

in Crossnore, something as enduring as the river rock in its buildings, shaped to roundness and beauty by the great persistence of time and nature.

A little town of large impression



Soaked in the history of the Crossnore School and Dr. Mary Martin Sloop's "miracle work" with the families and children of the mountains — begun

before area roads and electricity — the town of Crossnore immediately lifts any modern-day visitor into a spirit of community and into the freshening air of creativity. Not to be missed, on any day trip to the town:



Crossnore Weavers: A Working Museum. A rock cottage of looms, crafts and fine art where community women have woven pieces that have warmed local children and heads of state. The weaving continues as it has for decades in a room that catches sunlight and imagination. The Fine Arts Gallery upstairs benefits the children's programs.

A Ben Long Fresco in E. H. Sloop Chapel: The ancient art of the fresco, this time embodying a biblical passage which begins, "Suffer the little children to come unto me and forbid them not." Children from the school and from master fresco painter Ben Long's own family served as models for this illumination.



Blair Fraley Sale Store: The ultimate second-hand store with oodles of garments, basically priced like no other place and for good reason. As from the days of Mary Martin Sloop, proceeds go toward the running of the school on the hill.



Well-tended paths: Worthy of stroll, nature study and/or pure enjoyment and a product of CCE work. For a map, ask at the coffee shop, Miracle Grounds.



Crossnore Presbyterian Church: On the National Register of Historic Places and open for visiting. An architectural treasure with Linville-style barkwood components and unforgettable stonework.

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SMALL TOWN
REVITALIZATION PROGRAM

NORTH CAROLINA

CROSSNORE

A HERITAGE OF HELPING OTHERS
brought to life.

Established
1883

CROSSNORE
at a Glance

Population (July, 2009):
275
(+ 13.6% since 2000)

Median Age:
33.5 years

Median Household
Income (2008):
\$30,807
(Up from \$24,688 in 2000)

Median House/Condo
Value (2008):
\$123,458
(Up from \$73,000 in 2000)

Cost of Living Index (Dec. 2009):
82.1
(U.S. average is 100)

Zip Code: **28616**



"It only takes a handful of people," says Ann Baker, a Crossnore area resident who's been involved with Crossnore Community Enhancement (CCE) since it began in 1999. And, in a town taking up less than a half square mile, the work of a "handful" has shaped a place of remarkable dimension, well beyond its small imprint on a map of the North Carolina mountains.

By working in partnership with the town council, the Crossnore School, the volunteer fire



Spirited on by Rachel Deal (right), a Crossnorean work party sallies forth.

department, churches and other groups, CCE has used HandMade's model for community building to turn calamity into cause, heritage into hope, and a deep spirit of helping others into a continuing way of life.

The year CCE was formed, the town's primary economic engine, Sloop Hospital, closed for business.

"We were faced with a dilapidating 'white elephant' of a building and our once thriving community showed signs of sadly loosing its vitality," Ann recalls. "But change brought about other things too. Growth for the children's home, Crossnore School. Placement of the Crossnore Weaving Room on the National Register of Historic Places. The addition of a Ben Long fresco in the Sloop Chapel. Restoration of a stone building on Main Street that's now a coffee shop. In other words, lots of good reasons for tourists to be interested in what's happening here."

Place of many virtues

Good reasons, too, for Rachel Deal, niece of Crossnore School founder Mary Martin Sloop and an original CCE team member, to "sing to the rooftops" the virtues and

goals of her small town, which she frequently does as the town's ambassador to Raleigh. "We are proud of our town and how it serves the needs of so many different people, from our local community, to children in need, to tourists and summer residents."

With innovative planning, Crossnore School purchased the abandoned hospital and restored its original stone structure, long since hidden by modern additions. After extensive area flooding in 2004, CCE gained a hurricane recovery grant from the NC Rural Center, using those funds to work with the town's council in the repair of water lines, to remodel



The original Crossnore Hospital building, uncovered and restored to new uses.

Crossnore's Meeting House building, and to install distinctive local stone curbing.

Not far from a restored stone fountain at the center of town, some 2,000 folks will gather on the next Fourth of July to honor our nation's independence with fire-works and good times. By then, even more



Accomplishments:
Crossnore renewal since 1999

Building renovations:

A remodeling of the Meeting House, including new hardwood floors and a large side porch for jams and events

A CCE partnership with Crossnore School in restoring the old Sloop Hospital to its original look

Public areas and facilities:

Greening of the town center

A memorial sidewalk and memorial garden

A walking trail, from the town park to the elementary school, an adoption of a Trail Master Plan

Rebuilding of the creek bridge for walking

Fixing high water drainage issues

Replacing asphalt curbs with local stone curbs

Repair of the town center water fountain

Town signs with with stone bases and lighting

Computer and internet for the Town Hall

Exhibition cases and new window treatments for the Meeting House

Securing an \$800,000 grant for water and

sewage treatment facilities through CCE's relationship with the Rural Center.

Volunteer time and jobs created:

More than 9,000 volunteer hours put toward CCE efforts and 35 jobs created.

New businesses:

Six new businesses in town, including Miracle Grounds Coffee Shop on Main Street.

Investments:

In private funding, \$2,917, 815; in public money, \$1,765.

For further information:

townofcrossnore@charterinternet.com



Legend has it: "Drink from the Town Fountain, and you will always return to Crossnore."

creek and forest walk, another CCE project, will be in place, enhanced with step and bridge work as it slices up the hill past lone stone chimneys toward the historic rock beauty of the Crossnore Presbyterian Church.

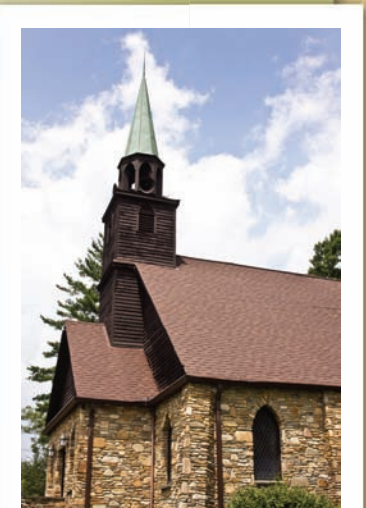
A handful of folks

From signs to walking trails to benches to well-tended landscapes, Crossnore's CCE continues its "handful of folks" work, empowered by many, many partnerships along the way and by the guidance and useful grants that HandMade helps steward.

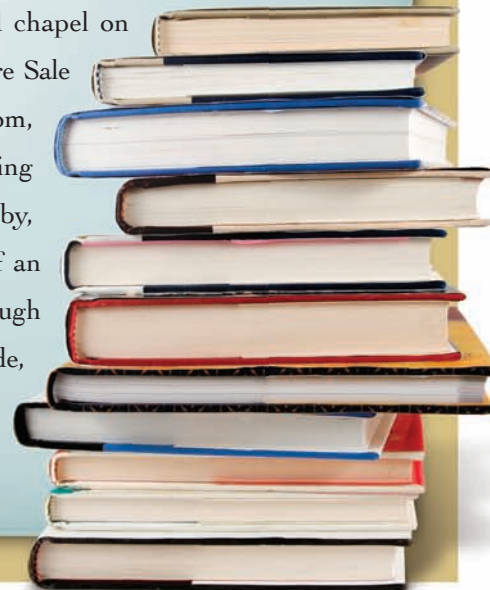
As Ann Baker says, "We see

Crossnore as a model of a resourceful small town that has neither 'given up' due to economic disaster nor 'sold out' to developers. Instead, it's taken charge to accomplish the ideals of HandMade's Small Town Revitalization Program — to provide sustainable economic development, social justice and environmental stewardship."

Standing at the center of town, with the school and chapel on the hill, the Crossnore Sale Store, Weaving Room, new hospital building and town hall all nearby, with the prospect of an encircling trail through forest, bog and hillside, it's easy to feel— something's going on



The Crossnore School's E.H. Sloop Chapel



"Crossnore's always been a town with a special story—we just keep adding to it."

— Jesse Smith, Dr. E. H. Sloop's great nephew, a blues and jazz guitar player who hosts and performs at the Meeting House twice a month for the Crossnore Jam, and a co-chair (with Ann Baker) of CCE.