

## Mecklenburg Historical Association Docents

*Spreading Knowledge of our History like the Down of a Thistle*

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



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### *A Mississippi Misadventure*

In the 1830s several members of Mecklenburg's Cedar Grove Torrance family aimed to establish a plantation on new land in Mississippi. Easier said than done.

We tend to forget there were two massive migrations of Scots-Irish in America. The first brought droves of people across the Atlantic, including Hugh Torrance who first farmed a square mile of land on McDowell Creek. In the 1800s many Scots-Irish descendants became the second wave, headed west following the prosperity of cotton, carrying their native feistiness, stubbornness, and family pride with them; some say they caused the west to be wild.

By 1836 Hugh's son James had grown the farm into a plantation he called Cedar Grove. It had well over 2,000 acres worked by 94 slaves. James' older sons, Hugh and Frank, had reached manhood, and wanted a change. Farmland for sale in Mecklenburg was scarce; it was nearly impossible to buy adjacent plots to splice into a farm. Families with large spreads generally had more sons than needed to work them. Cedar Grove would have been a handsome inheritance for Hugh and Frank, but not when shared with younger brothers, perhaps brothers yet to come; James' family of thirteen was not yet complete. They wanted their own places. James was still strong and vigorous; they couldn't envision a time when he would step aside, and until then, their father would always be in charge.

People were abuzz about promising land to the west; land that was cheap, fertile, and handy to waterways. The non-navigable Catawba had always made the Torrance's farm-to-market journey a costly one. The ever expanding demand for cotton was drawing settlers westward like a magnet. Hugh and Frank couldn't resist. The year before their sister Isabella had married Franklin Smith and they had a small daughter. The Smiths were happy to join Hugh and Frank on their venture.

Perhaps they anticipated that James would disapprove; the three men went behind his back to borrow the necessary money – \$5,000 from John Campbell. From that sum they paid Campbell \$1,326, half of the agreed price for three small tracts of land in Mississippi. The rest would finance their journey, and support them until their first



Cedar Grove Plantation

crop was in. The loan, though due in a year, could remain unpaid if the interest was paid promptly. To secure the loan, they asked their Uncle Frank and a business friend, Rufus Reid, to co-sign the note. Needless to say, James was furious that the loan was secured by others, but he gave cursory support to their moving.

The land where they were to settle was in a fine area, part of a tract opened a few years before by the signing of the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek with the Choctaw Nation. The soil, loamy and near navigable waters, had been lightly farmed if at all, probably never experiencing the underside of a plow. In December of 1836 the little band of migrants left Cedar Grove with several wagons filled with supplies and equipment, a few horses, and about 30 Negro slaves – their partial inheritance in advance.

Hugh, Frank, Isabella and Franklin wrote letters home, many of which were saved. They tell of their trials and misadventures, and reveal each writer's personality. The first letter came from James' son-in-law Franklin Smith. It described their journey – how many miles traveled each day and where they stayed the nights. Isabella – a spunky young woman keen for adventure – wrote to her sister from their new home near Coffeetown, Mississippi: *We arrived at this place a few days since after a long journey of six weeks as safe and well as when we left.* Along the way *"a small boat came along and brought us... to a landing where we had to ride on horse back through a swamp seven miles through which beat anything that you ever saw in your life but through it we came Mr. Smith carrying the baby and me plunging in after him sometimes in above the horses knees... I went to a party last night and I never was at such a place in my life The gentlemen got into what I call a real frolic while the ladies were there... I sat perfectly astonished all the evening."* Later the boys wrote that in the west many disputes were settled with the bowie knife.

Then their trials began. They had been in Mississippi barely six months when Franklin Smith died after a brief illness; Isabella instantly became a nineteen year old widow desperate to go home with no money to take her there. Soon the interest on the Campbell loan was due, and there was no money to cover it. James softened and paid the interest; perhaps a year was not enough time to clear land and raise an ample crop. Then Mr. Campbell died and his debts were called in. James bailed his sons out again by taking a bank loan, and began to insist that they repay him. The North Carolina bank would accept Mississippi money but only at a tiny fraction of its value. Yet his sons did not offer even a token payment. The indebtedness would gnaw at them for years.

From the beginning there had been a rift between Isabella and her father; it was not explained by their letters – they knew its nature. Probably James had not approved of Franklin Smith as a suitor. He was trained as a lawyer, had gotten in some legal trouble, and was no longer permitted to practice law in North Carolina. James' once spunky daughter repeatedly begged forgiveness: *"Dear father you well know how much trouble I have been to you I was young thoughtless and headstrong but thank God I have learned to take things more patiently and have got more experience in the ways of the world although it has been dearly bought; you say you forgive me for the past (for which I thank you with all my heart) and hope that I will bury all bad feelings but I can say with truth that I bear no ill will against any person on this earth."* Finally in 1843, seven years after they had moved to Mississippi, James relented, and sent stage fare for Isabella and her daughter to come home.

Hugh and Frank wrote many long letters home mostly about the farm business: how many acres were cleared, how many planted, rain or lack thereof, the price of cotton, getting the crop to market – endless details of great interest to another farmer. Meanwhile the bank loan festered – differently with each of the brothers. Frank worried incessantly for disappointing his father. He wrote, *"I have suffered greatly with my head for some time, but that has been trifling compared with my mental sufferings [over the loan]; " ... You must excuse the blunders that I have committed in this [letter], I ought not to send it as it is, but I am affraid I would not better it much if I would try."* You can almost see tears on the page.

Hugh was concerned about the loan – but not much bothered. He suggested his father come to Mississippi and obtain a deed of trust, but had nothing else to offer. He wrote in regard to the debt, *"I shall be compelled to rely on the kindness of my friends to arrange it [payment] at present it will be entirely out of my power to go to Carolina."* Hugh's letters became less frequent, not from estrangement, but from neglect. James died in 1847. Both boys were willed the slaves, horses, and goods already received. Frank was given \$150 to make him equal with his siblings, but for Hugh there was nothing else. He was allowed to keep his Negroes; the horses were dead, and most household goods had been replaced. It doesn't pay to disappoint your father.

Ann Williams

## *William R. Davie and the Constitutional Convention*

In the spring of 1787 the Continental Congress called a convention at the State House in Philadelphia to amend the Articles of Confederation. On June 30<sup>th</sup> William Richardson Davie, one of the delegates from North Carolina, stood and spoke to the questions of how the two houses of Congress should be organized. This question had been debated for weeks and was the last, worst division between the states. The larger states, Virginia, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania (North Carolina was the fourth largest), wanted proportional representation on the basis of population in both houses. The smaller states wanted equal representation in the upper house, with the same number of representatives from each state. There were good arguments on both sides but the Convention was so divided that neither side could muster the required seven votes to decide the issue.

Davie expressed his opinion that a compromise must be reached on this question if there was to be a constitution. He was not pleased with either of the choices but, if he had to choose now, he would vote for equal representation. This was a shock to the other large states and an encouragement to the smaller ones. Time was running short and if this question could not be resolved the convention would adjourn without coming to agreement and might never meet again. The union could dissolve; the larger states might survive but the smaller ones would be absorbed by their larger neighbors or by foreign powers. France, Spain and, of course Great Britain, were waiting and watching for just such an opportunity.

Delegates from eleven colonies had opened this convention in May, 1787. New Hampshire was late and Rhode Island never did attend. As with the Continental Congress, each State, had one vote. They had been called to revise the Articles of Confederation under which the government had operated since 1777. As the delegates arrived at the State House they realized that something else was going on. There were guards at the door and as each delegate arrived he was sworn to not breathe a word of what went on in that hall to another living soul, So Help Me God.

In those days a man's word was indeed his bond and all of the delegates kept their word. What would happen there was so momentous that news could not be allowed get out until they were all



William Richardson Davie

agreed and ready to announce it to the people. The proceedings were so secret that no official records were kept. Private records kept by some, notably James Madison, were later gathered and are all we know about what happened there.

Under the Articles of Confederation all power lay in the individual states; the Confederation could only prosecute the war, borrow money and negotiate with foreign powers. The power to tax lay with the individual states which could tax their own people and, through tariffs, tax each other. This worked for a while but it was difficult to get the states to contribute adequate supplies and funds and the Congress built up a tremendous debt. When the war ended in 1783 the union began to splinter. Some of the states did not feel bound to obey the provisions of the Treaty of Paris or to repay the loans that had financed the war. The States levied extensive tariffs on each other which generally served to destroy trade between them and drive them apart. Trade declined, unemployment rose and poverty increased. By 1786 there was chaos with rebellions in a number of states, the most notable of which was Shays' Rebellion in Massachusetts.



The Convention opened on May 25<sup>th</sup> 1787. After electing George Washington as presiding officer and other organizing tasks, the first order of business was to consider the Virginia Plan, a list of questions that had been proposed by James Madison to start the discussions. And the delegates began to realize that they were starting on something truly exceptional.

At that time in history it was universally accepted that all true wisdom came from the ancient Greeks and Romans. Any new idea not based on received wisdom was “original” and not worth even discussing. But this Convention was truly embarking on something original. In thousands of years of history there had never been a government whose powers derived from the people. Always there had been a King or Emperor, a Despot or Dictator, with universal power. That was the way it had always been. But what these colonists in North America had done in their revolution and were setting out to do in their constitution was an entirely new form of government. There was not even an outline for such an organization. It had never been done before.

There were many questions that had to be decided in order to form a country. The solutions they found seem usual and ordinary to us today – the best possible way to organize a government. But at that time these solutions were original and unheard of. A few of the questions were:

How many units of government shall there be? One, like the Continental Congress? Two or three or more? This question had been raised and discussed many times in previous years and the consensus was three units – the Legislative, the Judicial and the Executive. By separating the powers in this way the three groups would act as checks on each other.

The very limited powers of the judicial branch were quite clear and very separate from those of the State courts.

The question of the executive was more complicated and opinions varied. How many executives shall there be? One? two? three or more? In the end it was agreed to have a single executive. Should he be elected by the people or appointed by the state legislatures? Should he serve for life? Should his office be inherited by his eldest son? Or should he serve for a limited term and for how long? Could he be reelected and how many times? Should he have absolute power in all things, or lim-

ited power, and could he be impeached and removed from office?

All of these questions were eventually resolved with a single executive serving a four-year term, subject to impeachment and eligible for reelection. It was not until Franklin Roosevelt was elected to his third term, during the Second World War, that this flaw was revealed and solved by the 22<sup>nd</sup> Amendment in 1951.

The composition of the legislative branch was the most difficult question. How many houses should there be? Pennsylvania and Georgia had single houses; the unicameral form. Some advocated three or more but it was soon agreed that there would be two houses of congress. The larger or lower house would have delegates elected on the basis of state population. This gave the larger states more power in that house. The upper house would be the smaller one with delegates elected by the state legislatures. The similarity to England’s houses of Commons and Lords is obvious, but it is nowhere recorded that anyone mentioned that in the Convention.

Representation in the upper house was a very difficult question. The large states – Virginia, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania – wanted to have upper house delegates apportioned on the basis of population and wealth – proportional representation, similar to the modern concept of “one man, one vote.” The smaller states saw quite clearly that if both houses were apportioned on population, the three largest states would have an absolute majority in both houses and the smaller states would not have a say. They strongly opposed this as a “tyranny of the majority” and held out for equal representation. The middle states – North Carolina was fourth largest – were of two minds with many delegations divided on the question. The convention was at an impasse which went on for six weeks. Several influential delegates believed that it would never be resolved and went home in disgust. It was during this time that Davie gave his speech proposing a compromise – the house should have proportional representation, the senate equal representation.

Shortly after Davie’s speech the convention decided to form a committee to resolve this issue. There was one member from each state and each had one vote. Davie was appointed to that committee, perhaps because of the strength of his speech and the wisdom and flexibility he had shown.

The committee met for three days. There is no record of their discussion but it is said that Davie argued convincingly for equal representation. The committee report drafted by Benjamin Franklin said that "...in the second branch of the legislature each state shall have an equal vote." After eleven more days of debate, the convention finally agreed and passed what came to be called the Great Compromise. The final major questions had been resolved.

There was still a lot of work to be done. A committee was formed to write the actual Constitution which was taken up by the Convention, argued point by point, modified, re-argued, etc. and finally carried unanimously. Twelve States decided the issue. Rhode Island never did show up.

William Richardson Davie did not stay around for the final vote or to sign the document. The questions had been decided and he had other, more pressing business in North Carolina. Many of the most influential leaders in the State were opposed to the very idea of a national Constitution and had refused to serve in that Convention. He needed to begin the campaign towards ratification. But that is another story.

So, in the end, it was a speech given by a junior delegate that led to his membership in a subcommittee that decided the most important and contentious question and allowed the Convention to agree, write and adopt the Constitution that has guided our country for these 230 years.

Jim Williams

### *From the Chairman*

2019 is nearing its close. It has been a year of unusual circumstances which we experienced most significantly in weather, politics, and sports. November is the month when we observe a day of national appreciation. We might express our thankfulness for living in this country by using our critical thinking skills. We might consider using our individual influence and energy to seek peaceful resolutions. I hope we will strive for goals that unite us.

I am taking this opportunity to say how thankful I am to each MHA docent. You give your service in several counties throughout the year. You demonstrate, research, give tours and lectures. You are an asset to museums and libraries. The individuals who are members of our MHA Board have earned Janet's and my special thanks for the countless hours each person has spent each month to assure the continuity and efficiency of our organization.

Elsewhere in this issue you will read about the events planned by the various sites for the holiday season. Our Holiday Tea will be our closing activity for this year. I look forward to greeting our guests and you on the first Tuesday in December.

And some words of appreciation:

Hazel White has served diligently on the library committee and as librarian for many years. We congratulate and thank her for her service as she retires from that responsibility.

Allison Boatman was our secretary for the first half of this year. Her new employment will prevent her from continuing to serve in this capacity. We send our thanks to her and our wishes for her success in her career endeavors.

Barbara Jackson

### *Newsletter Deadline*

The deadline for the January/February Dandelion will be December 16. Send articles to Jim and Ann Williams at [mhadandelion@mindspring.com](mailto:mhadandelion@mindspring.com)

## *MHA Docent Programs*

**Tuesday, November 5**

***A Relentless Spirit, Catharine Ladd, Southern Educator, Entrepreneur and Author, 1808-1899***

This 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.

Catharine Stratton Ladd was inspired by meeting the Marquis de Lafayette as a teenager. In her life she educated hundreds of young women, pushed the boundaries of women's rights, helped revitalize her community of Winnsboro, SC, published her political and social opinions in newspapers and wrote poetry and fiction for national magazines.

Pat Veasey will tell how she researched and wrote this biography of Catharine Ladd and will sell and sign copies of the book. Winnsboro was burned in 1865 so Pat had to reconstruct Catherine's life through two decades of searching public records; descendants' memorabilia and objects; museum collections; and historical records. She has published numerous articles and papers, received a Fellowship from the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts (MESDA) and has written an article for MESDA on Catherine Ladd's husband, itinerant portrait artist, George Ladd



**Tuesday, December 3**  
**The Mills and the Music**

Please join us in the Fellowship Hall of Sugaw Creek Presbyterian Church for the MHA Docents' December Tea and Luncheon, our gift to the history community to share with friends both old and new. The business meeting is at 9:45 am; the program at 10 will be followed by the tea. This year we will again accept donations for the Toys for Tots program. To participate bring a new, unwrapped toy.

Our program features the early 20<sup>th</sup> century music of Charlotte. In the 1930s more music was recorded in Charlotte than in Nashville? Yes! Learn about the Queen City's heyday as a country and gospel recording center – sparked by the establishment of WBT, one of America's first broadcasting radio stations and by our emergence as the hub of the nation's major textile manufacturing region.

Dr. Tom Hanchett, Historian Emeritus at the Museum of the New South, author and Historian-in-Residence at the Robinson-Spangler Carolina Room of the public library will expand on the topic and tell us how this all happened.

**Docents:** Please be at the church by **9:30** to arrange your dishes on the serving table. All docents 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.



The Briarhoppers



Tom Hanchett with Mark Larson  
Photo by Ron Ross

## *MHA Dinner Meeting*

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](mailto:btaylor797@aol.com) or 336-404-1751.

### **Monday, November 18 Mecklenburg County and Charlotte in the Colonial Era**

Native Americans, Scots-Irish, African Americans and Germans lived in colonial Mecklenburg County, North Carolina. This presentation looks at the origins, histories, settlement patterns, and interaction of these groups. Developments in the area and across the colonies led to the founding of Mecklenburg County and the town of Charlotte.

A native of London, Dr. Hugh Dussek is a professor of history at Central Piedmont Community College in Charlotte, North Carolina. He holds a PhD in history from Union Institute & University and serves on the Board of Trustees for The Charlotte Museum of History. Hugh has given presentations on colonial and revolutionary history for the "Trail of History" television series on WTVI.



## *History News*

### **Revolutionary War Field Days Historic Camden, SC**

**Saturday and Sunday, November 2 and 3 from 10 am to 3 pm with a battle each day at 1:30 pm**

Revolutionary War Field Days at Camden have been held on the first full weekend of November since 1970. Hundreds of reenactors from across the country converge on the historic grounds to camp, battle, and celebrate over the weekend. Visitors view a battle each day, walk through the camps of the combatants and see demonstrations of Colonial crafts and skills. Colonial sutlers (merchants) and scholars giving talks about the war are on site as well. Almost 3,000 spectators and 400 reenactors and demonstrators attended the 2018 event.





## MHA Dues

The time has come to pay your Mecklenburg Historical Association Dues for 2020; our fiscal year runs from January 1 to December 31. This one payment entitles you to be a member of MHA as well as an MHA Docent. Membership letters will be going out soon, so it is not too early to pay your dues for next year. If you are not sure whether you have already paid your dues, send an email to [mbadandelion@mindspring.com](mailto:mbadandelion@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.



**Archaeological Institute of America, Central Carolinas Chapter  
Speaker Series: Winter 2019 and 2020, Free and Open to the Public**

All presentations will take place at 7:30 p.m. and last about 75 minutes at Semans Auditorium (Room 117), Belk Visual Arts Center, Davidson College, 315 N. Main St., Davidson, NC 28036.

Maps and Directions: <https://www.davidson.edu/about/campus-and-surroundings/maps-and-directions>

The Belk Visual Arts Center is at the corner of Griffith St. and Main St. in Davidson, on the western edge of campus; there is parking behind the building.

**Thursday, November 14, Elizabeth Greene (University of Western Ontario), “The Social Life of Roman Soldiers: The Role of Wives, Children and Families in Roman Military Communities.”**

Dr. Greene, Assoc Prof. of Classics, holds a Ph.D. from UNC-Chapel Hill. She will be speaking about some of her archaeological research at Vindolanda, a Roman fort and community in northern England.

**Tuesday, January 21, 2020, David Markus (Clemson University), “Jewish Diaspora in the 1600s-1800s.”**

Dr. Markus, Lecturer in Anthropology at Clemson, holds degrees from the University of Arkansas and the University of Florida. He will be speaking about his archaeological research in Jewish Studies; this work also has theoretical connections to his interest in African diasporas archaeology.

For additional information, contact chapter president Susan Walker at [susan.walker.books@gmail.com](mailto:susan.walker.books@gmail.com) or Board Member At-Large Janet Levy at [jelevy@uncc.edu](mailto:jelevy@uncc.edu). The AIA Spring schedule will be published in the next issue of the *Dandelion*.

**A Christmas “Candle Tea,” Bazaar and Luncheon at the Little Church on the Lane, Saturday, November 16 from 9 am to 2 pm, 528 Moravian Lane, Charlotte, Free.**

There will be an introduction to Moravian history, traditional craft demonstrations, putz explanation and exhibition, nativity sets on display, a cookie walk to support missions in Sierra Leone, stars and other crafts.



### *Site News*



**Historic Rosedale Plantation announces that groundbreaking for their new Events Pavilion has begun.**

Made possible through a generous gift from Ed and Agnes Weisiger, long time Rosedale supporters, the 3,000 square foot structure will be a welcome addition to the historic site. This roofed, open-air pavilion will accommodate groups up to 185 (seated) and boasts a large fireplace and lush garden screenings. “This is a welcome addition to our beautiful meeting and wedding venue” explained Historic Rosedale Plantation Board President Tom Spada. “We’re a historic site first, but expanding our event space makes good business sense and allows for the expansion of our role in the Charlotte community.” The 1815 Federal style home and verdant gardens

have been the backdrop for many local functions. The open-air design allows the house and gardens to shine.

**New Exhibit: Brooklyn, Opening Friday, November 15 at 10 am, Levine Museum of the New South.**

The neighborhood of Brooklyn will be added to the ongoing #HomeCLT project. This historic African American neighborhood was located in Second Ward, near uptown Charlotte. Under urban renewal, it was destroyed and its residents displaced. Help uncover the history that's been buried.

**The House with a Heart, a New Exhibit Opening Thursday, October 26, Matthews Heritage Museum.**

This new exhibit spotlights the 40-year anniversary of the Matthews HELP Center which made its home for their first 25 years in the Massey-Clark House, now home to the Matthews Heritage Museum. The exhibit will continue through the end of January.

This exhibit traces the four decades of growth of the Matthews HELP Center from an all-volunteer agency, assisting those needing aid and support, to their current professional staff. In 1979 the community of Matthews, along with several churches and the Council of Aging, recognized a need to assist those needing guidance and temporary support. The HELP Center moved to 119 Ames Street in Matthews 15 years ago where it is today.

**Toys, Games, & Trains Exhibit, Open Friday, November 29 through Saturday, December 28, Tuesdays through Saturdays from 10 am to 4 pm,. Extended Hours until 8 pm on December 7, 14 and 21, Kings Mountain Historical Museum, Free.**

This annual exhibit fills the Museum with model train displays assembled by local "S" Gaugers, as well as railroad memorabilia, and antique toys and games. Visitors of all ages will be enchanted as they explore the miniature snow-covered scenes that line the tracks, and discover the interactive carousel, hot air balloons, and mailbag pickup. Parents and grandparents will enjoy reminiscing about the toys and games of their childhood. Bring your cameras - this exhibit provides great opportunities for holiday family photos.

**Historic Rosedale Plantation is seeking to fill a position for a Program and Volunteer Coordinator.**

This is a part time position, 18 to 20 hours per week with no benefits. For more information and/or to submit your resume, cover letter and references, contact Deborah Hunter, Executive Director [dhunter@historicrosedale.org](mailto:dhunter@historicrosedale.org)

*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>

**Five "Ps" in a Pod: Gardening Class, Saturday, November 23 at 10 am to 2 pm, \$45.00.**

Retired Director of UNC Charlotte's Botanical Garden and Professor of Botany, Dr. Larry Mellichamp will focus on the proper ways of gardening in Charlotte; Planning, Preparing, Planting, Protecting & Pruning. The program will end with a walk through the gardens at Historic Rosedale. Dr. Mellichamp welcomes specific questions about your garden including problems, concerns, and plant identification. Snacks and drinks will be provided. Please wear secure shoes for walking in the gardens and dress for the weather.

**Ghosts and Christmas Past: Haunted History Tour, Friday, December 13 at 6:30 pm, Registration Required.**

A special holiday version of our popular Haunted History tour. Join Rosedale staff and Charlotte Area Paranormal Society members for this unique event. We'll focus on some of the tragic events that have occurred at our site during the holiday season along with exploring holiday traditions from southern plantation life.

### *Historic Latta Plantation*

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

#### **Fiddle & Fire: A Night at the Museum, Saturday, November 2 from 6 to 8 pm.**

Join us for a night under the stars. This special event will include live music, star gazing, a candle-lit tour of the historic Latta home, whiskey tastings and marshmallow roasting by the fire. Bring your own picnic blanket, dinner, and beverage of choice. There will also be mulled wine and palm reading for an additional fee. Registration required.

#### **Victorian Christmas, Friday and Saturday, November 29 and 30 from 10 am to 4 pm.**

Experience early holiday traditions including open hearth cooking, horse-drawn wagon rides, mulled wine, ornate decorations, a live reading of the Night the Before Christmas, Victorian era outdoor games, blacksmithing, and Victorian carolers. Make a Christmas craft, toast s'mores around the bonfire, and pose for pictures with St. Nick.

Guest interpreter Dontavius Williams, creator of "The Chronicles of Adam," and guests will be on site for a special presentation of "Christmas in the Quarters." They will discuss the way the enslaved community celebrated Christmas during the Victorian Era.

Food vendors will be present and there will be complementary Whiskey tasting on Friday. And don't miss free samples of Mrs. Latta's 19th century gingercake recipe! Shop the local artisan market for unique gifts including art, photography, jewelry, pottery, ironworks, soap, quilts and stained glass.

### *The Charlotte Museum of History*

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

#### **Hidden History: Mecklenburg's Rosenwald Schools, Saturday, November 9 from 10 am to 2 pm.**

These schools were built by African American communities in the rural South during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century with help from the Rosenwald Foundation. They fostered a generation of well-educated African Americans, despite the lack of resources and hardships they faced during the Jim Crow era of racial segregation. Of twenty-six Rosenwald Schools built in Mecklenburg County, only seven remain. This self-guided tour features Siloam School in northeast Charlotte and McClintock School in southwest Mecklenburg County. Attendees can visit these schools, learn about preservation and restoration efforts to save them, and speak to alumni who attended.

The museum is leading a community effort to restore the Siloam School and open it to the public. All proceeds from the tour will support the Save Siloam School Project. This event was made possible in part by generous sponsorship from Wal-Mart.

### *Historic Brattonsville*

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

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

#### **Christmas Candlelight Tours, Saturday, December 7 from 3 to 9 pm.**

Historic interpreters will lead an evening of traditional Christmas festivities portraying how people in the Carolina Piedmont celebrated the holiday in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. There will be Father Christmas, candle-dipping, painting ornaments, period sutlers, a glassblowers, live music and food concessions.

*President James K. Polk State Historic Site*

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

[www.polk.nchistoricsites.org](http://www.polk.nchistoricsites.org)**President Polk's Birthday Celebration, Saturday, November 2 from 11 am to 3 pm.**

Join us for one of our most beloved events of the year. This event features living history demonstrations, tours of the historic cabins, games, crafts, and general family fun for all.

**A World of Transformation: The Lives of Catawba Indian Women, 1746-1840, Saturday, November 16 at 10:30 am.**

Dr. Brooke Bauer is a citizen of the Catawba Indian Nation of South Carolina and her research concentrates specifically on the ways in which Catawba women created, promoted, and preserved a Catawba identity as they adapted to the changes occurring inside and outside Catawba tribal boundaries during the eighteenth and early nineteenth-centuries. Her talk looks at women's intimate relationship to Catawba land through their shared history, kinship connections, and their economic productivity. Focusing on these three characteristics, one can see historical continuities in Catawba ways of building a nation through the actions of women.

**Holiday Basket Workshop, Saturday, December 14 at Noon to 4 pm, \$25.00.**

Weave a festive holiday basket with dyed reeds. All material supplied and all skill levels are welcome.

*Fort Dobbs State Historic Site*

438 Fort Dobbs Road, Statesville, NC 704 873 5882

<http://www.fortdobbs.org>**Military Timeline, Saturday and Sunday, November 9 and 10 from 10 am to 3 pm.**

Visit with soldiers and support personnel from hundreds of years of North Carolina history. The experiences of veterans of the Revolution, Civil War, World Wars and other conflicts will be shared through living history displays and weapons firing demonstrations.

**Winter on the Western Frontier, Saturday, December 14 from 10 am to 4 pm.**

This living history will give visitors a glimpse of what daily life was like for the garrison of Fort Dobbs as they prepared to spend winter in the fort in 1756. On-going displays of camp life and historic cooking will be offered, as well as musket and cannon firing demonstrations.

*Kings Mountain Historical Museum*

100 East Mountain Street, Kings Mountain, NC 704 739 1019

[www.kingsmountainmuseum.org](http://www.kingsmountainmuseum.org)**Sneak Preview for the Toys, Games & Trains Exhibit, Monday, November 25 from 5:30 to 7 pm.**

Get a first look at the holiday exhibit in the magic of the nighttime atmosphere. Complete with festive snacks. For information on the Exhibit see "Toys, Games, & Trains, Exhibit" under Site News, above.

**Spirit of Christmas Past, Saturday, December 7 from 10 am to 8 pm, Free.**

Step back into Christmas past with antique toys, electric trains, roaring fires, historic games and crafts. The historic Barber House will be decked out for the holiday season with ongoing hearth cooking demonstrations.

**Santa & Mrs. Claus Visit the Museum, Saturday, December 21 from 11 am to 1 pm, Free.**

Come hear Mrs. Claus read "The Night Before Christmas" and take your picture with Santa Claus next to the Tree! There will be plenty of inspiration on what to ask Santa for with the variety of toys and games on display.



*Reed Gold Mine State Historic Site*

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

<https://historicsites.nc.gov/all-sites/reed-gold-mine>

**A Golden Christmas, Saturday, December 7 from 10 am to 4 pm.**

Take a candlelight tour in the daytime, down in the mine. See how miners in the early 1800s celebrated Christmas and learn the Germanic origins of some of our holiday traditions. There will be locally produced crafts and a hayride to Mansion Hill. Refreshments will be available.

*Duke Mansion*

400 Hermitage Road, Charlotte, 704 714 4400

<http://www.dukemansion.com>

**Charlotte in the Revolution, Sunday, November 10 at 3 pm, Free.**

In honor of Veteran's Day, Tom Phlegar will share stories of Revolutionary War events that occurred in the Charlotte area. Past President of Charlotte's *Sons of the American Revolution* and a reenactor known for his period appropriate uniforms, Tom will share pictures and stories of dozens of the locations that are significant to Mecklenburg County's history during the Revolutionary War.

This program is part of The Rosalie Reynolds *Explore History!* Series, presented by Wells Fargo Private Bank and a partnership between The Duke Mansion, Levine Museum of the New South, and the North Carolina Chapter of the Institute of Classical Architecture and Art.

*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)

**Life in the Waxhaws Lantern Tour, Saturday, November 9 at 6, 6:30, 7 and 7:30 pm.**

Spend an evening in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. See what life was like for early settlers living in the Waxhaws and how the American Revolution affected our region. Costumed volunteers will bring to life the events that shaped the community and demonstrate the skills it took to survive in this backcountry settlement.

*Matthews Historical Foundation***Christmas Open House, Sunday, December 15 from 4 to 6 pm, Free.**

Dr. and Mrs. Reid will welcome guests to their Victorian House at 134 W. John Street with a Christmas open house. Tours will be given by docents from the Mathews Heritage Museum. The Historic Reid House will be dressed in its finest Christmas garlands as visitors tour this 1890 treasure. As you move from room-to-room you will be delighted with the decorations of yesteryear. Light refreshments will be served.



**Nancy Basket, Artist-in-Residence.**

Traditional artist Nancy Basket demonstrates basket making techniques and discusses her work with kudzu, wisteria and long leaf pine needles. She will be in residence from 10 am to 5 pm on Friday and Saturday, November 8 and 9, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, December 5, 6 and 7, and Friday and Saturday, December 20 and 21.

**Native American Art & Craft Sale, Saturday, December 7 from 9 am to 5 pm.**

Just in time for the holiday season, see and shop for jewelry, Catawba pottery, baskets and quilts and one-of-a-kind artwork at this festival, held in conjunction with the City of Lancaster's Christmas in the City.

**Jesus, Mary, and Frosty: The Art and Artistry of Christmas Yard Art, Lunch and Learn, Friday, December 13 at Noon.**

Folklorist and USC Lancaster Native American Studies Director Dr. Stephen Criswell will discuss Christmas Yard Art from simple lights and greenery to the assembling of those icons that best express the meaning of the holiday and creating, often by hand, a unique expression of the "Christmas Spirit."

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