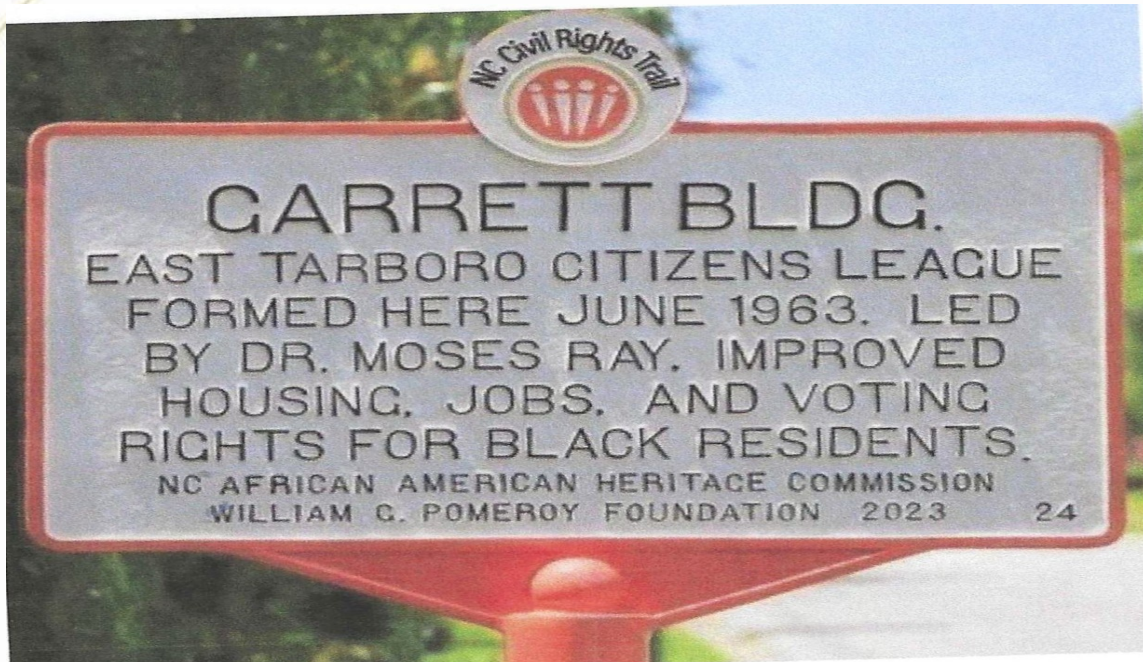


TRAILBLAZER AWARD

The East Tarboro Citizens League



The East Tarboro Citizen League formed in 1963 was a bold and calculated effort on the part of black citizens to establish an organization to be an advocate and a voice for its the citizenry. A group of black citizens met in the office of Edgecombe Credit Union to form the East Tarboro Citizens League in June 1963. Tarboro dentist Dr. Moses Ray was the first and only president for the East Tarboro Citizens League, which grew from twenty founding members to more than 125 active members.

The goal of the East Tarboro Citizens League was to organize Tarboro's black population to become effective in the electoral politics, job market, housing, and higher education. The East Tarboro Citizens League facilitated black voters' registration, which increased from 400 in 1963 to over 2,000 in 1977 and was responsible for electing two blacks to the Tarboro Town Council, including Dr. Moses Ray who was first elected in 1965.

In 1977, North Carolina General Assembly cited the activities of the East Tarboro Citizens League that promoted more active participation of its black citizens in the political life of the community; developed better housing, education, job opportunities; and upgraded streets, sewage facilities, and other public services in the east Tarboro area. The East Tarboro Citizens League secured the appointment of the first black to the Tarboro Housing Authority in 1967. The League spearheaded the establishment of United Manor Court (Panola Heights Housing Development Corporation) in 1970 for affordable housing for citizens of east Tarboro. Also, the East Tarboro Citizens League successful-