

PAUL GREEN FOUNDATION

NEWS SPRING/SUMMER – 2020



The arts we've lost this spring & summer to Covid-19!

As you can imagine, not a whole lot is going on at the Paul Green Foundation so we've sent you no **NEWS!** We *do* have some exciting NEWS for the Fall issue, but it may even turn out to be Fall/Winter at the rate Covid-19 is endangering North Carolina. We all need to stay safe!

So, we thought that since *The Lost Colony* didn't get to be performed this summer because of the virus, we'd tell you a few things about its beginnings. We can start with Paul Green himself, on the audio clip attached telling about a time when he approached Hallie Flanagan, director of the Federal Theatre Project, to see if she could help him with actors and funds to secure the initial production, in 1937, of *The Lost Colony*.

You might want to stop reading now and listen to the attached clip of Paul Green's voice, and then come back to read further.



Here's Hallie Flanagan on CBS Radio for the Federal Theatre of the Air in 1936. Her vision for the Project was to bring, COAST to COAST, cutting-edge, high-quality theatre to the great majority of the American public who had never witnessed it. During post-Depression times the project supported struggling artists with subsidized funds, and spread well-crafted, affordable theatre across the nation. And Hallie and Mrs. Roosevelt made sure it would include *The Lost Colony*!

In the voice clip, Paul Green tells us that Eleanor Roosevelt was so enamored with the production that she came to Roanoke Island and stayed for two or three weeks while they rehearsed. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, from inside his car pulled up behind the back row of seats, saw a performance of *The Lost Colony* on August 18, 1937, the occasion of the 350th Anniversary of the birth of Virginia Dare, the first English child to be born in the New World.



Eleanor Roosevelt helped Paul Green on another occasion. In 1960 Green was raising funds for Harnett County Lumbee Indian high school students who were not allowed to go to white high schools and he enlisted Mrs. Roosevelt to help, which she did with financial and influential support. And for the next year, Paul Green and many others set about getting the laws changed so the Indian high school students could go to the white schools in their area and not travel the 72 mile round trip to the Eastern Carolina Institute for Indian Children in Clinton. Of course, the three school systems would cease to exist all together, during the 60s, as integration spread widely across the state.

Now one more story about Paul Green and *The Lost Colony*. This is right for the telling in these times, as we acknowledge Black Lives Matter. Paul was to give a talk before a production of *The Lost Colony*. He came up on the stage, but he didn't speak he just stood there looking at the audience. Time passed and still he did not speak. Folks back stage were getting very concerned – had he forgotten his talk? Then finally Green spoke up sternly: **“I hope I live long enough to see that rope stretched down the middle aisle to separate the black and white sections, removed for good!”** And he walked off the stage!

