

Horne, Joshua Lawrence ("Josh") ^[1]

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by Claiborne T. Smith, Jr., 1988

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Joshua Lawrence ("Josh") Horne, newspaperman and civic leader, was born in [Nash County](#) ^[2], the son of Joshua Lawrence and Lula Parker Horne. Educated first in local schools, he attended [Trinity Park School](#) ^[3], Durham, from 1903 to 1905 and was graduated from Trinity College (later [Duke University](#) ^[4]) in 1909. Horne began his lifework as city editor of the Rocky Mount *Daily Record* in 1910. The following year he founded his own newspaper, the *Morning Telegram*, whose name was changed in 1912 to the *Evening Telegram*. In 1950 a Sunday edition was published. Influential for many years in northeastern North Carolina, the newspapers were sold to the Thomson chain in 1970.

During his sixty years in the newspaper business, Horne not only won recognition from his profession but also gave liberally of his time and talents to his city and state. As a newspaperman, he served as president of the [North Carolina Press Association](#) ^[5] in 1930 and was director of the [Associated Press](#) ^[6] from 1937 to 1950. He also founded two radio stations in Rocky Mount, WCEC and WFMA. A pioneer in many fields, Horne was a member of the first state rural electrification authority, of the Rocky Mount Air Port Commission (beginning in 1934), and later of the [Rocky Mount–Wilson Airport Authority](#) ^[7]. In the latter capacity, he was instrumental in obtaining better air service for his area of the state.

While Horne was serving on the state Board of Conservation and Development in 1935, a new highway marker program was begun jointly by that board, the [North Carolina Historical Commission](#) ^[8], and the State Highway Commission. He was a member of a special committee formed at the time to approve markers and their inscriptions. Through this association, Horne developed an intense interest in the heritage of his native state. In 1954 [Governor William B. Umstead](#) ^[9] appointed him to the executive board of the [North Carolina Department of Archives and History](#) ^[10]; Horne served as chairman from 1965 to 1972 and remained on the board until his death. During his chairmanship, the agency's staff doubled and its budget tripled, providing increased services to preserve the history of North Carolina, and new facilities were opened at several state historic sites. Horne had a particular interest in historic [Halifax](#) ^[11], not far from his home in Rocky Mount.

A devout [Methodist](#) ^[12], Horne was long a member of the official board of the First United Methodist Church, Rocky Mount. For many years he was a trustee of [Duke University](#) ^[4] and [High Point College](#) ^[13], and he participated in the establishment of [North Carolina Wesleyan College](#) ^[14] in Rocky Mount.

In 1912 Horne married Mary A. Thorp, the daughter of Judge William Lewis and Mildred Brown Holmes Thorp. They were the parents of a daughter, Mary Louise, who married Mel. J. Warner of Rocky Mount. Horne's second wife was Mildred Nicholson of Orlando, Fla.

On his retirement, a bust of Horne was placed in the foyer of the *Telegram* building by the newspapers he had founded. The inscription read in part: "For fifty years he strove daily to hold up a mirror, not only for the news of his community, but for the conscience of its citizens. His has been a life of unselfish effort and dedication to the best for his church, his profession, his town, state, and nation." He was buried in Pineview Cemetery, Rocky Mount.

References:

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William S. Powell, *North Carolina Lives* ^[15] (1962).

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Additional Resources:

Preliminary Inventory of the Joshua Lawrence Horne Papers, 1917-1974, Duke University:
<http://library.duke.edu/rubenstein/findingaids/hornejoshual/> ^[16].

D. Hiden Ramsey Papers, 1877-1966 (collection no. 03805). The Southern Historical Collection. Louis Round Wilson Special Collections Library. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
<http://www.lib.unc.edu/mss/inv/r/Ramsey,D.Hiden.html> ^[17] (accessed June 28, 2013).

"Photograph, Accession #: [H.1971.76.1](#) ^[18]." 1971. North Carolina Museum of History.

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