadcast of a stock car event is significant, as it is not recorded on his website.

113 RetroSheet, "First National Association Game," http://www.retrosheet.org/1stGame.htm.

114 International Speedway Corporation, "Martinsville Speedway: Track Timeline."

115 Myers, 55.

116 Jayski, LLC., "Race Track Seating Capacity Chart Page" *Jayski's NASCAR Sprint Cup Silly Season Site*, http://jayski.com/pages/tracks-seating.htm.

117 International Speedway Corporation, "Martinsville Speedway: H. Clay Earles," *Martinsville Speedway Official Web Site*, http://www.martinsvillespeedway.com/track_info/h_clay_earles/.

118 Steve Waid, "Martinsville Hot Dog is a Must for Many, But Why" *NASCAR, Scene Daily*, http://www.scenedaily.com/opinions/blogs/stevewaid/The_Martinsville_hot_dog__its_a_must_to_many_but_why_.html.

119 International Speedway Motorsports, Inc., "About ISC: History," http://www.iscmotorsports.com/About_history.html.

120 Waid.

121 Ibid.

122 Clay Campbell, personal interview with author. September 17, 2008. The Advance Auto Parts 500, in April of 2004, was also the same race where Jeff Gordon's car tore a large chunk of the concrete surface. Campbell said that he would never forget that race, and that he wasn't sure that the Hot Dog scandal hadn't been more significant than the track conditions.

123 Ben White, "Keeping Time," *WiseGuys, NASCAR Winston Cup Illustrated*. August 2003, 14.

124 Darrell Waltrip, "What Makes Martinsville So Special?" *NASCAR on Fox*, [n.d.] http://msn.foxsports.com/nascar/story/7961864.

125 Many articles address the threatened race dates of Martinsville Speedway. An especially impassioned, yet reasonable example is in Kurt Smith, "Please NASCAR, Not Martinsville Too," http://www.frontstretch.com/ksmith/21021/.

126 Darrell Waltrip.

127 Ibid.

128 Fielden, *NASCAR: The Complete History*, 51.

129 Hunter, *Darlington Raceway*, 12.

130 Ibid., 14.

131 Ibid.

132 Ibid., 18.

133 Ibid., 19.

134 Tom Kirkland and David Thompson, *Darlington International Speedway, 1950-1967* (Osecola, WI: MBI Publishing, 1999), 21.

135 Fielden, *NASCAR: The Complete History,* 50.

136 "Auto Races," *The News and Press*, August 17, 1950.

137 Robert Moore, "Winston NASCAR Racing News," September 3, 1976.

138 Hunter, *Darlington Raceway,* 23.

139 Ibid., 24.

140 Dot Owens, personal interview with author, October 23, 2008.

141 Hunter, *Darlington Raceway*, 155.

142 Tom Higgins, "Black Armbands for the Lady in Black," *Tom Higgins' Scuffs,* August 29, 2005 http://blogs.thatsracin.com/scuffs/2005/08/by_rom_higgins_.html.

143 Victory Lane Motorsports, "Storyteller," *Inaugural Darlington Historic Racing Festival*, *Official Program* (September 2008), 32.

144 International Speedway Corporation, "Darlington: Track Facts" Darlington Raceway, *Darlington Raceway Official Track Web Site*, http://www.darlingtonraceway.com/. "Tower" refers to a taller section of the grandstands.

145 Ibid.

146 Craig R. Dylan, "Updating the Lady in Black," *Point of Beginning,* February 26, 2008, http://www.pobonline.com/Articles/Features/BNP_GUID_9-5-2006 _A_10000000000000269889. A detailed description of the technology used to scan and create a 3D model of Darlington Raceway is available at this site.

147 Stock Car Racing: Buddy Baker. "Buddy Baker Quotes," *Stock Car Racing,* http://www.stock-car-racing.net/buddy-baker.htm.

148 Harold King, Darlington Raceway, personal interview with author, September 2008.

149 Ibid.

150 Harold King, personal Interview with author, September 2008.

151 “Weatherly Museum Ground Breaking Scheduled Sunday” *Spartanburg Herald*, November 19, 1964.

152 The first monuments honor Darlington builder Harold Brasington; Bill Elliott winning the Winston Million bonus at the 1985 Southern 500; David Pearson's leading 10 victories at "The Lady in Black;" and the Ricky Craven-Kurt Busch finish at the 2003 Carolina Dodge Dealers 400.

153 Michael Richardson. Personal communications with author, May 2009.

154 NASCAR Media. “NASCAR Announces 1st Phase of 'Realignment 2004 and Beyond' NASCAR Press Release” NASCAR Media Information, http://www.nascarmedia.com/main.jsp.

155 At the time, the track was named California Speedway. The name changed in 2008 to Auto Club Speedway. It is also important to realize that NASCAR moved the single remaining race date for Darlington to Mother’s Day weekend. This is another traditionally important date for NASCAR, as no races were held on this weekend.

156 Tom Bowles, “The Five-Step Program To Fix The Country’s Most Hated Race Track,” *Sports Illustrated*, February 19, 2009, http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/2009/writers/tom_bowles/02/19/inside.nascar/?eref=sircrc. This article is about the Auto Club Speedway in Fontana, California.

157 Micah Roberts. “Darlington Preview,” *Vegas Insider*, May 7, 2008, http://www.vegasinsider.com/auto-racing/story.cfm/story/710612.

158 Waltrip.

159 “Southern 500 Week Declared Darlington Raceway Week In South Carolina” http://www.darlingtonraceway.com/news/track_news/553267.html.

160 “Fred Lorenzen,” http://www.fredlorenzen.com/NASCAR_Golden.htm.

161 David Caraviello, “Residents Cling To Hope Of Rockingham’s Revival,” *NASCAR*, February 24, 2007, http://www.nascar.com/2007/news/opinion/02/24/Dcaraviello.rockingham.return/index.html.

162 “From Scrub Pine to Speedway,” *Richmond County Journal*, October 26, 1965, Race Edition.

163 Ibid; “Steeped in History” Winston Cup Scene, September 21, 2000, 72-73.

164 “The Track is Different, Many Say” *Richmond County Journal*, October 26, 1965, Race Edition.

165 “New Speedway Features Ultra-Modern Pressbox,” *Richmond County Journal*, October 26, 1965.

166 “Rockinghamlet? No Thank You!” *Richmond County Journal*, October 26, 1965, Race Edition.

167 Ibid.

168 “Area’s Biggest Week Starts Sunday at NC Motor Speedway.” *Richmond County Journal*, October 26, 1965, Race Edition.

169 Bill Tuthill, *Richmond County Journal*, October 26, 1965, Race Edition.

170 Dick Bergren, “The Rock Splits,” The Inside Groove, *Speedway Illustrated*, June 2003, 8.

171 6/13/2003 - NASCAR Announces 1st Phase of 'Realignment 2004 and Beyond' NASCAR Press Release.

172 Racing Reference Database, http://www.racing-reference.info/raceyear?yr=2003&series=W. (Races: 2003)

173 As quoted in the November 21, 2001 “Stock Car Racing” and from *Winston Salem Journal*; June, 2001.

174 Jayski, LLC., “Tracks: LAWSUITS: SMI Shareholder, 2nd Texas date,” *Jayski’s NASCAR Sprint Cup Silly Season Site*, http://www.jayski.com/pages/tracks/lawsuit-smi-texas.htm.

175 Scott Mason, “Rockingham Speedway Purchased for $4 Million.” WRAL.com http://www.wral.com/news/local/story/1885014/.

176 Jayski, LLC., “Rockingham Speedway Honors NASCAR Greats,” *Jayski’s NASCAR Sprint Cup Silly Season Site*, http://jayski.com/pages/tracks/rockingham.htm.

177 Joe Menzer, “1On1: Rockingham Boss Keeping Busy At Old Track,” *NASCAR Scene*, February 24, 2009, http://www.nascar.com/2009/news/features/02/24/1.on.1.ahillenburg.rockingham/story_single.html.

178 U.S. National Park Service, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form,* National Register Bulletin 16A.

179 U.S. National Park Service, *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation,* National Register Bulletin 15.

180 Mary Hufford, "Rethinking the Cultural Mission" in *Conserving Culture: A New Discourse on Heritage*, ed. Mary Hufford (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 3.

181 Dot Owens, personal interview with author. October 23, 2008.

182 U.S. National Park Service, "National Register of Historic Places; Listing a Property: Some frequently asked questions," http://www.nps.gov/ history/nr/listing.htm.

183 Leigh Cockram, personal email with author. Martinsville Economic Development Corporation. Quoted from an email regarding Martinsville Speedway, City of Martinsville, DHR File Number 044-5178, originally dated October 2006.

184 This is not the case if federal monies are used for the project. The National Register website also encourages working closely with the SHPO and local preservation organizations so that an owner is aware of any state regulations which deal with historic properties. Available from National Register of Historic Places Fundamentals. "Frequently Asked Questions." http://www.nps.gov/nr/faq.htm#benefits.

185 STS Motorsports, Inc., "NC Highway Markers," *Save North Wilkesboro Speedway,* http://www.savethespeedway.net/.

186 Friends of the Mountain to Sea Trail, "About the MST," *North Carolina Trails System: Mountain-to-Sea Trail,* http://www.ncmst.org/aboutthemst.html.

187 Brenda Barrett and Carroll Van West, *Getting Started in Heritage Areas* (Washington D.C: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2005), 1.

188 U.S. National Park Service, "National Heritage Areas: Frequently Asked Questions," http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas/FAQ/INDEX.HTM.

189 Ibid.

190 Ibid.

191 U.S. National Park Service, "National Heritage Areas: Frequently Asked Questions," http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas/FAQ/INDEX.HTM.

192 U.S. National Park Service, “Critical Steps and Criteria for becoming a National Heritage Area,” http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas/REP/criteria.pdf.

193 Barrett and Van West, *Getting Started*, 6.

194 U.S. National Park Service, “Visit a National Heritage Area,” http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas/VST/INDEX.HTM.

195 Barrett, *Getting Started*, 6.

196 U.S. National Park Service, “National Heritage Areas: Feasibility Guide,” http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas/FSGUIDE/feasibility_guide.html.

197 Myers, 55-57,75.

198 RoAnn Bishop, “Who Did That Sign Say?” *Tar Heel Junior Historian*, 44:2 (Spring 2005), www.ncmuseumofhistory.org/collateral/articles/s05.who.did.that.sign.say.pdf.

199 L.D. Russell, “Racing Vs. Religion,” *The Alliance for Historic Hillsborough*, http://www.historichillsborough.org/images/Speedway-Complete.pdf.

200 Eno River Association, “Occoneechee Speedway,” *Eno River Association*, http://www.enoriver.org/eno/ parks/occspdwy.htm.

201 http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas/REP/criteria.pdf.

202 University of North Carolina, Urban Institute, *North Carolina Motorsports Economic Impact and Development Study; Executive Summary*, http://www.sanfordholshouser.com/pdf/recent_projects/NC_Motorsports_Study_ Executive_Summary.pdf (2004).

203 Ibid.

204 Leigh Cockram, Personal email to author. December 01, 2008. Martinsville Henry County Economic Development information is also available from http://www.yesmartinsville.com/.

205 Sanford Holshouser Business Development Group, *Motorsports; A North Carolina Growth Industry Under Threat*, (Charlotte: Sanford Holshouer Business Development Group, 2004), 95.

206 NASCAR Hall of Fame, “Frequently Asked Questions” *NASCAR Hall of Fame,* http://www.nascarhall.com/faqs.php.

207 Kim O'Connell, "Seeking Higher Ground: Determining Factors for Success in Appalachian Heritage Areas" (master's thesis, Goucher College, 2006), http://greenquill.com/thesis.html.

208 Ibid., 1.

209 Jacquelyn L. Tuxill and Nora J. Mitchell, eds. *Reflecting on the Past, Looking to the Future: A Technical Assistance Report to the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission*, Conservation and Stewardship Publication No. 7 (Woodstock, VT: Conservation Study Institute, 2005), 40-42.

210 Ibid., 41.

211 O'Connell, 8.

212 Birmingham International Raceway, http://www.bir-raceway.com/Home_Page.php.

213 Racing-Reference, Racing Results Database, http://www.racing-reference.info/tracks?id=003. (Fairgrounds Raceway)

214 Anthony Marino, "A unique perspective on BIR," *Blog of Tomorrow*, http://blog.al.com/blogoftomorrow/2009/01/anthony_marino_a_unique_perspe.html.

215 "Economy's Woes Play Role in Racing's Return to Roots," *NASCAR*, February 5, 2009, http://www.nascar.com/2009/news/business/02/04/economic.crisis/index.html.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alliance of National Heritage Areas. *Alliance of National Heritage Areas.* http://www.NationalHeritageAreas.com.

Anderson, Kay, and Fay Gale, eds. *Inventing Places: Studies in Cultural Geography*. Melbourne, Australia: Wiley Halsted Press, 1992.

Atlanta Motor Speedway. http://www.atlantamotorspeedway.com

Atlanta Time Machine. http://www.atlantatimemachine.com

Auto Club Speedway. http://www.autoclubspeedway.com/

Bagnatto, Andrew. "Kurt Busch Becomes Honorary Deputy in Arizona," *USA Today*, November 9, 2006. http://www.usatoday.com/sports/motor/nascar/2006-11-09-busch-deputy_x.htm.

Baker, Andrew. "When the Engines No Longer Roar: A Case Study of North Wilkesboro, N.C. and the North Wilkesboro Speedway." Master's Thesis, Ohio University, 2005.

Barrett, Brenda, and Carroll Van West. *Getting Started in Heritage Areas*. Washington D.C.: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 2005.

Bergren, Dick. "The Rock Splits," *Speedway Illustrated*, *The Inside Groove*, June 2003.

BIR Racing. *Birmingham International Raceway Official Track Web Site*. http://www.bir-raceway.com.

Bishop, RoAnn. "Who Did That Sign Say?" *Tar Heel Junior Historian* 44, no. 2 (Spring 2005). www.ncmuseumofhistory.org/collateral/articles/s05.who.did.that.sign.say.

Blair, Jeff. "New Yankee Stadium Set to Be a Cash Cow," *Globesports*, September 24, 2008. http://www.globesports.com/servlet/story/RTGAM.20080924.blair25/GSStory/GlobeSportsBaseball/home.

Blount, Terry. “A Little Research Turns Up Some Interesting Trends in NASCAR,” *ESPN*. http://sports.espn.go.com/rpm/nascar/cup/ columns/story?columnist= blount_terry&page=BlountsBlitz

Bowles, Tom. “The Five-Step Program To Fix the Country’s Most Hated Race Track.” *Sports Illustrated*, February 19, 2009. http://sportsillustrated.cnn.com/2009 /writers/tom_bowles/02/19/inside.nascar/?eref=sircrc.

Bowman-Gray Stadium, Official Track Web Site. http://www.bowmangrayracing.com/.

Braun, Julie. “Change As an Historic Feature of Preservation of Places Related to Science and Technology.” Master’s Thesis, Goucher College, 2006.

Brown, Allan E. *The History of the American Speedway: Past and Present*. Marne, MI: Slideways Publications, 1984.

Cabarrus County Visitors Bureau. *The Racing Side of Charlotte*. http://www.visitcabarrus.com/.

Campbell, Clay. Interview with author, September 17, 2008.

Caraviello, David. “Residents Cling to Hope of Rockingham’s Revival.” *NASCAR*, February 24, 2007. http://www.nascar.com/2007/news/opinion/02/24/ Dcaraviello.rockingham.return/index.html.

Carmichael, Michael. “No Bypass.” *Historic Speedway Group*. http://www.historicspeedwaygroup.org/No_ByPass.html.

Cobb, James C. *Away Down South: A History of Southern Identity*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Daniel, Pete. *Lost Revolutions: The South in the 1950s*. Chapel Hill: Chapel Hill Press for The Smithsonian National Museum of American History, 2000.

Darlington Chamber of Commerce. *Greater Darlington Chamber of Commerce*. http://www.darlingtonchamber.sc

Darlington News and Press. Auto Races, various dates, 1949-1950.

Dylan, Craig R. “Updating the Lady in Black.” *Point of Beginning*, February 26, 2008. http://www.pobonline.com/Articles/Features/BNP_GUID_9-5-2006_A_10000000000000269889.

Earnhardt, Jr., Dale. “Post Race Interviews.” *NBC Television Broadcast*, October 1, 2004.

“Economy’s Woes Play Role in Return to Racing Roots,” *NASCAR*, February 5, 2009. http://www.nascar.com/2009/news/business/02/04/economic.crisis/index.html

Engle, Greg. “Former NASCAR Driver Busted for Making Moonshine.” *NASCAR Daily News*, March 9, 2009. http://cupscene.com/blogs2/2009/03/04/ former-nascar-driver-busted-for-making-moonshine/

Eno River Association. *Eno River Association*. http://www.enoriver.org.

FastTrack. *Official Driving School of ARCA*. http://www.fasttrackracing.com/.

Fielden, Greg. *Forty Years of Stock Car Racing*. 4 vols. Surfside Beach, SC: The Galfield Press., 1992.

—. *NASCAR: The Complete History* (Lincolnwood: Publications International, Inc, 2007)

“First National Association Game.” *RetroSheet*. http://www.retrosheet.org/1stGame.htm.

Friends of the Mountain-to-Sea Trail. *North Carolina Trails System: Mountain-to-Sea Trail*. http://www.ncmst.org/aboutthemst.html.

Ginsburg, Steve. “NASCAR Chief Pleads For Drivers to Show Emotion.” *Reuters*, December 2, 2008. http://www.reuters.com/article/sportsNews/ idUSTRE4B18LM20081202.

Gluck, Jeff. ”NASCAR Honors Jimmie Johnson,” *NASCAR*, December 6, 2008. http://www.scenedaily.com/news/articles/sprintcupseries/NASCAR_honors_ Jimmie_Johnson_Cale_Yarborough_makes_surprise_appearance.html.

Golenbock, Peter. *American Zoom; Stock Car Racing-From the Dirt Tracks to Daytona*. New York: Macmillan, 1993.

Golenbock, Peter, and Greg Fielden, eds. *The Stock Car Racing Encyclopedia*. New York: Macmillan, 1997.

Green, Carl. “Stock Car Racing.” *National Speed Sport News*, April 13, 1949.

—. “Stock Car Racing.” *National Speed Sport News*, January 11, 1950.

Hall, Randall L. “Before NASCAR: The Corporate and Civic Promotion of Automobile racing in the American South, 1903-1927,” *The Journal of Southern History* 68, no. 3 (August 2002): 649.

Harris, Jacob. Interview with author, September 2008.

Higgins, Tom. “Black Armbands for the Lady in Black,” *Tom Higgins' Scuffs*, August 29, 2005. http://blogs.thatsracin.com/scuffs/2005/08/by_rom_higgins_.html.

Hillenburg, Andy. Interview with author, September 16, 2008.

Hinton, Ed. *Daytona: From the Birth of Speed to the Death of the Man in Black*. New York: Warner Books, 2001.

Howell, Mark D. *From Moonshine to Madison Avenue: A Cultural History of the NASCAR Winston Cup Series*. Bowling Green: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1997.

Howell, Vance. Interview with author, March 15, 2009.

Hudson, Charles. Interview with author, September 2008.

Hufford, Mary, ed. *Conserving Culture: A New Discourse on Heritage*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994.

Hunter, Jim. *Darlington Raceway, 50th Anniversary*. Charlotte: UMI Publications, 1999.

International Speedway Corporation. *Darlington Raceway Official Track Web Site*. http://www.darlingtonraceway.com/. Accessed 2009.

—. *Martinsville Speedway Official Track Web Site*. http://www.martinsvillespeedway.com.

International Speedway Motorsports, Inc. “About ISC: History.” *Welcome to ISC Motorsports.* http://www.iscmotorsports.com/About_history.html.

Jackson, John Brinckerhoff. *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1984.

—. *A Sense of Place, A Sense of Time*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994.

Jacobson, David. *Place and Belonging in America*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002.

Jayski, LLC. *Jayski's NASCAR Sprint Cup Silly Season Site*. http://www.jayski.com.

Johnson, Junior. Interview by Pete Daniel. June 4, 1988. Interview C-0052, transcript, Southern Oral History Program Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC.

King, Harold. Interview with author, September 2008.

Kirkland, Tom, and David Thompson. *Darlington International Speedway, 1950-1967*. Osecola, WI: MBI Publishing, 1999.

Leslie-Pelecky, Diandra. "The Science of G-Forces," *Stock Car Science*. http://stockcarscience.com/blog/index.php?cat=55.

Levine, Lawrence. *Highbrow, Lowbrow: The Emergence of Popular Culture Hierarchy in America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990.

Levine, Leo. *Ford: The Dust and the Glory: A Racing History.* New York: The Macmillan Company, 1968.

Light, Andrew, and Jonathan M. Swift, eds. *Philosophies of Place*. Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 1998.

Low, Seth M. "Cultural Conservation of Place" in *Conserving Culture*, edited by Mary Hufford, 66-77. (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994).

MacGregor, Jeff. *Sunday Money: Speed! Lust! Madness! Death! A hot lap around America with NASCAR*. New York: Harper Collins, 2005.

Madding, Allen. "NASCAR's Golden Boy- Fred Lorenzen." *Fred Lorenzen, Golden Boy of NASCAR.* http://www.fredlorenzen.com/NASCAR_Golden.htm

Marino, Anthony. "A Unique Perspective on BIR." *Blog of Tomorrow*. http://blog.al.com/blogoftomorrow/2009/01/anthony_marino_a_unique_perspe.html.

Martin, Mark. *NASCAR for Dummies*. New York: Wiley Publishing, 2000.

Martinsville Daily Bulletin, "Here and There about the City," September 9, 1947.

Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Corporation. *Martinsville Henry County Economic Development*. http://www.yesmartinsville.com/.

Mason, Scott. "Rockingham Speedway Purchased for $4 Million." WRAL.com, October 2, 2007. http://www.wral.com/news/local/story/1885014/

Menzer, Joe. “Hillenburg Resurrecting the Rock with a Steady Effort.” *NASCAR.com* February 26, 2009. http://www.nascar.com/2009/news/features/02/25/enterprise.jmenzer.ahillenburg.rockingham/index.html

—. “1On1: Rockingham Boss Keeping Busy at Old Track.” *NASCAR.com.* February 24, 2009. http://www.nascar.com/2009/news/features/02/24/1.on.1.ahillenburg.rockingham/story_single.html.

Moore, Bud. Interview with author. October, 2008.

Moore, Robert. “Winston NASCAR Racing News.” September 3, 1976. From ISC Archives, Dayton Beach, Florida.

Mooresville Convention and Visitors Bureau. *Rev Up with Our Racing Attractions*. http://www.racecityusa.org/racing.html.

Motor Racing Outreach. “The History of MRO.” *MRO: Motor Racing Outreach.* http://www.go2mro.com/history.htm.

MotorCities National Heritage Area. *MotorCities National Heritage Area, Official Web Site.* http://www.motorcities.org/.

Myers, Bob. “Silver Anniversary: Martinsville is Celebrating 25 Years of Racing in 1972.” *Stock Car Racing,* June 1972.

NASCAR. “83 Crew Chief, Car Chief Suspended Indefinitely,” *NASCAR*, October 22, 2008. http://www.nascar.com/2008/news/headlines/cup/10/22/bvickers.penalties/Index.html.

“NASCAR Enjoys Big Season!” *National Speed Sport News*, December 15, 1948.

NASCAR Hall of Fame. *NASCAR Hall of Fame, FAQs*. http://www.nascarhall.com/faqs.php.

NASCAR Library Collection. *NASCAR Wall Chart Timeline*. Lincolnwood, IL: Publications International, 2007.

NASCAR. *NASCAR 1959-1971; Growth, Change and Challenge*. Charlotte: UMI Publishing, 2003.

National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing, Inc. *NASCAR, Official Web Site.* http://www.nascar.com/

—. NBC; EA Sports 500. Talladega Superspeedway. NBC Universal, Inc. 2004

—. *NASCAR Media*. http://www.nascarmedia.com.

—. *NASCAR Media*. NASCAR Camping World, 2009 Television Commercial. Viewed ESPN, 2009.

—. *NASCAR Media*. NASCAR Sprint Cup Series, 2009 Television Commercial. Viewed Fox, 2009.

National Coal Heritage Area. *National Coal Heritage Area/Coal Heritage Trail, Official Web Site*. http://www.coalheritage.org/.

National Speed Sport News. Issues inclusive 1934-1970.

—. "Important Stock Car Series Now Being Formed," July 6, 1949.

—. "Race Ban Lifted. Many Speedways Ready," August, 1945.

Norton, William. *Explorations in the Understanding of Landscape: A Cultural Geography*. New York: Greenwood Press, 1989.

O'Connell, Kim A. "Seeking Higher Ground: Determining Factors for Success in Appalachian Heritage Areas." Master's Thesis, Goucher College, 2006.

Otto, Edgar, and Joanne Biondi. *Ed Otto: NASCAR's Silent Partner*. Newburyport, MA: Coastal 181 Publishing, 2008.

Owens, Cotton and Dot. Interview with author. October, 23, 2008.

Penning-Rowsell, Edmund C., and David Lowenthal, eds. *Landscape Meanings and Values*. Boston: Allen and Unwin, 1986.

Pierce, Dan. "The Most Southern Sport on Earth; NASCAR and the Unions," *Southern Cultures*, 7, no. 2 (Summer 2001).

Queenan, Joe. *True Believers: The Tragic Inner Life of Sports Fans.* New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2003.

Racing Reference Database. *Racing Statistics and History*. http://www.racing-reference.info.

Reed, John Shelton, and Dale Volberg Reed. *1001 Things Everyone Should Know About the South*. New York: Double Day, 1996.

Richmond County Journal, "Area's Biggest Week Starts Sunday at NC Motor Speedway," October 26, 1965, Race Edition.

—, Tuthill, Bill. "North Carolina Motor Speedway" October 26, 1965, Race Edition.

—, "Ellerbe's Big John Sears 'Out to Win' American 500," October 15, 1965.

—, "From Scrub Pine to Speedway," October 26, 1965, Race Edition.

—, "New Speedway Features Ultra-Modern Pressbox," October 26, 1965, Race Edition.

—, "Rockinghamlet? No Thank You!" October 26, 1965, Race Edition.

—, "The Track is Different, Many Say." October 26, 1965, Race Edition.

Roberts, Micah. "Darlington Preview." *Vegas Insider*, May 7, 2008. http://www.vegasinsider.com/auto-racing/story.cfm/story/710612.

Rockingham Raceway Park. *Rockingham Speedway Official Track Web Site*. http://www.rockinghamracewaypark.com/.

Russell, L. D. "Racing vs. Religion: A Brief History of Occoneechee Speedway." *The Alliance for Historic Hillsborough, Official Web Site.* http://www.historichillsborough.org/images/Speedway-Complete.pdf.

Samples, Steve. "Fred Lorenzen." *Fred Lorenzen: Golden Boy of NASCAR*. http://www.fredlorenzen.com.

Sanford Holshouser Business Development Group. *Motorsports: A North Carolina Growth Industry Under Threat*. Charlotte: Sanford Holshouser Business Development Group, 2004.

Savage, Beth L., and Marilyn Harper. *My Property is Important to America's Heritage What Does that Mean?* Washington, D.C.: National Park Service, 1993. http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/publications/bulletins/myproperty/

Schwartz, Lou. "Sportscasting Firsts, 1920-Present." *American Sportscasters Online.* http://www.americansportscastersonline.com/sportscastingfirsts.html.

"ServiceMaster Clean Named Caution Period Sponsor at ISC, SMI Tracks." *Scene Daily*, January 15, 2009. http://www.scenedaily.com/news/articles/sprintcupseries/ServiceMaster_Clean_named_caution_period_sponsor_at_ISC_SMI_tracks_.html .

Singer, Marc P., and Ryan L. Sumner. *Images of America: Auto Racing in Charlotte and the Carolina Piedmont.* Charleston: Arcadia Press, 2003.

Smith, Kurt "Please NASCAR, Not Martinsville too," *The Frontstretch*. http://www.frontstretch.com/ksmith/21021/.

"Southern 500 Week Declared Darlington Raceway Week in South Carolina." http://www.darlingtonraceway.com/news/track_news/553267.html. March 25, 2009

Sowers, Richard. *The Complete Statistical History of Stock Car Racing: Records, Streaks, Oddities, and Trivia*. Phoenix: David Bull Publishing, 2000.

Spartanburg Herald, "Weatherly Museum Ground Breaking Scheduled Sunday," November 19, 1964.

Speedway Motorsports, Inc. *Atlanta Motor Speedway, Official Track Web Site*. http://www.atlantamotorspeedway.com. Accessed 2009.

"Steeped in History." *Winston Cup Scene*. September 21, 2000, 72-73.

Stock Car Racing: Buddy Baker. "Buddy Baker Quotes," Stock Car Racing, http://www.stock-car-racing.net/buddy-baker.htm.

STS Motorsports, Inc. *Save North Wilkesboro Speedway*. http://www.savethespeedway.net/.

Thompson, Dick, and Morris Stephenson. *From Dust to Glory: The Story of Clay Earles and the NASCAR Sanctioned Martinsville Speedway*. Bassett, VA: Bassett Printing Corporation, 1992.

Thompson, Neal. *Driving with the Devil: Southern Moonshine, Detroit Wheels, and the Birth of NASCAR*. New York: Three Rivers Press, 2006.

Tuxill, Jacquelyn L., and Nora J. Mitchell, eds. *Reflecting on the Past, Looking to the Future: A Technical Assistance Report to the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission.* Conservation and Stewardship Publication No. 7. Woodstock, VT: Conservation Study Institute, 2005.

U. S. Bureau of the Census. "Census Regions and Divisions of the United States" http://www.census.gov/geo/www/us_regdiv.pdf.

U. S. National Park Service. "Critical Steps and Criteria for Becoming a National Heritage Area," http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas/REP/criteria.pdf

—. *Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Traditional Cultural Properties*. National Register Bulletin, no. 38.

—. *How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation*. National Register Bulletin, no. 15.

—. *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* National Register Bulletin, no. 16A.

—. "National Heritage Areas: Feasibility Guide," http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas/FSGUIDE/feasibility_guide.html.

—. "National Heritage Areas: Frequently Asked Questions," http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas/FAQ/INDEX.HTM.

—. "National Register of Historic Places Program: About Us," http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/about.htm.

—, "National Register of Historic Places, Listing a Property: Some frequently asked questions," http://www.nps.gov/ history/nr/listing.htm

—,"National Register Information System," http://www.nr.nps.gov/.

—, "Visit a National Heritage Area," http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas/VST/INDEX.HTM.

University of North Carolina, Urban Institute. *North Carolina Motorsports Economic Impact and Development Study: Executive Summary*. 2004. http://www.sanfordholshouser.com/pdf/recent_projects/NC_Motorsports_Study_Executive_Summary.pdf

Victory Lane Motorsports. "Storyteller." *Inaugural Darlington Historic Racing Festival, Official Program*. September, 2008.

Waid, Steve. "Martinsville Hot Dog is a Must for Many, But Why?" *NASCAR, Scene Daily*. http://www.scenedaily.com/blogs/stevewaid/The_Martinsville_hot_dog__its_a_must_to_many_but_why_.html.

Waltrip, Darrell, "What Makes Martinsville So Special?" FoxSports, [n.d.]. http://msn.foxsports.com/nascar/story/7961864.

Wharton, David, and Sam Farmer. "Bullet Proof," *Los Angeles Times*, February 9, 2007. http://articles.latimes.com/2007/feb/09/sports/sp-nfl9.

White, Ben. “Keeping Time.” WiseGuys, *NASCAR Winston Cup Illustrated*. August 14, 2003.

Wilson, Chris, and Paul Groth, eds. *Everyday America: Cultural Landscape Studies After J.B. Jackson*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.

Wood, Perry Allen. *Silent Speedways of the Carolinas: The Grand National History of 29 Former Tracks*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2007.

Yost, Mark. *The 200 MPH Billboard: The Inside Story of How Big Money Changed NASCAR*. St. Paul: Motorbooks, 2007.

Yunick, Smokey. *Best Damn Garage in Town: My Life and Adventures*. Holly Hill, FL: Carbon Press LC, 2005.