

**Mecklenburg Historical Association Docents**

*Promoting Local History through Education and Research*

<http://www.meckdec.org/>



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*Queens College Rediscovered*

Most of us are familiar with the name “Queens College” and many of us know that there was a school by that name in Colonial Mecklenburg County. That early Queens College was not connected in any way with the present-day Queen’s University in Myers Park or with College Street in uptown Charlotte.

The first Queens College was founded by an act of the Colonial Assembly in 1771 and was long gone before the modern Queen’s came on the scene in 1913. What we knew about the original Queens College came primarily from laws passed by the Colonial Assembly. We knew that an act was passed in 1771 establishing Queens College and that Royal Governor William Tryon signed the act and sent it with his strong recommendation to the Board of Trade in England. They presented it to King George III for his approval but the King disallowed the bill, perhaps because he thought it would be a training ground for dissenting (Presbyterian) ministers. When the news of the disallowance reached the Colony in 1773, the college continued operating but changed its name to Queens Museum. During the Revolution a law was passed changing the name to Liberty Hall. And when President Washington passed through Charlotte in 1791 he mentioned the college in his journal.

What we didn’t know until now is what the Queens College building looked like and what kind of a school it was. In 1771 the only public building in Charlotte was the County Courthouse which was a single room log cabin on brick pillars standing in the middle of the intersection of Trade and Tryon Streets. It has been said that there were only 20 or 30 buildings in town, many of them taverns, and they were all rude log cabins.

Up to this point we have generally thought that the College must have been a log building of two stories and perhaps four or six rooms. Just recently a paper has come to light that radically changes not only our appreciation of the Queens College building but of the College itself and the nature of Colonial Charlotte and its citizens. This paper was found in the Hawks Collection at the New-York Historical Society in Manhattan and we were able to obtain a microfilm copy of those papers on Inter-Library Loan from them.

A paper in that collection labeled “Bill for College in Mecklenburg” is a bill-of-materials showing the amounts of material, types of labor and costs for “a College to be Built in Charlotte town.” This was probably a document the builder used to calculate his bid price. We have no information showing whether he was the successful bidder, or if the college building was even built. However, something must have been built because the “Queens College Building” was used as a hospital by both sides during the American Revolution.

The overall description in this bill of materials is for a building of two stories and twenty rooms that would be 116 by 40 feet. It had only been 20 years or so since the first settlers arrived here and this is an extremely large

building for that time and place. The total cost of the building was £1,380, a considerable fortune at that time. From the bill of materials and labor we can conclude that this was a brick building on stone foundations with a shingle roof, containing a hewn timber frame. It had five large double doors with brass knobs and large locks. There were 53 windows containing a total of 1,500 panes of glass. All of the windows would open except for five in the attic and those on the first floor had shutters. The twenty rooms all had doors and locks plus built-in studies. The interior walls were plastered and painted yellow with white trim.

In addition to feeding all of the workmen, and a £100 fee for the builder, there was an accounting of £60 for liquor. At then-current prices this was 240 gallons of whisky.

Building such a structure would have taken three or four years, so it must have been started several years before the Assembly authorized it. The cost of the college was to be paid by a special tax on all whiskey brought into the county. Today we might think it strange that a Presbyterian College was supported by whiskey sales, but in those days there was no prohibition of hard liquor and, in fact, many considered it a healthy drink.

In addition to this information on the College building, papers in the Hawks Collection reveal that Joel Brevard was the first teacher at the college and that there was a library of at least 247 volumes, many of them contributed by county residents. And finally, thanks to historian Mary Boyer and her research into other sources, we know that after the King disallowed the college, it continued to operate as “Queens Museum” and was supported by a public lottery.

Jim Williams

### *New Evidence Discovered for America's First Declaration of Independence*

Since the publication late last year of *The First American Declaration of Independence? The Disputed History of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence of May 20, 1775*, I have received numerous inquiries and tips from interested parties on the much mooted question of the veracity of the “MecDec.” Usually, these tread familiar ground or the usual historical rabbit holes.

Recently, however, two interesting developments have occurred, neither of which was known previously.

The first development was the discovery of references to MecDec found in several Revolutionary War pension applications. This was made possible by a new searchable electronic database of these applications. To give but one example, there is the testimony of William Culberson, Sr., made in October 1832, which (after the oath formalities) begins as follows: “The first service he performed in the South was as a private in a company of Captain Oliver Wiley in the County of Mecklenburg North Carolina in the year 1775 or early in the year 1776 just as the Patriots of Mecklenburg had declared themselves independent of the British Government ...”

For those interested in this topic, please see my article in the (online) Journal of the American Revolution entitled “The Mecklenburg Declaration in Revolutionary War Pension Applications.”

<http://allthingsliberty.com/2015/03/the-mecklenburg-declaration-in-revolutionary-war-pension-applications>

A second more recent tip was sent to the MHA by an intrepid researcher named Rebecca Fried. Ms. Fried found a reference to the MecDec in the April 14, 1801 *Raleigh Register and North-Carolina Weekly Advertiser*. The article records a gathering of “[t]he Republican citizens of the village of Charlotte, in Mecklenburgh County” in celebration of the election of President Jefferson. The gathering was “convened at the house of Mrs. M’Combs on the 17th ult.” and records a series of toasts, including the following: “10. The citizens of Mecklenburg, being the first in their declaration of Independence, may they ever be the first in resisting usurpation by defending their civil righst.” [sic]

To my understanding, this is now the earliest recorded contemporary reference to MecDec. The “rough notes” of John McKnitt Alexander and the Moravian diaries might, in each case, be earlier, but in both cases those documents cannot be precisely dated to everyone’s satisfaction. Similar references to MecDec have been found in 1808 and 1809 (including a similar set of toasts from an article in the same paper in 1808); however the reference Ms. Fried found is seven years earlier. What is more, because the (ceremonial) language used in both cases (1801 and 1808) is so similar, it hints that earlier such toasts might even pre-date 1800. In any event, it proves conclusively that the story was considered true and part of local lore as early as 1801 (if not earlier).

A principal argument made by MecDec skeptics is that the story was not locally celebrated or even known until after the Jefferson-Adams letters were published around 1829 (ten years after their actual correspondence in the summer of 1819). According to this line of argument, no one really knew or talked about MecDec before Jefferson made it a sore subject with his “spurious” comments to Adams.

Rebecca’s discovery of an explicit and verifiable 1801 reference to MecDec comprehensively demolishes this argument, and proves beyond any doubt that the MecDec story was commonly known and locally celebrated in the area, almost two decades before the Adams/Jefferson letters took the story “viral.” It’s ironic that although the MecDec Controversy has been at a stalemate for decades, important research is coming out of the woodwork due to advances in technology and a fresh look at the facts. What could be next?

Scott Syfert

### *From the Chairman*

History can be something that happened centuries ago or just yesterday. It can involve complete strangers or our own family. We look for clues not only in documents but also in family stories that are passed down for generations, in old photographs, in a secret supply of clay along the Catawba River.

At our last meeting, Beth Harris showed us photographs of George Caldwell and the Henderson family, all descendents of people who had been slaves of Dr. D. T. Caldwell. The photos helped drive home the point that these were real people not just names used as collateral on a 19th century deed of trust. In November, Caroleen Sanders will use her traditional Catawba pottery to tell us about the heritage of the Catawba Indians. The December meeting will be our annual tea.

Our monthly meetings are a gathering of people who enjoy learning about local history and sharing it with others. Please join us.

Janet Dyer

### *Newsletter Deadline*

The deadline for the January-February issue of the Dandelion is December 10.

### *MHA Docent Programs*

Tuesday, November 3

### **Sacred Clay of the People of the River**

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. Visitors are always welcome.

A deposit of rare, sacred clay lies hidden near Lancaster, SC, not far from the Catawba River. For centuries its exact location has been kept secret by the Catawba Nation. And yet it is at the heart of an ancient cultural tradition that is being revitalized through the passionate efforts of Catawba potters like Caroleen Sanders, artist in residence at the Native American Studies Center in Lancaster, SC.

The history of this unusual clay and its continuing significance to the Catawba Nation, known as the “People of the River,” is the subject of our November program. Come meet Caroleen, a Catawba potter, and hear how she transforms a clump of clay into a communal peace pipe or a cook pot that can ward off invading insects. She will tell us first-hand of the hardships and adversity experienced by the Catawbans, as well as her desire to keep the centuries-old pottery-making tradition alive. Learn the risks that face the clay today as it continues to play an important role in maintaining the Catawba identity. “The clay,” she says, “has kept us Catawba people. That’s who we are.” Catawba clay truly is sacred to the People of the River.

**Tuesday, December 1  
Annual Christmas Tea**

Business meeting at 9:45 am, program at 10, followed by the tea. Please join us in the fellowship hall at Sugaw Creek Presbyterian Church for the MHA Docent’s December Tea, our gift to the history community to share with friends both old and new. This year we will also share with children. If you would like to participate bring a new unwrapped toy, and we’ll donate them to a worthy children’s charity. After a program of musical history, we’ll enjoy tea and delicious food.

Music is a part of Christmas today as it was in the past. Christmas carols, both religious and secular, were sung and played by the early settlers here in the backcountry. Our ancestors brought their carols and traditions to America. Once here, they sometimes created new ones, or occasionally adopted those of their neighbors. “The Limbertwigs” (Janet Dyer, Beth Caveny, and Lynn Eskridge) are musicians who enjoy playing music from the past. Which carols could have been sung and played in Charlottetown in the 18th and 19th centuries? They will tell us as they play some old favorites and tell their history. They’re sure to entertain and enlighten us.

*Now Christmas comes, 'tis fit that we  
Should feast and sing, and merry be;  
Keep open house, let fiddlers play.  
A fig for cold, sing care away  
And may they who whereat repine  
On brown bread and on small beer dine.  
The Virginia Almanack*

**Docents:** Please be at the church by **9:30** to arrange your dishes on the serving table. The board and hospitality committee will arrive at 9 to set up and decorate the tables. Everyone should bring a dish to share for our Tea/Luncheon. We will be joined by many of our friends in the history community, so do be generous when planning your dish.

***MHA Dinner Meeting***  
**Monday, November 16**  
**Historic Landmarks Revolving Fund – Preserving our Built History**

Our holiday social and book sale will be at Trinity Presbyterian Church beginning at 6 pm. It will feature appetizers and festive beverages, followed by dinner at 6:30 and the program at 7:15. Those not having dinner are welcome to enjoy the program at no charge. A special history book sale by the Carolina Room of the Charlotte Public Library will start at 6 pm and continue after dinner. To make a reservation for dinner use the order form in your MHA Newsletter or contact Robin Brabham at [Mecklenburg1775@yahoo.com](mailto:Mecklenburg1775@yahoo.com) or 704-543-7519.

Under the presidencies of Elizabeth Morgan, 1970-71, and Douglas Glasgow, 1972-73, the Mecklenburg Historical Association played a key role in the establishment of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission. Tonight, Mary Dominick, office administrator at the commission, will talk about the commission’s current projects and its revolving fund.

Although the city and county have a reputation for tearing down much of our history, the Landmarks Commission oversees the largest locally-funded historic preservation revolving fund in the United States. This fund allows the commission to purchase at-risk properties, place protective covenants in deeds, develop customized preservation plans, and resell the newly protected properties to buyers committed to historic preservation. The commission's current projects range from Charlotte's only remaining 1970s GM New Look Bus to a 1950s pottery and kiln in Matthews to a 1930s brick jail in Huntersville.

Mary Dominick is a graduate of the UNC Charlotte program in public history and wrote her master's thesis on the evolution of the built environment at Charlotte College, which evolved into an institution that has provided 46% of the enrollment increase in the UNC system of higher education in the last six years. She did an internship at the Carolina Room, digitizing the Mary Boyer Photograph Collection of 842 photographs from 1882 to 1977. Since 2006 she has worked at the Landmarks Commission where her duties include managing the website, assisting in historical research, and helping to develop historical documentaries.

## *Site News*

### **Charlotte Mecklenburg Library**

The Robinson-Spangler Carolina Room has always been an important source of support for historical researchers and genealogists. A new feature has been added to make that research easier and more convenient. Of course the books in the Carolina room do not circulate and must be used there. However, they have a number of duplicates of these books and have started putting those duplicates in a special section so that they can be checked out. The Carolina room is on the third floor of the main library uptown and the circulating collection is in a section on the second floor, marked Genealogy. This is located at the extreme end of the non-fiction books at the west end of the second floor.

When you visit the uptown branch, browse this section and see what you can find. And when you search the library catalog on-line, notice if the book you are interested in has a copy that circulates. You can request that the book be delivered to your home branch and you will have it in a day or two and can check it out for three weeks.

### Beginning or advancing your genealogy.

Join volunteers from the Olde Mecklenburg Genealogical Society and Carolina Room staff in the Robinson-Spangler Carolina Room (3rd floor of Main Library) to get personal help on Saturday, November 7 from 10 am to 3 pm. Bring as much information as you can to allow us to help you get started or solve some mysteries.

### **Opportunity for Part Time Work.**

Historic Latta Plantation is looking for a part time employee. The position will be for approximately six hours on Sundays, with occasional Saturday hours. Applicant needs to be experienced and comfortable around large animals and interact well with the public. Responsibilities include:

- Feeding animals and making sure they are safely put away in the evening.
- Opening and locking all buildings.
- Operating the gift shop register.
- Giving tours of the circa 1800 home.

Please send inquiries and resumes to David Clay: [dclay@lattaplantation.org](mailto:dclay@lattaplantation.org)

### **Stories of the Stones, a Rose Hill Cemetery Tour**

On Saturday, November 7 from 1 to 4 pm the Yorkville Historical Society will conduct tours of Rose Hill Cemetery on East Liberty Street in York, SC. Costumed re-enactors will tell the stories of the lives of York citizens who shaped the community. The tour takes place at the grave site, their last resting place.



## MHA Dues

The time has come to pay your Mecklenburg Historical Association Dues for 2016; 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. Membership letters are going out now, so it is not too early to pay your dues for next year. 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:

General Membership \_\_\_\_\_

MHA Docent Membership \_\_\_\_\_

North Branch MHA Membership \_\_\_\_\_

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 and expense for MHA.



# Beyond the Wagon Road

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



February 6, 2016

“The First American Declaration of Independence? The Disputed History of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence of May 20, 1775”  
Scott Syfert, corporate attorney at Moore & Van Allen and  
co-founder of the May 20<sup>th</sup> Society

“Portrayal of a Sixteen-Year-Old Backcountry Revolutionary War Soldier”  
Dr. Tony Zeiss, President of Central Piedmont Community College

February 13, 2016

“A Visit with an 18<sup>th</sup> Century Herb Woman”  
Kay K. Moss, founder of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century Backcountry Lifeways Studies Program  
and adjunct curator at the Schiele Museum

“Dr. David Thomas Caldwell: Medicine in Antebellum Charlotte”  
Janet Dyer, historical researcher and MHA Docent

February 20, 2016

“Music in Charlotte During the 1930’s”  
Dr. Tom Hanchett and the Kollard Kings, a String Band

“The Scotch-Irish Influence on Music of the Carolinas”  
Michael C. Scoggins, historian at the Culture and Heritage Museums (SC)

Registration fee for the course: \$20.00 due by January 31, 2016.  
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](mailto:jdyer399@gmail.com)  
All lectures at Levine Museum of the New South from 9:30am-12pm. Doors open at 9am.

## “Preserving Mecklenburg’s Heritage”

For more details, see the next page.

## *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 for details. In the past this series has been popular with both longtime residents and especially with newcomers to 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, so do respond as soon as possible to reserve your space, and feel free to share the information with anyone who might be interested. 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.

## *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>

### **Bulb planting Class, Saturday, November 7 at 10 am to noon.**

Join our garden curator as he teaches us the how's, when's, and where's of planting bulbs. This is a great opportunity to ask an expert any questions you may have about fall gardening. This fun and informative lecture includes snacks.

### **The Harvest Table, Thursday, November 19 from 10 am to noon.**

In this interactive workshop we provide the materials and the teacher, our Garden Curator. Then our guests will make their own special living centerpieces that will look amazing atop their Thanksgiving tables.

### **Scottish Heritage Christmas, Saturday & Sunday, December 5 & 6 from 1 to 5 pm.**

This Christmas season as Rosedale celebrates her bicentennial year we recognize the Scottish heritage of those who lived here and our own Scottish roots. For these two days there will be house tours, music, food, entertainment, kid's crafts, vendors and artists. Come and do some Christmas shopping.

### **Christmas Candlelight, Saturday & Sunday, December 5 & 6 from 6:30 to 8:30 pm.**

Historic Rosedale Plantation will showcase the 1815 home by candlelight. Live music will fill the great hall with carols as costumed docents bring the home to life circa 1840. Experience antebellum Southern hospitality and the fragrances of natural decorations typical of a backcountry Carolina Christmas. Hot cider and refreshments will be served in the English basement kitchen.

### **Greenery Workshop, Saturday, December 5 & Wednesday, December 16 at 10 am to noon.**

Learn about many types of greenery for the holidays and make a bowl of greenery that will last through the season. Jeff, our Garden Curator, will show you how to make a boxwood wreath and garlands for the house. Bring a pair of hand pruners and be ready to work and learn.

### **The Art of the Thank You Note, Wednesday, December 30 at 11 am to 1 pm.**

Teach your child to be thoughtful and considerate through the lost art of handwritten thank you notes, a pivotal part of being a Southern lad or lady. We will teach the etiquette of the note and the valuable lesson of expressing



gratitude. Dress up or come as you are and enjoy the fun atmosphere of a tea party in the charming English basement kitchen of our 200 year old Federal home. Rosedale will provide stationery to get you started.

### *Latta Plantation*

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

#### **Folk Life Festival, Saturday, November 7 from 10 am to 4 pm.**

Local vendors will have handcrafts including pottery, jewelry, preserves, paintings, and woodcrafts. There will be living history demonstrations of woodworking and cooking and the house will be open for tours. There will be the farm animals and games for the children plus food vendors and the Olde Mecklenburg Brewery.

#### **One Hundred Years of Christmas, Friday and Saturday, November 27 and 28 from 10 am to 4 pm.**

Celebrate Christmas from 1768 to 1868 with interpreters attired from the Federalist through the Victorian eras. The Latta Home, Cooks Kitchen, Alexander Cabin, and Yeoman Cabins will be transformed with period Christmas décor plus live music, tours, demonstrations, and farm animals.

#### **Candlelight Christmas, Saturday, December 5 from 6 to 9 pm.**

Stroll the property and visit the candlelit buildings of Latta Plantation. See first person interpreters celebrating Nancy Latta's holiday wedding. Visit James and Jane Latta in their home and discuss the wedding, crops and events of 1827. Enjoy caroling, refreshments, and an 1800's inspired live nativity scene. This unique event is a fine way to start the Christmas season.

#### **A Christmas Tea for Caroline the American Girl Doll, Sunday December 13 at 2 pm.**

At the end of this year Caroline Abbott, the 1812 American Girl Doll, is going into the vault. Say goodbye to her in style with an early 19th century Christmas tea. Bring your Caroline, or other American Girl doll. Enjoy tea and pastries, learn about early American Christmas customs and make a 19th century Christmas decoration inside the Latta's Alexander Cabin. RSVP to Heather Lineberger at 704-875-2312, ext. 301 or [hlineberger@lattaplantation.org](mailto:hlineberger@lattaplantation.org) by Friday, December 4th. Only 25 places are available.

### *The Charlotte Museum of History*

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

#### **English Tea Rescheduled, Saturday, November 7 at 4 pm, reservations required.**

The English Tea that was postponed last March due to inclement weather has been rescheduled. The program will be led by England native and Museum volunteer and member, Felicity Wray. She will be discussing her favorite English landmarks as well as making her family's traditional English cake. If you previously registered and paid, be sure to contact the Museum to confirm your reservation.

#### **Backcountry Beer Fest, Saturday, November 14, from 1 to 5 pm.**

Join us for a Backcountry Beer Fest featuring Birdsong Brewing Company, Olde Mecklenburg Brewery, Rock Bottom Restaurant & Brewery and Heist Brewery. Enjoy live music by Christopher Suter and Jason Marcum and food from the popular Ruthie's of Charlotte Food Truck. A corn-hole tournament and home site tours are included.

#### **Backcountry Explorers – Cooking, Saturday, November 7 at 10:30 am.**

A hands-on class for students ages 6-12 to immerse themselves in Colonial food preparation. Join us as we discover Colonial life at the Hezekiah Alexander Home Site and create hands-on projects.

#### **Backcountry Explorers – Trade and Barter, Saturday, December 5 at 10:30 am.**

A hands-on class for students ages 6-12 to immerse themselves in Colonial trade and barter. Join us as we discover Colonial life at the Hezekiah Alexander Home Site and create hands-on projects.

### *Schiele Museum*

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

#### **Harvest Day, Saturday, November 21 from 10 am to 4 pm.**

Join in celebrating the harvest season at the 18th-century Backcountry Farm. Watch our cooks and bakers at work as they prepare a traditional holiday feast in a spirit of thanksgiving for the season's harvest. Visit with craftspeople and farm folk as they demonstrate early American skills & crafts.

#### **Colonial Christmas & Candle Lighting, Saturday, December 12 from 2 to 6 pm.**

Celebrate the Season in the 18th-century fashion at our 40th Annual Colonial Christmas & Candle Lighting. Join in the "Procession of the Yule Log", decorating with greenery, singing early American carols, and English country dancing. As the day draws to a close, gather with our Backcountry family for the traditional Candle-lighting Service and scripture reading. Enjoy colonial hospitality with Christmas pudding and hot gingered apple cider.

### *President James K. Polk State Historic Site*

12031 Lancaster Hwy., Pineville, NC, 704 889 7145  
[www.polk.nchistoricsites.org](http://www.polk.nchistoricsites.org)

#### **Celebrate the Birthday of US President James K. Polk, Saturday, November 7 from 10 am to 4 pm, Free.**

On the 220<sup>th</sup> birthday of President Polk step into 19<sup>th</sup> Century Mecklenburg County, chat with back-country residents, talk with blacksmiths, carpenters and musicians, visit open-hearth cooks and ladies spinning and tatting, plus children's activities. Meet the President himself and discuss the events of the day.

#### **Death & Dying Tour, each Saturday at 1:15 pm.**

This 45 minute walking tour of the Polk Site gives visitors a look at the culture of death in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century and highlights the stories of some of those buried in the Polk Family Cemetery. Admission charged.

### *Fort Dobbs State Historic Site*

438 Fort Dobbs Road, Statesville, NC 704 873 5882  
<http://www.fortdobbs.org>

#### **Military Timeline, Saturday and Sunday, November 14 and 15 from 10 am to 3 pm, Free.**

North Carolina has survived numerous invading forces and has sent tens of thousands of her sons and daughters off to war over the centuries. Learn the stories of these men and women through living history displays of uniforms, weapons, equipment and vehicles from the Revolution, Civil War, World Wars and Vietnam.

#### **Winter on the Western Frontier, Saturday, December 12, from 9 am to 5 pm, Free.**

Historic interpreters will present musket and cannon firing demonstrations as they explain how French and Indian War soldiers fared in the winter.

### *Matthews Heritage Museum*

232 North Trade St., Matthews, 704 708 4996, [www.matthewsheritagemuseum.org](http://www.matthewsheritagemuseum.org)

#### **Matthews Holiday Stroll, Saturday, December 5 from 6 to 8 pm.**

Walk along the luminary-lighted streets of downtown Matthews while enjoying refreshments and treats at participating businesses. There will be goodies for the children, carolers on the streets, and Santa's Helpers to guide you along the way. Pick up a map at the Chamber Depot office so you can enter the Holiday Treasure Hunt. Also in the Chamber Depot office you'll find an amazing display of Gingerbread Houses crafted by talented locals and an array of "Very Beary Christmas" Bears.

**Girl Scouts through the Years Exhibit through January 30, Thursdays through Saturdays from 10 am to 4:30 pm.**

This year the Girl Scout program in Mecklenburg County reached its 80th birthday. Many troops have scheduled visits, other girls have come individually. Individual girl scouts in uniform are free; there is a modest fee for Troop tours.

***Rural Hill***

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

**Rural Hill Oyster Roast Fundraiser, Sunday, November 15 from 3 to 6 pm.**

Over the past ten years the Amazing Maize Maze has been Rural Hill's primary fundraiser, however this summer's drought significantly reduced its income. In order to continue providing educational programming, the site will host an Oyster Roast on November 15th.

The roast will be conducted by Dan "the pig man" Huntley who specializes in Southern food traditions. A basket of 8 to 10 steamed oysters can be had for \$10, or 4 oysters on the half shell for \$8. Please pre-order as many baskets or half shells as you like; there will be a very limited supply available for purchase on site. The event will include live music, bonfires, hay rides, and local wine and beer vendors.

***Charlotte Folk Society***

Great Aunt Stella Center, 926 Elizabeth Ave., Charlotte  
[www.folksociety.org](http://www.folksociety.org)

**Charlotte Folk Society Gathering Concert & Jams, Friday, November 13, Roots Music, Blues & More by the Harris Brothers.**

Great Aunt Stella Center, 926 Elizabeth Avenue, Charlotte. 7:30 pm; doors open 7 pm. Free; donations appreciated. [www.folksociety.org](http://www.folksociety.org) "The Harris Brothers are one of my favorite groups. Great playing, singing and soul. It just doesn't get any better than this." – David Holt

**Charlotte Folk Society Annual Holiday Potluck & Jams, Saturday, December 12, Featuring the Thistledown Tinkers with Music of the Season.**

Dilworth United Methodist Church, 605 East Blvd., Charlotte 28203. 4 to 9:45 pm. Dinner 5 pm. The Thistledown Tinkers Music of the Season 6:00-6:30 PM. Song circle & jams before & after dinner. Bring a dish to share or donate \$5 per person towards expenses. [www.folksociety.org](http://www.folksociety.org)

***Duke Mansion***

400 Hermitage Road, Charlotte, 704 714 4400  
<http://www.dukemansion.com>

**Explore History, the 38th Evac. in World War II, Sunday, November 8 at 3 pm, free, reservations required.**

An idea first floated at Charlotte's Duke Mansion made military history in World War II. Visiting General George Marshall and local physicians including Dr. Paul Sanger came up with the notion of a portable hospital that could move close to the line of battle. The pioneering 38th Evacuation Hospital, staffed with Charlotte doctors and nurses, became the model for subsequent units, including MASH (Mobil Army Surgical Hospital) units during the Korean War. Dr. Brian Madison Jones, history professor and dean at Johnson C. Smith University, will discuss historic context, followed by screening of a WTVI documentary on the 38th Evac.

### *Gaston County Museum*

131 West Main Street Dallas, NC. (704)922-7681, #2 [www.gastoncountymuseum.org](http://www.gastoncountymuseum.org)

#### **Holiday Open House, Friday, December 11 from 4 to 6 pm, Free.**

Enjoy the Town of Dallas Christmas Parade beginning at 4 pm, and then join us at the Museum for Christmas traditions for the whole family. See the Museum decorated for Christmas, visit the Museum Shop for holiday gifts, take part in cookie decorating and historic crafts, hear live music, and get a chance to meet some very interesting traditional characters from early Christmas celebrations including Saint Nicholas, Christkindl, and Krampus.

### *Historic Brattonsville*

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

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

#### **After-Thanksgiving Cotton Picking, Friday and Saturday, November 27 and 28 from 10 am to 4 pm.**

Help us bring our yearly crop in. Enjoy 19th century demonstrations of the cotton production, from the plant to the cloth. There will be weaving, spinning, sewing, ginning, and of course picking.

#### **Christmas Candlelight Tours, Saturdays, December 5 and 12, from 3 to 9 pm.**

Walk the candlelit paths of Historic Brattonsville and experience a Southern-style Christmas in the Carolina Backcountry. Costumed interpreters bring to life the holiday seasons of the past with stories of people who lived in the 18th and 19th centuries. Enjoy hot drinks, seasonal foods, baked goods and musical entertainment around a campfire while visiting with Father Christmas.

#### **Living History Saturdays from 10 am to 4 pm.**

Every Saturday, except when there are scheduled special events, the Interpreters bring to life aspects of colonial and antebellum history. The weekend activities change throughout the month, usually to reflect the time of year or major monthly event. Call ahead to find out what's coming up.

### *Reed Gold Mine State Historic Site*

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

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

#### **A "Golden" Christmas, Saturday, December 5 from 10 am to 4 pm.**

Celebrate the season by exploring the Christmas traditions of John Reed, his family, and other early settlers of the Cabarrus County area. Join us for food, music, and holiday cheer and a little history. Demonstrations by vendors, artisans, and craftsmen. Hayrides up to Mansion Hill and Tours of the Underground Mine by candlelight.

### *Historic Camden*

Highway 521 just South of Camden, SC

(803) 432-9831 <http://www.historic-camden.net>

#### **Reenacting the Battle of Camden, Saturday and Sunday, November 7 and 8 from 10 am to 5 pm.**

Five hundred British and American soldiers will re-enact the American Revolution in the south – there were two major battles in that war in and near Camden. There will be battles at 1:30 each day with a military courts martial, period craftsmen, civilian interpreters and a period fashion show. Seventeen Suttlers will be selling colonial wares and there will be kids activities and food available.

### *Museum of the Waxhaws*

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

**Veterans Day, Saturday, November 7 from 10 am to 4 pm, free to veterans and their families.**

Memorial displays with cake and coffee plus a flag retirement ceremony at 11 am by local scouts and the VFW.

**Living History, Saturday, November 21 from 10 am to 4 pm.**

Thanksgiving seasonal cooking in our 1830 cabin, plus black powder firings.

**Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day, Saturday, December 5 from 10 am to 4 pm.**

Displays remembering a pivotal time in world history.

**Treats with Mrs. Claus, Saturday, December 12 from 2 to 3:30 pm.**

Naughty or Nice list, reindeer tales, Santa's wedding story and Christmas goodies. Reservations required.

### *Andrew Jackson State Park*

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

[www.southcarolinaparks.com/park-finder/state-park/1797.aspx](http://www.southcarolinaparks.com/park-finder/state-park/1797.aspx)

**Arbor Day Program, Friday, December 5 at 3 p.m.**

Visit the park as Garden Clubs, Lancaster County Master Gardeners, the DAR, the SAR, the Lancaster County Retired Educators, the Friends of Andrew Jackson State Park and the State Park Service plant trees. To donate a native tree or help with tree trimming or planting, contact the park office.

**Life in the Waxhaws Lantern Tour, Saturday, November 14.**

See what life was like for early settlers living in the Waxhaws and how the American Revolution affected our region. Costumed volunteers bring to life the events that shaped the community and demonstrate the skills it took to survive in this backcountry settlement. Lantern tours will begin at 6, 6:30, 7 and 7:30 pm.

### *Kings Mountain State Park*

I-85 Exit 8 in NC and follow the signs

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

**Christmas at Kings Mountain, Saturday, December 5 from 10 am to 4 pm.**

Christmas was not always the hustle and bustle time of year that it is today. Step back in time at Kings Mountain and visit a Christmas scene from a simpler, by-gone era. You can be a part of it by helping us decorate the Farm.

### *Kings Mountain Historical Museum*

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

[www.kingsmountainmuseum.org](http://www.kingsmountainmuseum.org)

**Spirit of Christmas Past, Saturday, December 5 from 10 am to 7 pm, free.**

Celebrate the season with a full day of activities sure to get the whole family into the holiday spirit! During the day, experience the magic of the Toys, Games & TRAINS exhibit, and tour the historic Barber House decorated for the holidays. Learn about the history of Christmas celebrations, and participate in traditional craft demonstrations. That evening after the City of Kings Mountain's annual Christmas Parade, the Museum will turn the lights down low for a special "night run" of the trains. Costumed interpreters will provide candlelight tours of the historic Barber House while visitors enjoy hot apple cider with cookies by the firelight.

**Santa & Mrs. Claus Visit the Museum, Saturday, December 12 from 10 am to 1 pm, free.**

Bring your camera for the perfect holiday family photo. Santa Claus will be at the Museum during the Toys, Games & TRAINS exhibit to visit with the little ones while Mrs. Claus reads "The Night before Christmas."

***Guilford Courthouse National Military Park***

Greensboro, NC. <http://www.nps.gov/guco/index.htm>

**Living History Weekend with the Guilford Militia, Saturday and Sunday, November 14 and 15 from 10 am to 4 pm, Free.**

Visit the men and women of the Guilford Militia, an organization of dedicated Revolutionary War enthusiasts, in their re-created 1781 camp. They will present a variety of interpretive programs clad in replica Revolutionary War clothing and carrying the firearms of 1781 while living the life of the 1780's soldier and camp follower.

**History of the American Soldier, Saturday, November 14 from 10 am to 4 pm, free.**

Veterans Day, November 11, was originally called Armistice Day to observe the end of World War I in 1918. Today it is an annual national holiday to honor all those who have served in the armed forces of the United States. "The History of the American Soldier" is a living timeline of American military history. Learn about several periods of this nation's military history from early European settlement to the recent era. Interact with the soldiers to learn about their uniforms, equipment, and weaponry, and the period they represent.

***York County Genealogical & Historical Society***

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

**Building a Canal in the Carolina Back Country, Saturday, November 14 at 10 am, Landsford Canal State Park, SC.**

Park employees will tell the story of the creation of a canal in the 1820s to avoid the rocky shoals of the Catawba River and also about the rare and wonderful Rocky Shoals Spider Lily which lives in the shoals. The park is 12 miles South of I-77 on US 21.

MHA Docents  
Jim and Ann Williams  
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