

***“Tom, Scott & Zelda:
Following In Their Footsteps”***

by Bruce E. Johnson

A Thomas Wolfe Memorial Literary Award Recipient

Three iconic literary figures of the Roaring Twenties, all with a North Carolina legacy:

Thomas Wolfe, author of *Look Homeward, Angel*.

F. Scott Fitzgerald, author of *The Great Gatsby*.

Zelda Sayre Fitzgerald, artist and author of *Save Me the Waltz*.

One was born and is buried here. One nearly died here. One did die here.

While it’s not a story with a happy ending, their three entangled and tragic lives are a part of this area’s history. It is a story author Bruce Johnson felt “needed to be explored, understood, and sometimes corrected, for along the way it enables us to appreciate how their time here influenced each of their lives.”

Johnson has written a biographical walking and driving guide covering the time Thomas Wolfe, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and Zelda Sayre Fitzgerald spent in Asheville, Hendersonville, Tryon, and Lake Lure from the 1920s into the 1940s. It also highlights and explores the architectural landmarks they frequented: the historic Grove Park Inn, the Thomas Wolfe home, Asheville’s Pack Square and Riverside Cemetery, as well as Hendersonville’s famed marble angel, plus the towns of Tryon and Lake Lure, which the three iconic and tragic authors visited.

“As a former English teacher, I was already familiar with Thomas Wolfe and F. Scott Fitzgerald when I moved to Asheville in 1988,” Johnson explained. “I was then writing books and magazine articles about the American Arts and Crafts movement and the 1913 Grove Park Inn, which had been designed and furnished in the Arts and Crafts style.

“As I did, I began collecting stories about F. Scott Fitzgerald’s time spent in rooms 441 and 443 from 1935 until 1937, as well as his adventures in Hendersonville, Tryon, and Lake Lure. Along

the way I discovered that Zelda Sayre Fitzgerald had also lived here for several years of her tragic life, and that both had a connection with Asheville's famous son Thomas Wolfe.

“When I couldn't find a book that detailed where they had each stayed and what had happened to them here, I took some wise advice and wrote the book I always wanted to read.”

The newly-released softcover book is 172 pages long and includes 68 photographs, three timelines, and two driving maps. It is available at local bookstores and at the website BruceJohnsonBooks.com.
