

Mecklenburg Historical Association Docents

Spreading Knowledge of our History like the Down of a Thistle

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Who was John Wilkes?

"Wilkes and Liberty and Number Forty-Five"

In North Carolina we are familiar with Wilkes County and the towns of Wilkesboro and North Wilkesboro. There is also a Wilkes County in Georgia and the town of Wilkes-Barre in Pennsylvania. They were all named for John Wilkes, a British politician. But who was this man who was so important and respected that people named cities and counties after him? His worldwide fame extended from before our Revolution through the end of the century. Forty-one years after Wilkes' death the famous Shakespearian actor Junius Brutus Booth named his son John Wilkes Booth in honor of his illustrious ancestor. On a local note, the John Wilkes who built Mecklenburg Iron Works in Charlotte which later became the Confederate Navy Yard was a proud direct descendant of John Wilkes.

John Wilkes, of an undistinguished background, lived in England during the time of our revolution. His father was a rich distiller and merchant and gave his son a good education including college in Holland where John gained a respect for religious freedom and political liberty. He also developed a great love for England and a deep hatred of Scotland (they were enemies at the time). He married well but after the birth of their only child he and his wife separated. This was probably because Wilkes was a notable rake-hell known for participating in orgies with prostitutes that went on for days. He had a ready wit which stood him well in politics but also got him in a lot of trouble.

During the decade before the revolution, America was not the only place where men were seeking freedom from oppression. Notable were Pascal Paoli of the island of Corsica who sought freedom from Genoa, Prince Heraclius of the country of Georgia who fought for freedom from Turkey and Dr. Charles Lucas who argued for freedom in Ireland. These men became well known and their exploits were reported in Colonial newspapers. They were greatly admired and held up as examples in our struggle to free ourselves from the oppressive rule of the British King and Parliament. Perhaps the greatest and best known among these was John



*John Wilkes Esq.^r
Drawn from the life and etched in Aquafortis by W. D. Hogarth.*

Wilkes in England, a member of parliament who defied the King and suffered greatly for it. His exploits changed British law forever and served as a model for us in declaring out independence and in writing our constitution.

John Wilkes was known as “the ugliest man in Britain” with a prominent jaw full of badly shaped and poorly arranged teeth. He was cross-eyed and had a bad squint yet was extremely attractive to women. He said, with some truth, that if he could keep a woman’s attention for thirty minutes they forgot all about his appearance and his conquest was complete. This was an era when it was common for rich and powerful men to have a happy family life and multiple mistresses. They shared their mistresses with their friends and acknowledged and educated their multiple bastard children. In this company Wilkes stood out as a libertine and was said to work his wiles on young girls and the wives of his friends.

In 1757, at the age thirty, Wilkes went into politics, gaining a number of appointed positions from his friends – he had gambled away much of his fortune and needed the money. He ran for parliament and failed several times until he finally bought a seat by bribing influential voters – a usual method of getting elected in those days. Wilkes served in parliament when it suited him, spending much of his time in other pursuits including extensive gambling, long visits to Paris for the food and the women and, eventually, in publishing a newspaper.

Wilkes was in the minority party in parliament, the Whig Party. He took a great dislike to the Scotsman John Stuart, the Earl of Bute, and to Scotsmen in general. Bute was tutor to the Prince of Wales, and rumored to have an affair with the Prince’s mother. When George III ascended to the throne in 1760, he made Bute his prime minister.

In 1762 Lord Bute started a newspaper he called The Briton to put forward his views. Within a week Wilkes started a rival he called The North Briton. It was dedicated to attacking Bute, Scotsmen in general and the Government. It was well written, witty and full of scandalous rumors and insults. It became extremely popular and reached a circulation of 2,000 copies a week, ten times that of The Briton. Because of this, Lord Bute became so disliked that he resigned within a year and both The Briton and The North Briton ceased publication immediately. Wilkes continued to attack the Government with speeches in The House of Commons which did nothing to endear him to the King

In April 1763 the King gave a speech to parliament and Wilkes started up The North Briton again, featuring a veiled attack on the King’s Speech and on the King himself. This was Number 45 of the newspaper and that number was destined to be associated with Wilkes and Freedom for evermore. This publications was too much for the King who ordered Wilkes’ arrest. The King’s order was issued as a “General Warrant” naming “the authors, printers, and publishers, of a seditious and treasonable paper intituled ‘the North Briton, number xlv’” but giving no names. The authorities arrested forty-nine people but could not arrest Wilkes who claimed parliamentary immunity. There had long been a question about the legality of a General Warrant which accused unnamed people of crimes and this event brought it to a head.

The Court ruled that General Warrants were invalid. The forty nine men that had been arrested sued and won their liberty. The illegality of a general warrant still stands in British and America law and became a key part of our Constitution as Article Four of the Bill of Rights. The Court also ruled that Wilkes, as a member of Parliament, had immunity from arrest.

As a result of this Wilkes became a popular hero and soon “Wilkes and Liberty” was heard on both sides of the ocean. This decision marked a shift in power from the privileged to the people. Wilkes re-printed #45 which, again, did not endear him to the King.

Since parliament could not arrest one of their own members, they expelled him from the body and then issued an arrest warrant charging him with “Blasphemous Libel.” Wilkes fled to France and lived there for four years.

In 1768, Wilkes was still an outlaw but he returned to England anyway and was elected to the House of Commons as a member from Middlesex, today a part of London. He was arrested and thrown into a jail called “The Kings Bench.” Wilkes’ supporters rose up and there were riots in the streets. Troops fired on the crowds, killing some. As Wilkes sat in prison the commons ejected him. Middlesex reelected him within two weeks. The Commons ejected him again and Middlesex reelected him. This went on for four times when finally parliament refused to certify his election. Instead they seated his opponent whom Wilkes had beaten by a margin of 1,143 to 296 . Wilkes was more popular than ever and the cry of “Wilkes and Liberty and Number 45,” was heard throughout the land and across the ocean.

Wilkes had served nearly two years in prison when he was made an alderman of the City of London and released. He later became the Sheriff of London and then Lord Mayor. Finally, in 1774 he was reelected to

parliament by Middlesex and served for sixteen years. As a member of the minority in parliament he continued to attack the government and to speak in support of the revolution going on in America at that time. Leading American political figures such as John and Samuel Adams, John Hancock, and several of the Lees of Virginia endorsed him and the Wilkes name was applied to counties in North Carolina and Georgia and towns in Pennsylvania and North Carolina.

John Wilkes' constant public opposition to the arbitrary rule of King and Parliament brought American Patriots to realize that the British Government would never reform but must be opposed. Throughout the ten years before the war, during that war and in the crucial nation-forming period afterwards, Wilkes continued to inspire America and show the way forward to freedom and liberty.

Jim Williams

The Marvelous Journals of Susan Nye Hutchison

Susan Nye Hutchison was an educator who enriched the lives of many of Mecklenburg's 19th century students, and left a legacy to enrich us all – copious well-written journals. She kept several from 1815 through 1840. They were transcribed by two grandsons, and selections of the transcripts, totaling 277 typed pages, were donated to the Southern Historical Collection at UNC. These pages are said to be exact transcriptions of Susan's words. There are gaps in time between some of the journals, and other gaps may have resulted from the selection process. The very brief journal of 1815 and the typewritten transcriptions remain in the UNC archives; the rest of Susan's hand written journals are apparently lost. All quotes here are from the journals' transcriptions.

Susan Nye was born on August 13, 1790 in the tiny village of Amenia, New York which lies northeast of Poughkeepsie, almost abutting the Connecticut border. In April of 1815 at the age of twenty-five Susan left her native land and went south in pursuit of a teaching position. She sailed by sloop down the Hudson to New York where she boarded a vessel for Wilmington. The voyage began with roiling seas and seasickness, then after several days of smooth sailing and a perfectly calm afternoon, the ship rounded Cape Hatteras and encountered a horrific night-time storm: "The confusion on deck was inconceivable. The night was dark, the wind boisterous, and the dreadful shoals of Hatteras were at our side. Soundings were constant and the Captain as well as the sailors felt our danger. No object was visible on deck except when illuminated by the dreadful glares of lightening. The thunder rolled in awful peals, but it could scarcely be heard beneath the mingled mass of sound which rolled on deck, sails, riggings, and tackles were continually shifting." She feared for her life, but at last reached Wilmington, then on to Raleigh where she began her teaching career. Among her students were three sisters from Charlotte, Margaret, Sarah, and Harriett Davidson; we'll meet them again later.



The first journal ends in August, 1815; the next commences in October, 1826. During that interval Susan's sister, Amanda joined her in Raleigh where she continued to teach until, in 1823, the two of them left Raleigh for Augusta, Georgia. In 1825 Susan married Adam Hutchison, a widower with three children. This was probably not her wisest move. Adam was a cotton factor, and later a bank employee; he was constantly plagued by poor health, which was almost certainly tuberculosis. Because of health, limitless self-indulgence, and an inability to keep a job, Adam was always short of money. Susan had been teaching in Augusta before she married, and when she asked his permission to open a school again, he surprisingly said yes. Most men would not permit their well-educated wives to take a job reserved for spinsters and widows. Especially a wife like Susan with three step-children, and a two-year-old and a month-old infant of her own. She and Adam had been married two and a half years, and she had become the sole support of the family.

Adam was equally as short of temper as he was of money. In December of 1826 Susan wrote: "Today two years have elapsed since I first saw Mr. H angry, would to God that I could say it was also the last." Susan had

read letters Adam wrote to his first wife, and perused that woman's journal which included accurate birthdates of her children (which Susan promptly entered in her own journal). Susan "found that her trials were just as deep as my own"; the first Mrs. H. became a kindred spirit.

Adam's rages gradually turned abusive, although she does not share the nature of the abuse. He kept the family in poverty while "indulging himself in unnecessary expenses." "I have had a trial of temper in seeing Mr. H with a new pair of boots – we are destitute of even one blanket and I do believe Mr. H has twenty pairs of boots now on hand besides shoes in profusion." Susan received a letter stating that the church session had asked Adam "not to partake of the communion as the indignation of the people against him on account of his unjust treatment of me..." Whether his abuse of her was only monetary, or of a more sordid nature, it was obviously well known about the community.

The Hutchisons owned no slaves – the cost was too great – but they hired at least four people. There had been a number of fires in the neighborhood, and Jenny, who belonged to a neighbor, confessed to one of them. Jenny was promptly jailed; Susan and Adam visited her and reported "Jenny is as calm as it is possible for a living thing to be – She desires death." Jenny was hanged for her crime.

In 1829 Adam's older daughter Hannah died. Then Robert and Elizabeth entered their rebellious teen years and gave Susan no end of trouble – especially Elizabeth; in fact in the journal she appealed to her descendants never to become step-parents. By 1830 Susan and Adam were the parents of three sons. She took Sylvanus and Ebenezer to her parents' home in Amenia; they were only five and three, but she felt they must be protected from their father. She brought little Adam, only a month old, back to Augusta with her. Another son was born in 1832, but the marriage remained fractured, and in those days divorce was not an option. In 1833 she, Elizabeth and her younger sons, Adam and John, sailed for New York to join her parents, and Sylvanus and Ebenezer. Once more she opened a school to support herself and her children. She heard from Adam from time to time, worried constantly about his health, and in her journal reminisced about happiness in the early days of their marriage including the adventurous journey to Scotland to retrieve her step-children. She seemed to grasp onto a wisp of hope that those days could return. But it was not to be. Adam wrote to her from Savannah, St. Mary's, and other southerly places where a cure might be found. Then in 1834 she received a letter stating that he had died in Florida at a mineral springs on the St Johns River. She had regrets; if she had stayed with him, would he still be alive? She wrote that in one of his last letters he admitted that "he had been guilty of the height of injustice toward me and asking my forgiveness – May God forgive me as sincerely as I forgive him."

Susan went on to accomplish much, and record many details about 19th century life. The rest of her adventure brought her back to Raleigh, then to Salisbury and Charlotte. Watch for it in the next issue of the Dandelion.

What's in a Name

From time to time we are asked why the MHA Docent Newsletter is called the Dandelion. After the MHA Docents were formed about 1990 we began mailing out a newsletter to our members that was called "Docent News" – about as drab as a name can be. So in 1994 the docent board decided to hold a contest to select a new name. The winner was Betty Hutchinson, a retired school teacher, and a fine researcher. The announcement of the new name appeared in the Dandelion Press, Vol. 1, No. 1, along with some of her reasons for choosing that name.

Early colonists brought dandelions to America where they have flourished and scattered everywhere. The dandelion (from the French dent de lion, or tooth of the lion) is a hardy plant and adapts to any climate. Once established, they are nearly impossible to get rid of. If the plant is cut off at the surface, the roots grow deeper and stronger. The bright golden blossoms appeal to the eye, and the downy cluster of seeds is spread easily by the wind or the breath of a child. As docents our mission is to disseminate accurate history to the community, and we do tend to be a persistent bunch.

About 2003 or so Camille Smith was the Dandelion's editor. Camille was much more tech savvy than most of us at the time, and she had the bright idea of offering the Dandelion by email to anyone who wanted it. There would be no printing or postage costs, and it would give us another outlet to spread history in the community. We became Dandelion editors in 2006, and inherited about a hundred email subscribers. Today our subscribers number over 1,500. We are indeed fulfilling the promise of our namesake, and have adopted as our masthead slogan "Spreading Knowledge of our History like the Down of a Thistle."

Ann and Jim Williams

Voices From The Past
 Saturday, April 6th from 1 to 4 pm

This will be the third year for the MHA Docents to present Voices From The Past, a history tour of Elmwood/Pinewood and Settlers Cemeteries. Once again Lynn Mintzer has agreed to chair the project, and she is well on her way to bringing Charlotte another splendid production. During the afternoon about fifty appropriately garbed portrayers will stand beside a grave and assume the persona of the grave's occupant. Many of last year's participants will give encore performances, and a number of new characters will join the fold. Each person will give a five minute snippet from their character's life; this will give our visitors an opportunity to meet lots of Charlotte's early citizens.

Settlers is the older of the cemeteries. There you'll find Mrs. Henderson talking about her husband who occupies the oldest grave, and their very talented daughter. General Graham has a tale about overturned beehives that scattered hundreds of British soldiers much to their chagrin. William Strange – more clever than odd – was a Scotsman essential to the success of Charlotte's Mint.



At Elmwood, meet John Springs, III who was instrumental in creating the Charlotte and South Carolina Railroad; fittingly he loved to travel. He was buried at Settlers, then was uprooted. What did he think of that journey? Randolph Scott, Charlotte's best known film star is always a hit. Chief, the murderous elephant is good for a bit of drama. At Pinewood meet Romare Bearden's grandmother. Summers spent at her home influenced much of his art. William

Houser was only one of the accomplished folks in his large extended family; expect bragging. As we continue to celebrate Charlotte's 250th anniversary, note that every one of our portrayers represents a part of that past.

New this year is our "Take Your Best Shot" photo contest sponsored by Biggs Camera. Do you enjoy being creative with your picture taking? This is a unique venue for taking some great pictures; so bring your camera – or phone – and show us what you can do.

We have a full slate of portrayers, but we could use a few more volunteers for the day of the event. We will have an information table at Settlers, and two at Elmwood/Pinewood. We're asking people to take a shift of half the afternoon, and use the other half to visit portrayers. These volunteers will distribute programs and water, answer questions, and help visitors find their way. We'll be sure that all volunteers have the information they will need at their fingertips. If you would like to help, contact Lynn Mintzer at lynnmhad@gmail.com or 980-439-1927.

There are free parking spaces on the wider lanes inside Elmwood. All automobiles must use the Cedar Street entrance; the main entrance on 6th Street will be open to foot traffic only. The metered spaces on the streets near Settlers' are free all day Saturday. There are several parking lots on 5th and 6th Streets, and we'll have a free shuttle service between Settlers' and Elmwood/Pinewood.

The event is free, but we gladly accept donations. Put April 6 on your calendar, and pass the word along to others about Voices From The Past.

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the May through August Dandelion will be April 15. Send articles to Jim and Ann Williams at mhadandelion@mindspring.com Don't forget to include your summer activities and camps.

From the Chairman

Greetings,

I hope you have been enjoying February weather in North Carolina – spring to winter to spring and back to winter all in 24 hours! Keeps us on our toes.

We can look forward to the March program at the general Docent meeting with Annmarie Reiley-Kay from Latta Plantation. April's program will be a field trip to Loray Mill in Gastonia.

Our main event for 2019 is Voices from the Past on Saturday, April 6. Thanks to Lynn Mintzer and her committee for all their planning and coordinating and to the portrayers who are developing and finessing their presentations. There are also opportunities for Docents who are not portrayers to volunteer to help the day of the event. Please sign up. Make sure you invite a friend to our meetings and to Voices from the Past.

Janet Dyer

MHA Docent Programs

Tuesday, March 5, 2019

Reinterpreting Historic Latta Plantation

The meeting will be held in the Fellowship Hall of Sugaw Creek Presbyterian Church. Refreshments at 9:30, business meeting at 10, and program at 11. Free; visitors are always welcome.

Annmarie Reiley-Kay, Latta Plantation's new executive director, will share how her past experience with regional historic organizations is impacting her vision for the reinterpretation of a living history museum. Some of those changes include new programming initiatives, strategies for reaching new patrons, and renovations to the existing exhibit hall.

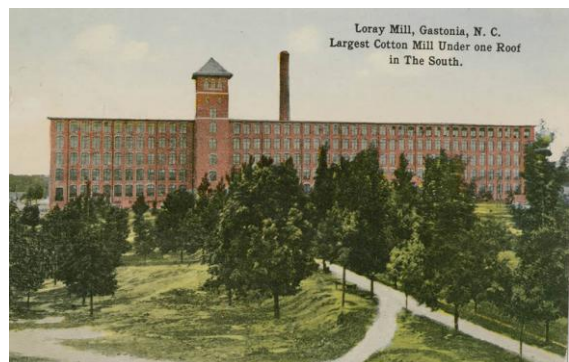
Annmarie was director of programs and exhibits at the Morris Center for Lowcountry Heritage in Ridgeland, SC. She helped open the museum in 2015 and managed the center's daily operations, programs, and exhibits. Prior to that she spent nearly six years at the Earl Scruggs Center. During her tenure she was responsible for curating the Scruggs family artifacts, assisted with daily operations, developed programs, and was responsible for temporary and traveling exhibits.

Tuesday, April 2, 2019

A Trip to Loray Mill in "Spindle City"

Our April meeting will be a field trip to Gastonia – nicknamed Spindle City – to visit Loray Mill and the Alfred C. Kessell History Center. The tour will include the history of the mill which opened in 1902, its transition from textiles to tire cording and to its current renovation as a history center and a place for businesses and residences.

Loray Mill was the site of the 1929 strike in which Ella May Wiggins was killed. Ella May was quite a character: a mill worker and balladeer who lived in an African American mill village. She supported the Textile Workers Union, and participated in the Communist sponsored strike. Two recent books have been written about her - *The Last Ballad*, a novel by Wiley Cash, and *Martyr of Loray Mill*, by Ella May's great-granddaughter, Kristina Horton. The first is a great read, although it is a novel and liberties were taken. According to a review by Danyne Powell, Horton's book is very well researched and very readable.



Docents may bring guests, and we encourage you to carpool. Arrive at the Loray Mill by 10:45 for an 11 o'clock tour. Loray Mill, 300 Firestone Street, is a large brick building with plenty of parking; it is easy to spot when you turn onto Firestone Street. From the parking lot use the brick path to the building's front entrance. Those wishing to stay for lunch may eat at the Growler located in the same building.

Directions: Google says it takes about 40 minutes from the middle of Charlotte. Take I 85 south to Gastonia. Exit on Highway 321 and go south. At Franklin St., turn right, go about a mile and turn left on Firestone Street. Loray Mills will be one block on your right.

MHA Dinner Meeting

**The Great Flood of 1916
Monday, March 18**

Trinity Presbyterian Church. Dinner is at 6:30 followed by the program at 7:15. Those not having dinner may enjoy the program at no charge. To make a reservation for dinner use the order form in your MHA Newsletter or contact Barbara Taylor at 308 Braxton Dr., Indian Trail 28079, btaylor797@aol.com or 336-404-1751.

In July of 1916, two hurricanes hit the state of North Carolina leaving a path of destruction that has never been seen in our state before or since. The first storm, a gulf hurricane, moved into our mountains where slowed for the three days of July 8 - 10 bringing heavy rain to the Piedmont and Carolina mountains. The second hurricane hit Charleston on the 15th, moved up into the mountains and by the 16th and 17th brought as much as 22 inches of rain to the same area. The combined might of these two storms destroyed every bridge on the Catawba River from the mountains to the sea plus other bridges, railroads and businesses, with a considerable loss of life. It changed North Carolina forever.

Mike Baxter had a long and successful career in the manufacturing industry. Today, in retirement, he teaches history at Central Piedmont Community College and Belmont Abbey College, specializing in local and area history. He is a very active field archeologist, specializing in the Revolutionary War period in this area. He addresses many local organizations and you may have seen him on the "Trail of History" TV series.



MHA North Branch Meeting

Now in its fifth year, the North Branch of MHA has moved the regular meeting place to the restaurant, Boatyard Eats. David Stockwell, the owner and longtime member of the North Meck history community, has been incredibly supportive. With this move we now have better AV capabilities and room to expand the space to fit a larger audience. Attendees are happy to have food and drink available as well. We extend our heartfelt thanks to Mt. Zion United Methodist Church for being our host for four years. We would never have gotten underway without their support.

Our meeting time continues to be 7 pm on the second Tuesday of the month, February through May and September through November.

In February, we saluted Black History Month with a program on the history of Smithville. Pam Kelly, a freelance writer whose recent research on this topic can be heard on NPR and is available on the web, reviewed the origin, development and current status of this small black community, once on the west edge of Cornelius and now in heart of the traffic issues related to the I-77 exit 28 interchange. We had our largest turnout yet at this meeting.

We have several options for our program on March 12. Once the speaker is confirmed, it will be announced through the weekly History List mailing and through the direct email to those who have attended a North Branch meeting. On April 9, Ron Potts will continue our look at the history of the black community in the Cornelius area with his program on Torrance Chapel Church and School. On May 7 we will have another in our series of Hidden Treasure Tours visiting a historic site that is rarely open to the public. Watch the History List emails for details of all these meetings.

History News

Walter Klein, Historian and Civic Leader, Rest in Peace.

We were saddened to learn of the death of Walter Klein on January 15th. A long time MHA member and friend Walter was a civic leader, filmmaker, prolific author and historian. Among his many areas of expertise were NC Governor Zebulon Vance, and the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence. He was an expert on all things Masonic and on many aspects of local history. Recently he had compiled lists of Meck Dec signers and of the Alexander family. He will be missed. It has already started as there are several areas of local history we would like to have his opinion on.

The City of Charlotte Provides \$50,000 to Help Save Historic Siloam School.

This funding is being provided to the Charlotte Museum of History to support the relocation of the historic Siloam School to the Museum grounds where it will be restored and preserved. The school, now located in northeast Charlotte, was designed in the style of the thousands of Rosenwald schools built in the South a century ago to educate African-American children. The building is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Military Preservation Workshop, Monday, April 15 at 10 am to 1 pm, Mooresville Library, \$15.00.

NC Museum of History Military Curator, Charlie Knight, will conduct this workshop about protocols for storing and displaying uniforms, flags, and other military artifacts. Preservation specialist Adrienne Berney will lead hands-on practice for preservation techniques and mounts. Sponsored by NC DNCR, the \$15.00 registration fee covers morning refreshments and supplies. MHA members will receive a discount.

Site News

Hugh Torrance House and Store

The Hugh Torrance House and Store needs a few more docents to give house tours to the public. The site will be open on the 1st and 3rd Sundays from 2 to 5 pm from May through October. We like to have two docents at the site for each of those tours. Most of us do about three tours over the course of the summer. The house and store is just west of Huntersville on Gilead Road, two miles from I -77. The oldest part of the building which dates from about 1780 was the Torrance home and then a store; the property later became a large cotton plantation and was actively farmed until well after the Civil War. The family kept a huge number of records, letters, and other papers, so we are able to interpret the site accurately. But don't be intimidated by this volume of information; our tours cover only a small part of this history.

If you are interested contact me at mhadandelion@mindspring.com and I will get you started. I'll provide you with a training manual, and walk you through the building. Then you can shadow one of our tours, and be ready to do a tour of your own.

Ann Williams

MHA Dues

The time has come to pay your Mecklenburg Historical Association Dues for 2019; 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 are not sure whether you have already paid for this year, send an email to mhadandelion@mindspring.com and we will check and let you know. 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, use the form below (or 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

	Single	Couple
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 _____

Please check one or more as appropriate

General _____ Senior _____
 MHA Docent _____ North Branch MHA _____
 Patron _____ Life _____

Please send my MHA Newsletter by:

Email _____
 US Mail _____

If you have access to email, we would prefer to send the newsletter to you that way.
 This saves considerable time, effort and expense for MHA.

The History Calendar

Admission charged at most events unless otherwise noted.

Many of these events sell out so it is best to register at the web sites.

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>

Read It @ Rosedale: *Glory Over Everything* by Kathleen Grissom, March 21 or 23 (Pick Your Date) at 11 am to 12:30 pm.

Reading connects and transports us to a different time and place. That experience becomes even more meaningful when it's possible to encounter and interact with related historic objects and places while hearing little-known, yet meaningful stories. This moderator-led discussion of selected bestsellers is unique in that we provide a specially-designed house tour, bringing to life the past and literature, sharing oral history, and spotlighting artifacts rarely seen outside our archives.

Oyster Roast, Sunday, March 31 from 2 to 5 pm.

At this annual tradition of good food and good times, oysters are roasted outside in the true Southern coastal tradition. The usual fixins will be available, plus a low country boil and hot dogs. There will be beer and wine for adults and you can expect great live music, a craft beer tasting, and other fun things to do at this 3-hour afternoon happening. Reservations must be purchased no later than noon Friday, March 22. No tickets will be available at the door.

Easter Egg Hunt, Saturday, April 13, Events at 10 or 11 am, noon, or 1 pm.

Explore our enchanting gardens and wander through our ancient boxwoods as you and your child hunt for Easter eggs left by the Easter Bunny himself. There will be four egg hunts, each starting at the top of the hour between 10 am and 1 pm. The eggs are filled with fun treats and educational facts about the plantation. Each participant will also leave with a small take-away gift. Children of all ages are welcome and don't forget your Easter Baskets.

Historic Latta Plantation

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

Celtic Festival, Saturday and Sunday, March 16 and 17, from 10 am to 2 pm.

This historic celebration of all things Celtic includes authentic music, traditional Irish & Scottish dancers, Celtic warriors, historic encampments, weavers, spinners, blacksmiths, food trucks, whiskey tastings, and a beer garden.

On Saturday evening, after the Celtic Festival, fans of the *Outlander* TV series can party like it is 1743. From 6 to 9 pm, for a separate admission there will be dinner from The Scottish Cottage, whiskey tastings, a Scottish Country Dancing workshop and local ales. Costumes are welcomed and encouraged.

Easter Egg Hunt, Saturday April 20 from 10 am to 2 pm.

The Latta Annual Easter Egg Hunt is an organized event for young children ages one to ten. Each Easter egg will be filled with sweet treats and dozens of grand-prize eggs will be given including free family memberships, summer camp discounts, and goodie-baskets filled with fun things. The day includes photo opportunities with Baxter the Bunny, story-time, crafts, meeting the farm animals, and enjoying a stroll around the Latta Plantation home and grounds.

Monthly Cooking Guild, Monday, March 4 from 9 am to 2 pm, Free.

Meet with other cooking enthusiasts for discussions and activities focused on hearth cooking. Learn how to research old recipes and read them; hearth cooking techniques and the utensils, pots and pans used; how to build the right fire for the types of food to be cooked; and the differences between types of wood.

Open Hearth Cooking Workshop, Saturday, March 9 at 10 am to 2 pm.

Learn 19th century cooking techniques as you prepare a meal in the Latta kitchen and taste everything you cook. Pre-registration required, \$25 per person.

Beginner Knitting Workshop, Saturday, March 9 at 10 am to 2 pm.

Learn the basics and knit a scarf. You'll leave with the knowledge of slip knot, knit stitch, purl stitch, how to read a pattern, casting on and binding off. No experience necessary. Pre-registration required, \$25 per person.

Kid's Open Hearth Cooking Workshop, Sunday, March 10 at 1 to 4 pm.

Learn 19th century cooking techniques as you prepare a meal in the Latta kitchen and taste everything you cook. Designed for kids aged 9 and over and limited to 8 participants. Pre-registration required, \$25 per person.

Basket Making Workshop, Saturday, March 23 at 10 am to 1 pm.

Learn the basics of basket weaving and make a D-handle basket to keep. All the materials will be provided. Pre-registration is required, \$30 per person.

The Charlotte Museum of History

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

The Mod Experience, Thursday, April 18 from 6:30 to 9:15 pm, at the Wells Fargo Auditorium at Knight Theater at Levine Center for the Arts, 430 S. Tryon St.

“Modernism in the Mountains” tells the surprising story of Black Mountain College (1933 to 1957), a short-lived educational experiment in the North Carolina Mountains that revolutionized America’s art scene.

Earth Day Celebration, Saturday, April 27 from Noon. to 4 pm.

Get your hands dirty this Earth Day and learn how you can play an important role in protecting and preserving the Carolina Backcountry. Special guests include Dr. Larry Mellichamp, the Charlotte Herb Guild, Carolina Thread Trail and Cloister Honey.

Historic Brattonsville

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

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

Children’s Day on the Farm, Saturday, March 30 from 10 am to 4 pm.

Discover how children contributed to 18th and 19th century farm life. Events include magician Simon St. Clair plowing demonstration, candle-dipping, butter churning, quill pen writing, clay marble-making, cow milking demonstration, live animals in the barnyard, chicken egg hunting, 18th century cooking, tape loom weaving, toys and games, making wooden pegs in the woodworking barn, gardening activities, including planting, hoeing, and building a wattle fence, blacksmith demonstrations and 19th century school activities.

President James K. Polk State Historic Site

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

www.polk.nchistoricsites.org

Turning the Tables: Power in Domesticity, Saturday, March 9 at 10:30 to 11:30 am, Free.

Explore the history of Southern foodways through recipes that have stood the test of time with food historian Joann Joy. Discover the Election Cake recipe for your next watch party.

100 Years of the Vote, Coffee and Conversation on Saturday, March 30 from 10 to 11:30 am, Free.

This year is the 100th anniversary of the 19th amendment and Charlotte will be hosting the Republic National Convention. We are developing an exhibit to be displayed through the year and we want to hear from you. We will tell you what we have in mind and ask you to tell us what you would like to see. What aspects of this area of history are of greatest interest to you? What do you think is most critical to include? What types of objects or displays would you like to see?

Other Lives of Daniel Boone with Randell Jones, Saturday, April 13 at 10:30 to 11:30 am, Free.

On the 250th anniversary of Boon's first excursion through the Cumberland Gap in 1769 hear some surprising stories of three women in his life. Daniel Boone lived in North Carolina for 21 years before moving on to Kentucky and we have a strong claim on his life and legacy. If you already know the life of Daniel Boone--or think you do—you're going to be surprised.

Music, Dance, 'n Que: Festival and Fundraiser, Saturday, May 4 from 11 am to 3 pm.

There will be live performances from David Childers, High Ridge Pickers, and Myers Park Bluegrass Club while you enjoy plates of local BBQ, pours from local breweries, and dessert from the ice cream truck. Tour the log cabins, visit with local vendors and pan for gold with the folks from Reed Gold Mine. Purchase raffle tickets and bid in the silent auction to help support the Friends of President Polk Birthplace, a support group that helps fund educational events and field trips.

Levine Museum of the New South

200 E. Seventh Street, Charlotte, NC, 704 333 1887, <http://www.museumofthenewsouth.org>

#ShapingCLT: Where are the Dollars? Addressing the Gender Pay Gap, Wednesday, March 20 at 6 to 8:30 pm.

ShapingCLT is a monthly DIY social justice toolkit program about issues affecting our community. The March event will be a panel discussion with community leaders about the gender pay gap.

HerStory Family Day, Sunday, March 24 from noon to 4 pm, Free.

This event will honor the history and legacy of women from various backgrounds with young girls in mind. There will be musical performances, community engagement and arts and crafts for youth of all ages.

#ShapingCLT: Legacy of Lynching, Wednesday, April 24 at 6 to 8:30 pm.

ShapingCLT is a monthly DIY social justice toolkit program about issues affecting our community. This event is a panel discussion with Historian Willie Griffin about a new exhibit called the Legacy of Lynching.

New South for the New Southerner, Decoding Charlotte Murals, Tuesday, April 30 at 6 to 8 pm.

With Historian Tom Hanchett and mural maker and organizer Mike Wirth, a professor at Queens University.

#HomeCLT, A New Exhibit Opening Wednesday, February 27.

This exhibit explores narratives from Charlotte neighborhoods starting with Eastland, Sedgefield, Dilworth, Enderly Park, and Hidden Valley.

Fort Dobbs State Historic Site

438 Fort Dobbs Road, Statesville, NC 704 873 5882

<http://www.fortdobbs.org>

War for Empire, Saturday April 6-7 from 9 am to 5 pm.

In Fort Dobbs' largest event of the year, experience life in the 18th Century as we look at the French and Indian War history of North Carolina. Trades demonstrations, musical performances, vendors, and a weapons demonstrations will all be featured.

Matthews Heritage Museum

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

Tank Town: A Good Place to Live – Our New Exhibit is open Now through August 17.

After a year of research, this groundbreaking exhibit presents our findings on Crestdale, an African American neighborhood in Matthews, settled by former slaves and freedmen after the Civil War and once known as Tank Town. The exhibit explores the people, lifestyles, jobs, schools and community organizations of this neighborhood. Groups of all ages will enjoy learning about the history of this community.

On Saturday, March 2, the Museum will host a day-long open house for the community to view the exhibit.

Kings Mountain Historical Museum

100 East Mountain Street, Kings Mountain, NC (704) 739-1019

www.kingsmountainmuseum.org

Local Author Randell Jones, Saturday March 30 at 2 pm, Free.

This program will highlight the 250th anniversary of Daniel Boone's first excursion through the Cumberland Gap into Kentucky and the stories of the women who were a part of that adventure. Funding by the North Carolina Humanities Council.

Books: Stories that Shape Us, A New Exhibit, open February 9 through October 26, Tuesdays through Saturdays from 10 am to 4 pm, Free.

Books have been a part of our lives for centuries. Explore how books permeate so much of what we learn and do. This exhibit focuses on books and authors who have influenced our region: both past and present.

Reed Gold Mine State Historic Site

9621 Reed Mine Rd., Midland, NC 28163, 704 721 GOLD (4653)

<http://www.nchistoricsites.org/reed/reed.htm>

Carolina Gold Rush Heritage, Saturday, April 20 from 10 am to 5 pm.

Highlighting the 1850s mining era, costumed interpreters will demonstrate surface and underground mining with cradle and log rockers and show how blasting holes were drilled and gold bearing quartz rock was removed from the mine. The California-type 10-stamp mill will be in operation to show how rock was mixed with mercury to extract gold. Visitors will also be able to pan for gold during the event

Andrew Jackson State Park

196 Andrew Jackson Park Road, Lancaster, SC 803 285 3344

www.southcarolinaparks.com/park-finder/state-park/1797.aspx

Andrew Jackson Birthday Celebration, Saturday, March 23 from 10 am to 4 pm.

Celebrate the President's birthday with costumed story tellers and reenactors firing their muskets. Activities and demonstrations include blacksmithing, woodworking, broom making, salt making, basket making and a plant sale plus activities for the children and a tour of the one-room school house.

Union County Public Library

316 E. Windsor St., Monroe, NC, www.unioncountync.gov/library 704 283 8184

Early Jewish Families of Union County, NC, Saturday, April 6 at 2 pm, Co-sponsored by the Carolinas Genealogical Society.

Ever wonder why the intersection of New Town and Rocky River Roads is called "LaBatt's Crossroads"? Learn this and more about the early Jewish families of our area. Presenter is George Thomas, blogger and historian of the Rocky River area of North Carolina.

York County Library

138 E. Black Street, Rock Hill, SC. www.yclibrary.org

Genealogy Class: Military Records, Thursday, March 7 at 6 to 8 pm.

Learn about the different types of military records and how to access them.

Genealogy Class: Newspapers, Thursday, April 4 at 6 to 8 pm.

Learn how to locate articles about your family in newspapers on microfilm and online.

Mount Holly Historical Society

131 South Main, Mount Holly, NC <https://www.mounthollyhistoricalsociety.org>

The Growth of Mount Holly, Tuesday, March 26 from 7 to 8 pm, free.

Erin Ball will provide a brief history of the expansion of Mount Holly from incorporation, followed by a discussion of modern day growth with Kemp Michael, aided by his first hand experience as City Attorney.

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