

Mecklenburg Historical Association Docents

Promoting Local History through Education and Research



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- News of upcoming events at area historic sites.

George Washington is Coming to Town!



His Excellency, The President of the United States, George Washington, will be visiting in Charlotte on February 20 and 21, 2014. "President Washington will be visiting Charlotte to participate in the Sons of the American Revolution annual President's Day Community Dinner on Thursday, February 20th," said Tom Phlegar, chapter treasurer and event coordinator. "This past year we had President Thomas Jefferson visit us and had a crowd of 170 people. This year we will be able to accommodate the first 300 people who submit their paid reservations."

This dinner will be held at the Hilton Charlotte Executive Park Hotel, 5624 Westpark Drive, in South Charlotte, starting at 6 pm. Tickets are \$26 per person. To reserve a place, mail your check made out to the SAR for \$26.00 per person, with your name and address, to

Tom Phlegar
7324 Marlbrook Drive
Charlotte, NC 28212-4770

Professional historical actor Kevin Grantz will portray Mr. Washington and will be discussing the fight for Independency, the Revolutionary War, his patriotic peers and his presidency. You are encouraged to attend in 18th or 19th Century dress, fancy or common, and discuss events of the day with the President. As you may be aware, President Washington visited Charlotte during his first term in office on May 28, 1791. You may want to ask him what he thinks of our little village and our Declaration of Independence.

The night's festivities will include a fully-catered dinner, a formal presentation by President Washington, and an opportunity for guests to ask him questions and pose for photos following the night's events. The event is open to the public and everybody is invited to attend.

For additional information contact Tom Phlegar at Btphlegar@aol.com or Jay Joyce at jay@mecklenburgsar.org

On Friday, February 21 President Washington will have tea with citizens of Charlotte at the home of Hezekiah Alexander. This will be at noon in the museum building at a cost of \$25.00. Preregistration required, see The History Calendar, below.

*Book Review****North Carolina Musicians: Photographs and Conversations*****Daniel Coston with forward by Meg Freeman Whalen****(Jefferson, NC & London: McFarland & Co., Inc., 2013)****North Carolina
Musicians**

PHOTOGRAPHS and CONVERSATIONS

**DANIEL COSTON**

Foreword by MEG FREEMAN WHALEN

He's always there. Go to almost any type of music event anywhere within driving distance of Charlotte and Daniel Coston will be shooting photos.

Musicians love his deep knowledge of Southern music traditions – and his uncanny ability to zoom in on rising stars who are reshaping music today.

All of that makes Daniel Coston's new book, *North Carolina Musicians*, a lively historical document of Carolina culture in our lifetimes. From the region's grassroots recording studios, to the stages of nightclubs and bluegrass festivals, to quiet moments at musicians' homes, Daniel gives glimpses of the creativity that has made this corner of the South famous.

A forward by Meg Freeman Whelan, longtime writer for the Charlotte Symphony and now UNCC, brings us up to speed on North Carolina's deep and varied musical history. Asheville's Mountain Dance and Folk Festival turned young Pete Seeger on to the banjo and set the template for outdoor events worldwide. Charlotte's WBT radio became a magnet for top performers who forged the sound that became bluegrass, including Bill Monroe and homegrown guitar star Arthur Smith. Durham Dollar Store proprietor J.B. Long arranged recording sessions that made Sonny Terry and Blind Boy Fuller into lasting legends of the blues.

Then Daniel Coston takes the book's reins and we're off! Visit backstage with National Heritage Award winner Doc Watson. Hang out at the Winston Salem studio of indy-rock pioneer Mitch Easter – a house where every room is wired for sound. Spend time with the WBT Briarhoppers stringband, who Daniel credits for kindling his love of music during a visit to his 5th grade class. Get to know the circle of players in the Chapel Hill area – alt-country singers Tift Merritt and Caitlin Cary, newgrass band Chatham County Line and more – who have brought Southern music traditions to a new generation of audiences nationwide.

In fact, that bridging / reinventing of roots-based music for today's ears is perhaps the most important underlying theme of Daniel Coston's book. He gives an up-close look at the Avett Brothers from Concord, who have become unlikely arena-rock superstars in the past decade, playing banjos and acoustic guitars with a punk-rock intensity. And he devotes a place of honor to Rhiannon Giddens of Greensboro and her Carolina Chocolate Drops band, who have re-connected young African Americans with an almost lost heritage of stringband virtuosity, playing to capacity audiences of every race at major venues across the U.S. and Europe.

Hard to believe, if you grew up with rock or disco or hip-hop, but it's now cool on America's college campuses to pick a banjo or strum a ukulele or sing harmony.

That national trend has deep roots in North Carolina. And you can read about it and see the photos in *North Carolina Musicians* – because Daniel Coston was there.

Tom Hanchett, Levine Museum of the New South

From the Chairman

The Queen Has Moved....

But not very far. Our Docent Chairman, Barbara Jackson has recently moved to Sun City in the Indian Land area of York County, South Carolina. Her new address and phone number are in our current roster (if you've not received one, contact Valerie Jones); her cell phone number and email address remain the same. As this issue of the Dandelion went to press she had just reestablished telephone and computer service, and was in the midst of unpacking and tending to all the chores involved with moving. She sends greeting from the Palmetto State, and reports she is pleased with her new neighbors and her new home, along with this message:

"Best wishes to each docent for a healthy joyous 2014. I look forward to seeing you at the January and February monthly meetings. I know you are aware of our Education Seminar meetings scheduled by Audrey and Janet for three Saturdays in February. This excellent program will enhance your knowledge of Mecklenburg History. Please plan to attend."

We're looking forward to seeing you in January, Barbara!

Ann Williams

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the March/April issue of the Dandelion is February 12th. Send your calendar listings, and we especially like to have articles about history. We always appreciate book reviews (Thank You, Tom). If you've read something interesting, do write one for us. Send items to Ann and Jim Williams at mhadandelion@mindspring.com.

MHA Docent Programs

Both meetings will be held in the Fellowship Hall of Sugaw Creek Presbyterian Church. Refreshments at 9:30, business meeting at 10, and program at 11. Visitors are welcome.

Tuesday, January 7, 2014 Rosedale: From Private Home to Historic Site



Rosedale before Restoration

In the early 1980s Mary Louise Davidson, along with her sister Alice Abel, decided it was time to sell their cherished family home. Mary Louise lived there alone. The house was badly in need of repair, the neighborhood had become commercial, and she was ready for a smaller, simpler home. Ann Glover will talk about her experiences with Mary Louise, the extensive repairs to stabilize the building, what was done to take it back to its 1815 appearance, and how funds were raised to complete the project. It was not an easy journey. We'll learn about pitfalls and problems – the sisters had strong feelings about their home, and were not always a delight to work with. She'll also tell us about wonderful discoveries – perhaps walls can talk after all – including how we learned when Rosedale was built and found the details of its original portico design.

Ann Glover is a member of the chapter of Colonial Dames that, along with Historic Preservation of North Carolina, secured the purchase of Rosedale. The Colonial Dames also funded Rosedale's restoration and build a board to manage the site. She worked closely with Mary Louise Davidson and was deeply involved in the entire process. Ann, who had previously had site management experience as the director of Wing Haven, became Rosedale's first site director. She has also served as co-president of Rosedale's board of directors.



Rosedale Today

Tuesday, February 4, 2014
Firefighting in Early Mecklenburg

Tom Link will present a program on the history of Mecklenburg's fire companies and the fine gentlemen who manned them. We'll hear about the early pumper engines – horse drawn and supplied by residents' wells – and how little could be done in the early 1800s when fire broke out. He'll tell about black members of fire companies, both slave and free. Nearly all Charlotte's firemen were black during the civil war when few able-bodied white men remained at home. As a genealogist Tom has learned that firefighting runs in families, some of them having both white and black kin. As he weaves together family history and community service he tells a fascinating story.

Tom Link is Battalion Chief of the Charlotte Fire Department's Battalion 2. His research into Mecklenburg's early fire companies is exhaustive and scholarly. He has done extensive genealogical research on his family, and related Mecklenburg families. His passion and enthusiasm for his findings in both areas will be obvious.

Docent Board Retreat

The MHA Docent Board will hold its annual retreat on Monday and Tuesday, January 20th and 21st. If you have a committee report or anything else to present to the board please contact Barbara Jackson. She'll convey your information to the board, or schedule you on the agenda to appear in person. One of the board's projects is to set the budget for the year. Address budget requests to Valerie Jones, or if you wish, ask to be put on the agenda to appear in person. A summary of the retreat's accomplishments will be presented at the February meeting and in the next issue of the Dandelion.

Hospitality

At each of our meetings there is a basket on the refreshment table for donations to our hospitality fund. Money collected pays for coffee, tea, and paper products used for refreshments, as well as cards and postage for members' birthdays and other remembrances. The board suggests a \$5 donation per member per year should cover these costs. You may contribute whatever and whenever you wish, however for most of us a once-a-year donation is easier to remember.



MHA Dues for 2014

The time has come to pay your Mecklenburg Historical Association Dues for 2014; our fiscal year runs from Jan 1 to Dec 31. This one payment entitles you to be a member of MHA as well as an MHA Docent. If you have already paid, we thank you for paying early. Otherwise select a membership level from the list below.

If you are an MHA member, or would like to become one, and NOT an MHA docent, print out the form below (or cut out the one from the MHA newsletter), make your check payable to *Mecklenburg Historical Association*, and send it to:

Mecklenburg Historical Association
P. O. Box 35032
Charlotte, NC 28235

If you are an MHA Docent member, or would like to become one, pay your dues directly to the docent treasurer who will remit them to the treasurer of MHA, our parent organization. Do not send your dues to the P.O. Box above, as that makes our record keeping of dues-paying docents difficult to maintain. Make your check payable to the *MHA Docents* and give your check with the form below to Valerie Jones at one of our meetings, or mail them to her at:

4700 Coronado Drive
Charlotte, NC 28212

Levels of MHA Membership

	<u>Single</u>	<u>Couple</u>
General	\$30.00	\$50.00
Senior (60+)	\$15.00	\$25.00
Patron	\$60.00	\$100.00
Life (single payment)	\$300.00	\$500.00
Student	free	n/a

MHA Membership Form

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Email Address _____

Level of Membership _____

Please send my MHA Newsletter by: Email _____ US Mail _____ Both _____

In Memoriam

Longtime docent Helen Kinney passed away peacefully in her sleep on November 5th at the age of 95. She became a docent at the Hezekiah Alexander Homesite after retiring from Nations Bank (now Bank of America) in 1983. She liked to talk fondly about working for Hugh McColl when he was just a small fry. She was a member of Olde Mecklenburg Genealogical Society, DAR, and a lifetime member of MHA. She was a descendent of Hezekiah Alexander, and considered most of Mecklenburg's early residents as kinfolk. She loved local history and sharing her extensive knowledge of it with others. She participated with us in many of our docent projects and events, and was a docent at the Hugh Torance House and Store, another site she loved. In the late 1990s macular degeneration made it impossible for her to continue giving tours and attend many of our meetings, but she kept up with us through the newsletter and visits and phone calls from fellow docents.

Helen is survived by her son Sandy, two grandsons, and several nieces, nephews, and cousins. We will miss Helen. She was a joy to be with, especially when talking about our beloved history.

History Lecture Series

Beyond the Wagon Road

In February the MHA Docents will hold their biennial series of history lectures. Audrey Mellichamp and Janet Dyer have arranged a fine lineup of topics and presenters; see the flyer and registration slip below for details. In the past this series has been popular with both longtime residents and especially with newcomers in our area. It is one of the ways we carry out our mission of presenting regional history to the community. Registration is now under way, and you must send your check and registration form by January 31st to reserve your space. Do include your email address and phone number so we can contact you if there is a last minute cancellation due to weather, as has happened in the past. All three lectures will be held at the Levine Museum of the New South, and the museum invites all attendees to tour the museum after any of the lectures at no additional charge. You may park for free at the 7th Street Station garage; the museum will validate your parking ticket. Saturday validations are good for the entire day.

Please share this information with anyone else who might be interested.

Beyond the Wagon Road

A series of lectures offered by
the Mecklenburg Historical Association Docents
in partnership with the
Levine Museum of the New South

February 8, 2014

Agness Caldwell, Enslaved Woman of the Rosedale Plantation:
My life before and after the Civil War
Bridget Strong, Historic Rosedale interpreter

Civil War Charlotte: Last Capital of the Confederacy
Michael C. Hardy, historian and author

February 15, 2014

Native Plants of Colonial Times:
From the wilds of Carolina to the gardens of the world
Dr. T. L. Mellichamp, Director of UNC Charlotte Botanical Gardens

André Michaux Live: French botanist, explorer, and diplomat
Charlie Williams, retired librarian

February 22, 2014

Seven Jewels in the Crown of Queen Charlotte:
The influence of Presbyterianism on early Mecklenburg County
Dr. John Kuykendall, President Emeritus, Davidson College

The Idea of the New South: 100 Years Ago and Today
Dr. Tom Hanchett, Levine Museum of the New South staff historian

Registration fee: \$15.00 includes all 3 days of lectures within the series.

To register please complete this registration form by January 31, 2014.

Please make check payable to MHA Docents. Mail check and registration form to:
MHA, P.O. Box 35032, Charlotte, NC 28235

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email: _____

Telephone (in case of cancellation due to weather): _____

For more information, email jdyer399@gmail.com

Lectures will be held at the Levine Museum of the New South from 9:30am-12pm.

Doors open at 9am for check-in.

The History Calendar

Admission charged at all events unless otherwise noted.
Check the Charlotte Regional History Consortium website for other events.
<http://www.charlotteregionalhistory.org>

Historic Rosedale

3427 N. Tryon Street, Charlotte, NC, 704 335 0325, <http://www.historicrosedale.org>

Baxter's Birthday Bash, Tuesday, February 11, 5:30 to 7 pm

Drop by after work and join the plantation staff as we toast one of Rosedale's most colorful residents, Robert Baxter Caldwell (1838-1919) on the 176th anniversary of his birth. Enjoy beer and refreshments as you listen to "Baxter stories" in our warm and inviting English basement kitchen graced with two enormous open-hearth fireplaces and hand-made brick pavers.

Unheard Voices: Nat Caldwell, Saturdays, February 15 and 22 at 1:30 and 3 pm

Learn about life on a backcountry antebellum plantation through the eyes of its enslaved blacksmith, Nat Caldwell. The third in Rosedale's *Unheard Voices* series, Nat will tell of his life and that of his wife and children who live and work in the "big house."

Latta Plantation

5225 Sample Road, Huntersville, NC, 704 875 2312, <http://www.lattaplantation.org>

Civil War Winter Quarters and Homefront, Saturday, January 4 from 10 am to 4 pm and Sunday, January 5 from 1 to 4 pm.

See how Civil War soldiers survived brutal winters encamped with the armies and how families survived at home. Learn about Civil War Mourning customs in the house and see a Mathew Brady Portrait collection.

WWII Living History, Saturday, February 1 from 10 am to 4 pm and Sunday, February 2 from 1 to 4 pm.

Experience the atmosphere of a Southern England military base in 1944 as the soldiers are preparing for D-day, the invasion of France on June 6.

Sweetheart Tours, Saturday, February 15, on the hour from 11 am to 4 pm and Sunday, February 16 on the hour from 2 pm to 4 pm.

Take a special valentine's tour of the plantation house. Learn about 19th century courting customs and English Country dancing and hear sweetheart stories about the Latta girls.

Underground Railroad Adventure, Saturday February 22 from 10 am to 4 pm.

Learn about the characters, dangers, and triumphs of an escaped slave on the underground railroad as you go on a scavenger hunt around the plantation to find the supplies, skills, and knowledge you would need to successfully escape to freedom.

The Charlotte Museum of History

3500 Shamrock Drive, Charlotte, NC, 704 568 1774, <http://www.charlottemuseum.org>

Twelfth Night, Saturday, January 4 from 6 to 7:30 pm

Twelfth Night was the end of the Christmas season for the Backcountry settlers and celebrated with great revelry. Join with the Backcountry folk as they sing carols around the bonfires, toast the fruit trees, and play colonial games. Learn about the history of Twelfth Night and take a candlelight tour of the house. Enjoy cider and Twelfth Night cake in the log kitchen.

The Charlotte Museum of History is now open every Thursday, Friday, and Saturday from 1 to 5 pm.

Living History Saturdays, January 11 and February 8 from 1 to 5 pm.

Join the Piedmont backcountry folk as they go about their daily activities.

History Talks Lecture Series, Saturday, February 15 at 1 pm.

Author John Beakes will discuss his recently published book, "*Light Horse Harry Lee*" in the War for Independence. Beakes will sign copies of his book following his presentation. Copies are available in the museum store.

Colonial Tea with George Washington, Saturday, February 21 at noon.

Join us for a very special tea with President George Washington. As you enjoy delicious savory and sweet treats, President Washington will discuss his life and times. \$25 admission, preregistration required. Email info@charlottemuseum.org with name, address, and number of tickets you would like to reserve. We will contact you regarding payment.

President James K. Polk State Historic Site

12031 Lancaster Hwy., Pineville, NC, 704 889 7145

www.polk.nchistoricsites.org

Historic Floor Cloth Workshop, Saturday, January 18 at 10 am.

Join volunteer Olga Simms as she leads this fascinating workshop on period floor cloths. You will apply traditional floor cloth techniques to create your own placemat. Pre-registration is required. Registration fee is \$10.00 and the workshop runs from 10am-4pm. Please register by January 15th, 2014. The workshop is limited to 10 participants, ages 12 & up. Light refreshments will be provided. Please wear old clothing and bring your own paintbrushes and lunch. Ready, set, paint!

Matthews Heritage Museum

232 North Trade St., Matthews, 704-708-4996, www.matthewsheritagemuseum.org

From the Heart, a new exhibit, opens January 16.

Whether it is "puppy love" or true romance, Valentine's Day helps individuals express their heart's emotions. A collection of antique valentines from the 1920s will be on display thru the middle of March. St. Valentine's Day began as a liturgical celebration for the saint who was imprisoned for performing weddings for soldiers who were forbidden to marry and for ministering to Christians who were persecuted under the Roman Empire. During the time of Geoffrey Chaucer the day became associated with romantic love. In 18th-century England it evolved into an occasion in which lovers expressed their love for each other by presenting flowers, offering candies, and sending greeting cards known as "*valentines*". Today that tradition continues.

Rural Hill

4431 Neck Road, Huntersville, NC, 704 875 3113, <http://www.ruralhill.net>

First Footin' and Hogmanay, Wednesday, January 1 at 11 am, Free.

First Footin', also known as walking the bounds or "beating" the bounds is the traditional walk in the woods and fields around the boundaries of Rural Hill. Dress appropriate to the weather and wear sturdy shoes or boots. Hogmanay, or Scottish New Year is a celebration of the New Year by sharing stone soup with your neighbors. The event is free but bring some vegetables to add to the soup or bring bread or desert.

Schiele Museum

1500 E. Garrison Blvd., Gastonia, N.C. 704 866 6900 <https://www.schielemuseum.org>

Kamp Kephart '14

Eight separate one-day workshops exploring the Golden Age of Camping (1880's-1920's). This was a time when camping meant sleeping under canvas and cooking over an open fire. These courses are offered within that context. Participants will spend the day in a recreated campsite of the 1920s. Here in the woodsmoke, surrounded by the outdoor gear of a by-gone day, these traditional skills may be practiced in their proper setting.

- The Hafted Hatchet, Saturday February 22 from 9 am to 4 pm.
- Two Birch Bark Knife Sheaths, Sunday, February 23 from 9 am to 4 pm.
- Plus six more throughout the winter and spring.

Contact Steve Watts at the Schiele to make your reservations. See web site and phone number above.

Gaston County Museum

131 West Main Street Dallas, NC. (704)922-7681, #2 www.gastoncountymuseum.org

PREschool PREview Programs, from 10 to 11 am each day, preschoolers ages 1 to 4.

- Folktales, Saturday, January 11. Preschoolers will learn how to tell a great story while hearing some classic Folktales from the past.
- Victorian Valentines, Saturday, February 8. Learn about the origins of the holiday and how people in the 1800s celebrated Valentine's Day.

Dallas, North Carolina: A Brief History, Saturday, January 11 at 1 pm free.

Dallas, the original Gaston County seat for over sixty years, is a quaint small town with a fascinating past. Local historian Kitty Thornburg Heller will discuss her new book *Dallas North Carolina: A Brief History* and provide a glimpse into the lives of those who shaped the county and called Dallas home. A book signing will follow the lecture.

The Legacy of Slavery, Saturday, February 8 at 1 pm, free.

Slavery had a profound effect on the development of the United States. Modern understandings and debates on equality, personal rights, and government authority were shaped during the struggle over this "peculiar institution." In this program, we will examine the legacy of slavery and how that legacy has changed over the course of US history.

Historic Brattonsville

1444 Brattonsville Rd., McConnells, SC, 803 684 2327

<http://www.chmuseums.org/brattonsville>

Hog Butchering Day, Saturday, January 11 from 10 am to 4 pm.

Hogs were an important domestic animal for the survival of our 18th century Carolina Backwoods ancestors. Come and join costumed interpreters as they butcher and preserve the hog and utilize the byproducts as well.

By Way of the Back Door, Saturdays in February (1, 8, 15, 22) from 10 am to 4 pm.

"...in consideration of \$319.20...John S. Bratton is hereby authorized to take said Negro Adam in possession." What was life like for Adam and the other enslaved people that lived and worked at Brattonsville? Guided tours at 11 am and 2 pm will answer that question and many others about the enslaved people at Brattonsville of both the 18th and 19th centuries.

Charlotte Folk Society

Great Aunt Stella Center, 926 Elizabeth Ave., Charlotte

www.folksociety.org

Charlotte Folk Society Gathering & Jams, Great Aunt Stella Center, 926 Elizabeth Ave., Charlotte. 7:30-10:00 PM. Free; donations appreciated. Doors open 7 PM.

- Friday, January 10 – Annual Young Talent Showcase. Some of Charlotte's most accomplished young musicians perform old-time, Celtic, and bluegrass music.
- Friday, February 14 - Scott Ainslie, nationally acclaimed Blues Guitarist/Singer/Historian,

Cowpens National Battlefield

I-85 South Carolina Exit 83, follow signs, 864-461-2828

www.nps.gov/cowp

The Battle of The Cowpens, Saturday and Sunday, January 18 and 19 from 10 am to 7 pm, Free

Celebrate the 233rd anniversary of this pivotal battle of the American Revolution. There will be wreath-laying memorials, a reenactor camp, weapons and cavalry demonstrations, fife and drum concerts, battlefield walks and activities for children both days.

Kings Mountain State Park

I-85 Exit 8 in NC and follow the signs

<http://www.southcarolinaparks.com/park-finder/state-park/945.aspx>

Frontier Hunting, Trapping and Trading, Saturday, February 22 from 10 am to 4 pm.

Harvest is complete and winter has set in. Now is the time for hunting and trapping. Visit a traveling trading post that has come to the farm. Check out the fine furs on hand and haggle with the trader - just for fun. Then head out to a hunter's camp and discover what it takes to be a frontier trapper. Experience "market hunting" and learn about survival skills of the Carolina backcountry as well as food preservation techniques that early Carolina frontiersmen used.



Museum of the Waxhaws

8215 Waxhaw Hwy., Waxhaw, N. C. 704-843-1832, <http://museumofthewaxhaws.org/>

Museum of the Waxhaws Lecture Series:

Call 704-843-6048 to reserve a spot

The life of Robert E. Lee

As seen through his daughter Mildred, Presented by Nora Brooks, Sunday, January 19 at 3 pm

African Cultural Arts

Storytelling and interpretive dance with drumbeat, presented by Oneaka Mack, Sunday February 16 at 3 pm

York County Genealogical & Historical Society

P.O Box 3061 CRS, Rock Hill, SC 29732, <http://www.weblandinc.com/ycghs/member.html>

Visit USCL Native American Studies Center, 119 S. Main St., Lancaster, SC. Saturday, January 25 at 10 am.

Tour the Center which is dedicated to documenting, preserving, appreciating and studying Native American cultures and history. It has information about all the Native Americans in South Carolina – past and present plus over 1,160 pieces of Catawba Indian Pottery – the largest single collection in the world.

MHA Docents
Jim and Ann Williams
1601 South Wendover Road
Charlotte, NC 28211