

MICHAEL von GRAFFENRIED

OUR TOWN - AN INSIDE LOOK AT THE UNITED STATES TODAY



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When he sailed to North Carolina in 1710 with a group of German and Swiss immigrants, did Christoph von Graffenried ever imagine that, almost three hundred years later, one of his descendants from Switzerland would head for the same destination, travelling back to the settlement the Baron had founded on the banks of the Neuse and Trent rivers? This is precisely what photographer Michael von Graffenried, born in "old" Bern, capital of Switzerland, did.

Under the impulse of *Swiss Roots*, a programme of the organisation *Presence Switzerland*, which aims to help Americans reconnect with their Swiss origins, Michael von Graffenried decided to discover New Bern. The award winning photographer, who has settled in Paris, France, has an undying curiosity about the citizens of the world. His passion for photography has produced more than 25 books and has taken him all around the world, from Europe to Sudan, Russia, Algeria and Asia. Although he has been in countries plagued by war and conflicts, he says that the most interesting stories are those of everyday life. He knew about New Bern, and saw in the project the opportunity to see for himself an example of everyday life in today's America.

And so, the photographer went back and forth for one year. From the Country Club to the poorest neighbourhoods, from the typical High School prom to several of many Sunday services, the celebration of New Bern men based in Iraq to Muslim refugees, he has tried to capture with his panoramic pictures the reality of this American town. A reality that is, inevitably, colourful, many-sided and complex. His images will be shown at the Bank of Arts between October 20-28.

Opening Reception Friday, October 20 at 5:30PM

Craven Arts Council & Gallery

Bank of Arts - 317 Middle Street, New Bern, North Carolina

Hours: Thursday - Saturday from 10AM to 6PM

Telephone: 252.638.2577



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