

September - October  
August 27 2021  
Vol.27, No. 3



Newsletter of the  
*Mecklenburg Historical  
Association and MHA Docents*

*Spreading Knowledge of our History Like the Seeds of a Dandelion*

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

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Submission for this newsletter should be sent to [sarahsuenc@gmail.com](mailto:sarahsuenc@gmail.com). Deadline for November - December MHA Dandelion Newsletter is October 25.



*From the President*

Linda Dalton

Hello to everyone. What a difficult and crazy time we have upon us. After working with our MHA Board to arrange a dinner meeting for September, I was so disappointed to have to cancel it yet again. We simply didn't think it was safe for our membership to meet together for dinner and a speaker after the new mask mandate took effect. It was doubly disappointing to cancel Dr. Sally McMillen as our speaker for the second time.

We will look to the future and, as soon as we believe it is safe to meet together, we will schedule an MHA membership-wide event for all to attend.

I am truly grateful for Sarah Sue Hardinger's time and talent in producing both the History Calendar and the MHA Dandelion Newsletter. Look for both publications to be released today. It is heartening to read about so many history sites that now have public events scheduled. Please make every effort to support the sites, attend those events and invite your friends.

A special mention for the 37th Annual Hart Square Fall Festival in Hickory on Saturday, October 23rd. If you have never been to the Hart Square event, I strongly urge you to take time to visit this year. Hart Square is only open to the public one day each year (the 4th Saturday in October). My husband and I have volunteered at this event for over 20 years. It is truly the closest thing to going back in time I have ever seen. It is a literal village of 19th century log structures, all completely furnished with docents and craftspeople manning each one and waiting for you to visit. Elsewhere in this newsletter is the information to order your tickets. The tickets are much easier to order this year - just go online to the Hart Square website and order.

Please let us know if you have suggestions for MHA. We welcome your input. I look forward to seeing each of you in person as soon as we can make that happen.

Best wishes to all.

***IF YOU HAVE NOT RENEWED YOUR MHA MEMBERSHIP, PLEASE DO SO NOW.***

### *From the Docent Co-Chairs*

Barbara McCray Jackson, Docent Co-chair

It is September and we had hoped to be back. We had planned an in-person social gathering but caution for the health of our members has caused us to cancel that event. During the summer, we were fortunate to have met by ZOOM through Valerie's diligent coordination. Our Voices From The Past was cancelled in 2020 and 2021, but Lynn Mintzer reports that requests have been made for the service of members for events later this year. We are hopeful for resumption of Voices next spring. The ladies of the Cooking Guild had hearth cooking activities at Carolyn's home. And your board members met several times during the summer to catalog and shelve books in our library, to revise the Guidelines and the Passport to History, and to plan for our 30th anniversary celebration. That's correct! we have given service to Mecklenburg County historic sites and organizations for more than 30 years.

Sadly, during June, Historic Latta Plantation was closed. A significant part of Mecklenburg County has been silenced, temporarily, is our hope. It is a clarion call to us to gently remind the public that history can lead us to solutions. We need to examine what works or not, why, and how. History gives us examples of style and technique. History may reference evil or good. We should choose that which empowers us not that which lulls us into robotic behavior.

Welcome back! We are being challenged by a virus which has disrupted our lives. But we are resilient, resourceful and analytical individuals. We will look at historical precedents; we will rely upon scientific evidence; we will make moral judgments, and we will move forward and embrace the adjustments we must make to have productive meetings, productive lives, a productive civilization. We are DOCENTS!



### *Know the Boards*

The following is a list of the board members of the Mecklenburg Historical Association and its Docent Committee.

#### **MHA Board of Directors**

Linda Dalton, President  
Tom Cottingham, Treasurer  
Barbara Taylor, Secretary  
Jane Johnson  
Luther Moore  
Robert Ryals  
Sarah Sue Hardinger, North Mecklenburg Branch  
Janet Dyer, Docent co-chair  
Barbara Jackson, Docent co-chair

#### **Docent Board**

##### 2019 – 2021 MHA Docent Board

Co-chairs: Barbara Jackson and Janet Dyer  
Vice Chair: Jane Estep  
Treasurer: Valerie Jones  
Secretary: Linda Beverly  
Hospitality Chairman: Carolyn Dilda  
Newsletter editor: Sarah Sue Hardinger

#### Active Docent Committees:

- “Voices from the Past”- Chairman, Lynn Mintzer. Plans to resume the event April 2022.
- Guidelines Committee reviewed the Docent Guidelines and suggested changes to the Docent Board. Members of the committee – Janet Dyer, Valerie Jones, and Jane Estep.
- 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee members – Janet Dyer, Valerie Jones, Barbara Jackson, Carolyn Dilda and Suzanne Simmons. Planning a celebration of the 30 years of MHA Docents. March, 2022 MHA dinner meeting.
- Library Committee – inventorying the Docent Library and adding donations of books from the Schiele Museum, Dick Banks (Torance) and Ann and Jim Williams to the collection. Members: Lynn Mintzer (library chair), Barbara Jackson, Valerie Jones, Janet Dyer, Jane Estep and Hazel White, Library chair emeritus
- Nominating Committee – selection of new officers for the 2022-2023 Docent Board. Audrey Mellichamp, chair
- Historic Cooking Guild of the Carolinas – Carolyn Dilda, chair

### *MHA September Dinner Meeting*

We are sorry to announce that we have postponed this program and dinner due to concerns around Covid for our repeat attendees.

### *MHA Docent Programs*

We are sorry to announce that we have postponed our picnic due to concerns around Covid for our attendees.



## *History News*

News, thoughts and bits of history since we were last together.

### *MeckDec Day Photo Gallery*

Robert Ryals did two MeckDec readings. County Commissioner Laura Meier and City Council Member Julie Eislet shared with us the joint proclamation

officially declaring MeckDec week 2021. The crowd shouted Huzzahs and the muskets and cannons fired!

Look for us to return to our usual location at Trade and Tryon Street in 2022.



Chief Justice Paul Newby spoke at the dinner with a fabulous meal by The Olde Mecklenburg Brewery. The Captain James Jack Bike Ride came off in spite of the heat.



### **Matthews Heritage Museum**

232 N. Trade Street Matthews, NC 28105  
704-708-4996

Mailing: PO Box 1117 Matthews, NC 28106  
[www.matthewsheritagemuseum.org](http://www.matthewsheritagemuseum.org)

The Matthews Heritage Museum, 232 N. Trade Street is looking for individuals to serve as docents or tour guides. Do you like to learn? Do you like history? Join the group of women and men who are conducting guided tours of the museum. The rewards are great! In addition to learning about the history of Matthews, you will learn about the history of Tank Town, which is a temporary exhibit on an African American neighborhood that will evolve into a permanent exhibit.

Each volunteer is asked to take one shift of 3 hours once a month. Shifts are AM: 10 to 1, PM: 1 – 4. ***We are looking to recruit volunteers for the specific shifts.***

In addition to learning history, you will enjoy getting to know this interesting group. Occasionally the volunteers will take trips to other historic sites of interest. An initial training class of 4 – 5 days will orient new volunteers. A new training class will be offered beginning Thursday, September 9 at 10 a.m. and meet for the next four Saturdays from 10 to 12. Ongoing training (when scheduled) is held on the first Tuesday of the month throughout the year from 10 to 12.

The Museum is open Thursday to Saturday each week from 10 to 4:30. Volunteers are needed to be present for a morning or afternoon shift at least once a month on one of those days. Additionally, you may be asked to give a tour to school groups, senior groups or scouts when they are scheduled.

To learn more about becoming a volunteer, please call 704-708-4996 during our operating hours. Thank you for considering becoming a docent for the Matthews Heritage Museum .... **Where children experience and adults remember.**

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ED: Let me add that **all** sites need docents. Just contact the number or email listed in the History Calendar to learn the unique needs and opportunities of a site near you.

### **Hugh Torance House and Store Successful Open House**

Sarah Sue Hardinger

Hugh Torance House and Store, which has been closed for almost two years, opened its doors – all its doors – for two days August 21 and 22 as a thank you to those who have helped bring her to the point of reopening.



*1<sup>st</sup> Mecklenburg Militia guests visit the mysterious 1787 addition. Storage, sleeping, tavern, who knows?*

Board members, docents, volunteers, militia members and shanghaied friends all enjoyed seeing the fruits of months of labor to clean, restore, and redecorate the house and the store in order to tell more of the story of a small mercantile family and the equally small enslaved family that made this place a going concern.

The excellent research of Ann Williams and others in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century has been extended so that we can now be much more specific about the Falls girls who came with their mother when she married Hugh Torance, more exact about the \$300,000 worth of goods that were purchased in Philadelphia, and are able to track the land purchases that eventually made Cedar Grove (the large brick house next door) possible.

The site will remain closed for at least two more weeks to allow for the outside to be painted, to complete some small projects and so as not to compete with the Battle of Charlotte being held just down the road at Rural Hill over Labor Day weekend. Check the website. When it opens, you will know exactly when we will be open.

The Hugh Torance House and Store, the oldest standing store in the county, and possibly the state, is located at 8231 Gilead Rd in Huntersville, NC 28078.

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



## ***Honeywell Commits \$1.5 Million to Carolinas Aviation Museum's New Campaign to Build State-of-the-Art STEM Innovation Center at CLT Airport***

*Reimagined CAM seeks to welcome 100,000 visitors, 15,000 students annually*

**CHARLOTTE, N.C. (Aug. 10, 2021)** - Carolinas Aviation Museum, a Smithsonian affiliate that has served as a hub of community engagement for aviation history and STEM education in the Charlotte region for nearly three decades, today announced a \$1.5 million gift from Charlotte-based Honeywell, catalyzing the launch of the public phase of the museum's largest fundraising effort to date – "The Lift Off Campaign."

The gift from Honeywell, a Fortune 100 technology company that, among other industry-specific solutions, produces aerospace products and services found on virtually every commercial, defense and space aircraft, brings the Lift Off Campaign's quiet phase funding total to \$10 million, including \$3.5 million in additional private contributions from unnamed donors. The \$10 million also includes an expected \$5 million from Charlotte Douglas International Airport for site development.

The goal of The Lift-Off Campaign is to raise \$22 million in cash investments – plus several million dollars of in-kind support – toward creation of a state-of-the-art STEM innovation center on airport property, with construction expected to begin in early 2022 and a planned opening in 2023.

The reimagined Carolinas Aviation Museum, which will be developed in partnership with Charlotte Douglas International Airport, will house dozens of aircraft and include exhibits such as interactive cockpits, flight simulators, and historic artifacts that chronicle the region's indelible connection to the wonder of flight and aviation innovation. The new facility will be located at the site of Charlotte Douglas International Airport's historic WPA/Douglas Airport Hangar, which will be restored as part of the museum project.

"We are extremely grateful for the support from the Airport, the City of Charlotte and the generous investment from Honeywell, and we are ready to lift off on our next phase to create an exciting new facility that

matches the innovation we seek to inspire," said Carolinas Aviation Museum President Stephen Saucier. "We are looking forward to once again connecting in person with the region, contributing to Charlotte's cultural tourism and economic growth, and providing impactful hands-on learning opportunities in STEM that will help address economic mobility."

Honeywell will sponsor three key areas in the new museum. The first is a themed exhibition zone in the new Main Gallery known as Innovation Nation that presents the history of aviation as a testament to humankind's capacity for creativity and imagination of possibilities beyond the known. US Airways Flight 1549, the Miracle on the Hudson plane, will be on display in Innovation Nation. Honeywell's 131-9A auxiliary power unit, or APU, played a critical role in enabling the Airbus aircraft to touch down safely in the Hudson River in New York City on January 15, 2009. Honeywell is also sponsoring the museum's Maker Space, in which youth can learn about aviation via interactive, hands-on activities, and a Career Center, which will serve as a vital resource to help students and area adults connect to careers in STEM-based industries.

As a result of the campaign, Carolinas Aviation Museum hopes to welcome more than 100,000 visitors annually and connect more than 15,000 students to STEM programming and career development labs.

Carolinas Aviation Museum, a private nonprofit, was founded in 1991 by Floyd Swinton Wilson and his wife Lois and has operated as a "museum without walls" offering virtual exhibitions and community STEM programs funded by Honeywell since vacating its original location in 2019. Now, the new museum will seek to celebrate North Carolina as the birthplace of aviation and immerse visitors in the history of flight.

"The new Carolinas Aviation Museum will be a dynamic cultural attraction that will connect visitors to the Carolinas' storied aviation past and elevates educational opportunities and experiences for people of all backgrounds," said museum board chair Marc Oken, who is chairing the capital campaign. "We are humbled that donors will be able to see their dollars come to life in an immersive space that ignites creativity and inspires the next generation of aviation engineers, educators and experts."

For more information on the campaign and plans for the museum's new facility, visit [carolinasaviation.org](https://carolinasaviation.org).



With this issue we are separating the History Calendar from the MHA Dandelion. For ongoing events and contact information, please see the History Calendar for this date on the MHA website, [meckdec.org](http://meckdec.org). This new section, Special Events, will highlight one-time or annual events, especially those that may sell out once they are announced to the general public. These events will be scheduled within the next two months or later.

## *Special Events*

### *Hart Square 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Fall Festival is On!*

Hart Square is a 200 acre nature preserve that features the nation's largest collection of historic log structures. The village was started by Dr. Robert W. Hart III.

Among these 103 testaments of American history stand thirty homes, two churches, and several trade shops. Each cabin has been furnished by Becky Hart with artifacts from the 1800s that she and Bob collected over the past 60 years at flea markets and estate sales all over the Eastern United States. Each cabin appears as if a pioneer just got up and walked out moments prior. All of the cabins were rescued from the Piedmont and Western regions of North Carolina.

Since 1986, as the first touches of autumn fleck Hog Hill on the fourth Saturday in October, Hart Square bustles with hundreds of knowledgeable artisans and docents

demonstrating and sharing the craftsmanship and subsistence of Carolina's pioneers.

To enter the village on festival day is to enter the early 1800s. Here, visitors will witness everything from flax making, cotton baling, and tinsmithing to apple butter making and the sweet sounds of old time music. Demonstrators are dressed in period clothing and truly bring the village to life. We boast the most talented and authentic demonstrators in the country and know you will agree with us when you come to visit.

**Tickets go very fast**, so don't wait to go to <https://www.hartsquare.com/events/the-annual-festival> to get yours.

Saturday October 23rd 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Tickets are \$45 a person (plus \$3.15 tax)  
Children 12 and under are free

***Plan now: You're invited to register & participate.***

Register on-line & we'll send you a response.  
Then you can send your check.  
Our focus is the Southern Campaign in SC, battles & related to FM as much as possible,  
& the times as they were.

Look forward to hearing from you,  
All the best,  
Carole & George

*"In God We Trust" & "God Bless America!"*  
*Swamp Fox Murals Trail Society / Francis Marion*  
*Advocates: a 501(c)(3), non-profit*  
*PO Box 667, Manning SC 29102*  
*803-478-2645, cells: 803-460-9626, 803-460-7416*  
*Francis Marion Symposium: Oct 22-23,*  
*2021 [www.francismarionsymposium.com](http://www.francismarionsymposium.com)*  
*Clarendon Rev. history: [www.clarendonmurals.com](http://www.clarendonmurals.com)*



### *19<sup>th</sup> Francis Marion Symposium*

Dear Patriots & Marion  
Advocates,  
Hope you're well & getting out,  
We're working on the 19th

Francis Marion Symposium:

The Agenda is a work on progress.

Come to the **19<sup>th</sup> Francis Marion/Swamp Fox**

**Symposium Oct 22-23, 2021, Manning, SC**

**Explore the Revolutionary War Southern Campaign with General Francis Marion**

**Immerse yourself in Francis Marion's world** and the significance of the Southern Campaign of the American Revolution.

**"Times of Francis Marion, 1732-1795"**

Presentations & Evening dinner in Rev. History

Site: FE DuBose Campus, Central Carolina Technical College, I-95, Exit 122, Manning, SC



## Cultural Vision Grant



Audience: Charlotte-Mecklenburg creative individuals and nonprofits.

Initial Application Deadline: Wednesday, September 8, 2021, at noon.

### ***PHILADELPHIA PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CELEBRATES 250 YEARS 1770-2020 September 18 and 19, 2021***



Initially scheduled for September 2020, Philadelphia Church in Mint Hill postponed celebrating 250 years of worship and mission until September 2021. We are excited to now extend our warmest invitation to help us remember our history and celebrate where God is leading our community and congregation.

It was once said that of the six smaller towns surrounding Charlotte, Huntersville, Davidson, Cornelius, Pineville, Matthews, and Mint Hill, five grew and prospered because of a railroad. Mint Hill grew and prospered

ASC seeks to support high quality arts, science, history and heritage projects presented within Mecklenburg County by creative individuals or nonprofit organizations that:

- Building Community by connecting individuals across points of difference
- Building Community by nurturing, celebrating, and supporting authentic cultures and creative expression
- Increasing Relevance by using arts, science and history to address complex community issues
- Increasing Innovation by supporting the creation of new and groundbreaking work

Grants of up to \$10,000 will be awarded. Grantees will be required to provide matching dollars toward the project

because of a Church. The history of Mint Hill and the history of the Church have long been intertwined. This two-day event begins Saturday, September 18 from 1:00 to 4:00. Unique and exciting activities will include Voices from the Past tour, a Gospel Jubilee, historic brick making, colonial hearth cooking, churned ice cream, horse and buggy rides.

Guests are invited to make a brick with creek sand, red dirt, and water from the faucet (not the spring) and put them in the sun to dry. Church history tells that German settlers from the Morningstar Lutheran Church taught members at Philadelphia to make bricks for the construction of the third Sanctuary built in 1826. Two previous churches, both thought to be log structures, burned. That brick structure, now called the Chapel, has been in continuous use for 195 years.

Members dressed in period costumes will portray church and community leaders in our Voices from the Past tour. These Voices include Rev. Alexander Craighead, fiery circuit preacher; John Bain, builder of Bain Academy; Carl McEwen; Anne and Baxter Bigham; Adam Alexander, signer of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence; Peggy Todd Helms; Nancy and Rev. Russell Kerr; Josiah McCall, wounded at Jamestown and died shortly thereafter; Tina and Steve Ross and many more.

Guests are invited to visit the wall of memories inside the rotunda area, see the 250- anniversary quilt in the Sanctuary, listen to a gospel singing medley in the Chapel, enjoy homemade ice cream, ride in a horse drawn cart, listen to the Charlotte Folk Musicians and purchase a special handmade pottery coffee mug.

On Sunday, Philadelphia will welcome Rev. Mary Jane Kerr Cornell to the pulpit. She is the daughter of Rev. Russell and Nancy Kerr and grew up in Mint Hill, living in the church manse, attending Bain School, and

graduating from Independence High School. Following the Scots Irish tradition, approximately 40 members will carry tartans representing their family clan. This beautiful ceremony called Kirkin' o' the Tartans will be led by a bagpiper, the clergy, and the tartan bearers.

expenses. Generally, applicants will be required to match dollar-for-dollar in cash or a combination of cash and in-kind.

The Session of the Church and the 250 Anniversary Committee cordially invites the entire community to join in this two-day celebration. The purpose of this historic celebration is not to glorify the deeds of our ancestors but to inspire us all to serve more effectively in the present.

More information and links to the online application: [www.artsandscience.org/grants/grants-for-organizations/cultural-vision-grants/](http://www.artsandscience.org/grants/grants-for-organizations/cultural-vision-grants/)



## *Feature Articles*

### *Guardian of History*

**Barbara McCray Jackson**

When you visit a museum or an historic site, a guide or a docent will share with you pertinent information which enhances your visit. The MHA docents tell, show, and write about the sites where they work. One docent became a warrior for a site in her neighborhood. Betty Jane Caldwell, or Bee Jay as we call her, lives in the Pottstown community of Huntersville. She attended first through third grade in a four-room Rosenwald school a mile from home. After third grade she was enrolled at the Torrence-Lytle School near her house. The building had devoted teachers and offered grades 1 to 12. It was the hub of life in the community, the place for after school gatherings. Historically, the school was the first

high school for African Americans in northern Mecklenburg County.

In 1966 Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools were desegregated and Torrence-Lytle School was closed. However, the building continued to be used by the community for many years before it was closed again. In 2004 Bee Jay learned of plans to tear down the building. Her unhappiness with the demolition plans stirred her to organize protests. She appealed to the Landmarks Commission alerting them to the cohesive influence the school had in the community. The building was taken over by the Landmarks Commission and continues to serve the community.

The history of this community in Huntersville has been published in a pamphlet written by Bee Jay. She has written a book of poetry. Her services as docent continue also.

### *Terror in the Backcountry, 1771*

**Randell Jones**

During May and June 2021, we observe and learn from the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of formative events to America's nation-building efforts preceding the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence by four years (and the one Thomas Jefferson wrote for everyone else by five years). Although independent-America's civic virtues would become "liberty" and "equality," these formative colonial events, internal to North Carolina as the War of the Regulation, reveal our Tar Heel forebearers confronting prevalent and persisting attitudes of superiority and class entitlement and a hard conviction that "might makes right." How this conflict unfolded and concluded had great consequence for how individual

North Carolinians approached the soon-arriving War for Independence. And this history should perhaps inform us now how we more fully observe and correctly commemorate the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of that American Revolution.

Government for North Carolinians in the backcountry of the late 1760s was centered in Hillsborough although populations lived as far west as Bethabara, Salisbury, and Mecklenburg County. These yeomen farmers had been preyed upon and financially abused for years by authorities appointed by North Carolina's royal governor and colonial assembly. These perpetrators were lawyers,



clerks, sheriffs, judges, and tax collectors let loose upon the backcountry citizenry with scant oversight. These unrelenting abuses in time inspired riots in Hillsborough in September 1770 when Regulators, seeking a better regulation of government, attacked the court, chasing judges from the bench and lawyers through the streets. As tensions between Regulators and officials continued through the winter, rather than address these honest concerns, the Council called for an armed militia to advance into the backcountry in spring 1771 to squelch this uprising among frustrated citizens. Royal Governor William Tryon would lead them.



Tryon had some trouble gathering a militia force. Many eastern farmers, siding with the Regulators, refused to muster, but the governor persuaded enough from the coastal plain counties with the offer of extra pay. These were North Carolina citizens, not British soldiers. The eventual confrontation at the Battle of Alamance on May 16, 1771, was not the first battle of the American Revolution as some claim. It was a show of force by the colonial government ending in bloodshed and made worse by the arrogance of the governor and his eager accomplices.

Indeed, William Tryon was more successful in his raising a militia force in appealing to the militia officers and “gentleman volunteers” who made up a tenth of this army. These were a who’s-who of those who would later dominate North Carolina’s list of patriots during the War for Independence. They would be Sons of Liberty and signers of associations, resolves, and constitutions, but in 1771, these men were prominent among the colonial elites active in putting down this protesting in the piedmont.

Hugh Waddell, a hero of the French and Indian War and one who had been active against the Stamp Act in 1766, marched a separate militia force from Cape Fear into Mecklenburg County intending to approach Regulator country from the west. By the time he crossed the Yadkin River, he had gathered only 250 men, a third of those he had hoped for, even from Rowan, Tryon, Anson, and Mecklenburg counties. And resistance to his march went beyond just reluctance. On May 9, his camp was surrounded by 2,000 Regulators giving out Indian yells, unsettling Waddell’s men such that those who did not go over to the Regulators retreated with Waddell across the Yadkin River to Salisbury. About this time, as well, three brothers from now Cabarrus County were among a group who darkened their faces with soot like commandos and in this disguise attacked a supply wagon bringing gun powder from Charleston. This party of Regulators exploded all the wagons of powder on the mustering field at Phifer’s Mill.

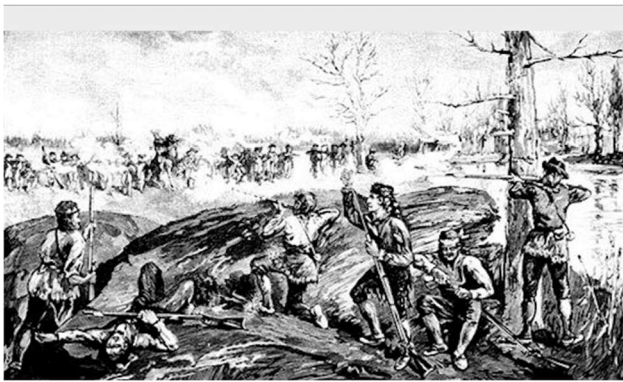


When Tryon and his militiamen arrived in Hillsborough on Saturday, May 11, it was supposed he would remain into Monday to oversee the election of the Assemblyman to replace the outlawed Herman Husband. But Tryon became anxious about an amassing of Regulators to his west. He marched out Sunday, May 12, into the heart of Regulator country, and on Monday evening, Tryon camped on the west bank of Great Alamance Creek.

Regulators began to amass opposite Tryon’s camp. The two groups eyed each other uneasily over a couple of days. On May 15, the Regulators sent a petition to Tryon’s camp imploring him to consider the honest concerns of his colony’s citizens rather than make war on them. Tryon promised his answer by noon the next day. On Thursday, May 16, Tryon marched his men to within 300 feet of the Regulator camp then grown to between 2,000 and 3,000 men. Three Regulators, men of note and honor including a Presbyterian minister, went to Tryon’s camp attempting to forestall any bloodshed. Tryon took them hostage and sent one Regulator back with his ultimatum to disperse. To make his point, Tryon

soon brought one of the hostages to the front line, where the man was shot in view of the Regulators. Tryon then sent a sheriff to the Regulators to announce under the Johnston Riot Act that they must disperse within one hour. At the end of that hour, Tryon ordered Col. James Moore to fire the cannon. The battle had begun.

The Regulators were unprepared for a battle. Those with guns—and not all men present were armed—had brought only the supplies they might need for a hunt. Neither did they have leaders with military experience. Still, their numbers nearly doubled Tryon's provincial militiamen. The Regulators, firing from behind trees and rocks and fences, had initial success against the provincial militiamen standing in close order. But they soon ran low on ammunition and began to leave the field. They were captured in their retreat by the pursuing militiamen. Reported casualty numbers vary as some Regulator wounded or killed may have been removed by their friends and family, but perhaps up to 20 Regulators were killed and nine provincial militiamen. Wounded on both sides may have been around 150.



On the morning after the battle, Tryon hanged prisoner James Few, 25 and a new father of twins, on the battlefield without benefit of a trial. Tryon did this, perhaps, to intimidate his own provincial militiamen who might have had leanings in support of the Regulators.

As horrible as was this battle, the real tragedy of the War of the Regulation unfolded through the remainder of May as Tryon and his army of militiamen and rangers marched west into the heart of Regulator country principally following the Indian Trading Path west toward Salisbury. He intended to punish those he saw as rising against his authority, especially seeking out the Quaker, Baptist, and Presbyterian communities which had suffered under the malfeasance of the officials and from which the Regulator Movement had arisen. Some Regulators hid in the woods, but most were found at home. Tryon's army destroyed the homes, barns, and fields of James Hunter, a principal Regulator leader. The

militiamen completely eradicated the 600-acre plantation of the absent Herman Husband, whom Tryon had declared an outlaw. The militiamen commandeered 70 barrels of flour from the communities for feeding the army. And Tryon set loose on the communities the much-despised Edmund Fanning who was bent on revenge against these Regulators who had burned his house in Hillsborough. By May 28, they crossed Deep River and on June 1 arrived at Jersey Settlement east of the Yadkin River not far from Salisbury. Turning north there, this army of retribution marched toward Bethabara. Along Abbotts Creek, they roused Benjamin Merrill and his family from their beds, turned over his beehives and turned loose into his crops a hundred horses to forage. Merrill had led 300 Regulators toward Alamance Creek but had turned back upon learning of the battle. Others along Abbotts Creek had to supply 30 beehives and 20 more barrels of flour for feeding the army. Tryon continued his horrid spectacle of terrorizing citizens in the countryside by court-martialing some and subjecting them to public lashings. The prisoners he had taken at the battle and in his cross-country march were paraded along during this rampage, tied up two-by-two.

During this march, Tryon offered a pardon to those who would come in and take an oath of allegiance to the Crown even though none were rebelling against British rule. In a few weeks, some 6,400—about three-quarters of the free, white males in the piedmont—did so, turning in their weapons such that Tryon had wagonloads hauled back to New Bern.

In early June, Tryon arrived at Bethabara, where the Moravians recorded in their journals that among the volunteers in Tryon's army were "all the leading men of the country." On June 4, Tryon's army and the community celebrated the King's birthday, George III then age 33. Afterward, General Hugh Waddell marched his militiamen south intending to subdue Regulators in Tryon and Rowan counties. On June 9, Tryon announced his offer of a substantial reward of money and land for the return—dead or alive—of four named Regulators. He then marched his army and prisoners 85 miles over the next five days back to Hillsborough. When he arrived on Thursday, June 13, Tryon, a vindictive, arrogant man, ordered his men to destroy the farm of the parents of James Few, the Regulator he had hanged on the battlefield the month before.

Also upon his arrival in Hillsborough, Tryon received confirmation that he was to report immediately as the new governor of New York. Keeping this news to himself, he then hurried through the trials which began on Saturday, encouraging the judges—including Richard Henderson and Maurice Moore—to give guilty verdicts.

By Tuesday, 12 men were found guilty of treason, all to be hanged.

Tryon selected a hilltop east of the town as the site of execution set for June 19. The townspeople were compelled to witness the execution with soldiers gathered around the gallows and horsemen riding about to assure that the citizens kept back from the soldiers. The people gathered, anxious that Tryon might yet pardon them all. To demonstrate his mercy and his power, Tryon commuted six of those death sentences, but he ordered the other six men to be publicly hanged, including Benjamin Merrill. Each was stood on a barrel, one at a time, with a noose around his neck. Each was given the opportunity for last words, and then the barrel was jerked away.



The next day, Tryon left his army in charge of Col. John P. Ashe, who would 18 years later preside over North Carolina's adoption of the U.S. Constitution. Tryon departed Hillsborough for New Bern to begin packing for his June 30 move to New York. Not surprising, the much-despised Edmund Fanning went to New York as well, serving as William Tryon's secretary and in time as surveyor general for the colony.

North Carolina's new governor, Josiah Martin, arrived in August. During his excursions into the backcountry to understand better the people and their problems, he was persuaded of the egregious behaviors worked by certain officials upon the citizens. He ordered a reconciling of the books and revealed that sheriffs were in arrears to the colonial coffers some £66,000, which the sheriffs were then compelled to send forward.

It is a popular notion—and an incorrect one—that these Regulators came back a few years later and fought for independence against the British. Facts do not bear this out. Some did, of course, but thousands of former Regulators took an oath of allegiance to the Crown. Some despaired and left the colony. Others were exiled. By in large, the former Regulators harbored hatred most for the colonial elites and “gentlemen volunteers” who had marched against them. The former Regulators resented these men of position and power and were not all eager to join in the revolution when these same men decided that North Carolina should break away from Great Britain. As a result, the War of Regulation deeply divided North Carolinians. Later, some fought as Whig rebels for independence and others as Tories to retain British control of the colony. Others, including Moravians, sought to remain neutral.

And so it continued, setting the stage for the American Revolution to unfold in North Carolina.

*For more on this topic including videos by the author, go to [Becoming America 250.com](http://Becoming America 250.com), to *History Highlights* and scroll down to 1771.*

Sources: *Breaking Loose Together*, Marjoleine Kars, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, NC, 2002

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## *Julia Alexander- Charlotte's First Female Attorney*

**Lois Stickell**

Julia McGhee Alexander was born in 1876, the daughter of United States Congressman Sydenham Brevard Alexander and Emma Nicholson Alexander. Julia was the youngest of three children. Her father owned Enderly Plantation in west Charlotte.

On her father's side she was a descendant of Joseph McKnitt Alexander, who signed the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence. On her mothers' side, she was descended from Revolutionary War hero General Joseph Graham. Throughout her life Julia was interested in history. While still in her 20s she wrote a book called *Charlotte in Picture and Prose: An Historical and Descriptive Sketch of Charlotte, North Carolina*.



A photograph of Settlers Cemetery from *Charlotte in Picture and Prose*.

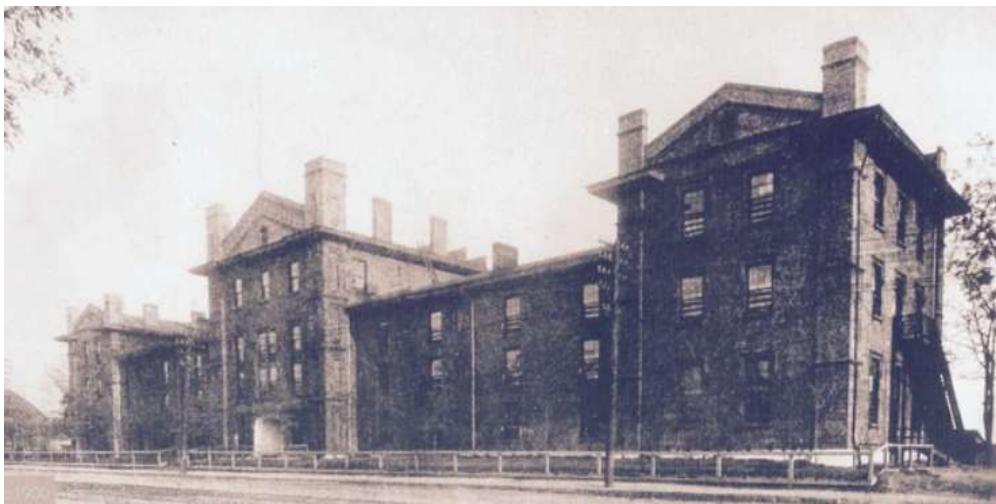


A young Julia Alexander

In the late 1800s, well-bred young ladies were expected to marry. Julia seems not to have found the right suitor or perhaps was never interested in marriage. In her 30s she attended law school at the Universities of Michigan and North Carolina. In the fall of 1914, at 38, she was sworn in as an attorney and became the third woman in North Carolina licensed to practice law. She was the first woman in North Carolina to have an independent law practice. Her office was in Latta Arcade, which was directly across from the courthouse then located at Third and Tryon.

In 1915, in one of her early cases, Julia helped represent a physically disabled woman named Annie who was charged with vagrancy. When Annie was called to testify, the newspaper described her as dragging “her distorted body with grotesque motions of her emaciated arms.” The writer noted that Annie did not use powder on her face or “pencil to disguise the tired eyes. Annie probably would have rejected any beauty shop hints anyway, for after all, she was but a beggar, and such details are assets in the marts of sympathy.” Julia Alexander defended Annie. In addition to acting as an attorney, Julia was also acting on behalf of the Humane Association. At that time, the Humane Association offered protection to people as well as animals. The case was resolved when Julia “expressed a willingness to assume temporary charge,” and Annie was delivered into Julia’s care.

Five years earlier Julia had helped organize the Humane Association and served as the first president. Julia advocated for drinking fountains for horses and dogs in Charlotte and was able to secure a \$1,000 drinking fountain from the National Humane Alliance. The fountain stood at the intersection of East Morehead and South Boulevard, near where the Dowd YMCA stands today. When the fountain was unveiled in November 1911, the old Military Academy still stood there. Over the years Julia represented the Humane Association in court on several animal cruelty charges.



The North Carolina Military Institute, which stood near where the Dowd YMCA now stands.

In 1918 Julia argued a case before the North Carolina Supreme Court (95 S.E. 850), the first woman to ever do so. The case was an appeal regarding the ownership of rights to an alleyway. The chief justice declined to participate in the

decision because of his relationship to the plaintiff, who happened to be Sydenham B. Alexander—Julia’s father. She won the case. Unfortunately, the printed opinion listed her under the male name “Julian M. Alexander.”

Julia was an outgoing and social woman who entertained often and had numerous society connections. When President Woodrow Wilson visited Charlotte on May 20, 1916, in honor of Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence Day, she served as Mistress of Ceremonies.



President Wilson in the center in the tall black hat. Julia Alexander may be the woman to the right of the President, in the broad-brimmed black hat.



Julia Alexander portraying Queen Charlotte.

In 1927 Julia was named County Historian. She was given a space on the third floor of the courthouse to create a local history room. She planned to have “relics and documents from every period in Mecklenburg County history placed in the new building.” She also had an assistant.

In addition to her work as an attorney and county historian, she was a suffragette, ran for mayor, served in the state legislature, fought to save the Mint building and helped turn it into a museum, advocated to preserve Settlers Cemetery, and was one of the most well-known women in Charlotte in her day. The newspapers often referred to her simply as “Miss Julia.”





Julia Alexander ca. 1930

Near the end of her life, she prepared a will that included bequests of items of historical significance that came with very specific instructions. She bequeathed a diploma from the original Queens College of the 1770s to Davidson College. She had purchased the diploma “from a member of the Clay Graham family, said diploma the only one in existence from that institution (see “Revolutionary Papers of General Joseph Graham” by Wm. A. Graham, p. 18.) I give said diploma with the proviso that Davidson College does not permit any statement that the said Queens Museum had any connection with Davidson College or any other later college.”

She had been a devout Presbyterian all her life. Her ancestral church had been Hopewell, but she attended First Presbyterian for many years. There she sang in the choir and was active in teaching Sunday School classes. In her will she bequeathed to the Presbyterian retreat Montreat papers from Dr. Arnold Miller, a pastor who had served First Presbyterian 1855-1857 and 1866 to 1892. She also gave Montreat a copy of a certified certificate from the North Carolina Secretary of State relating to the establishment of Queens College in 1896. (Note: This is a different Queens College than the one mentioned above. This Queens College sits in Myers Park and is today called Queens University.)

Some personal objects from the family are at the Charlotte Museum of History, including an ornate umbrella handle, her sister’s sterling silver mesh bag and her mother’s necklace.



**Sterling Handle**

Circa 1915

Once part of a fancy umbrella or parasol, it belonged to Julia McGhee Alexander, the first woman elected to the North Carolina Legislature. The bottom of the handle is monogrammed "JMA." Ladies carried parasols to protect them from the sun, while umbrellas, being waterproof, protected them from the rain.

**Faceted Jet Bead Necklace**

Circa 1860

This necklace belonged to Emma Nicholson Alexander (1848-1880), wife of Sutherland B. Alexander (1840-1921). Jet is a black coal-like mineral that polishes to a vivid luster. It was often used to create jewelry in the Victorian era.

**Sterling Silver Mesh Bag**

Circa 1890

Violet Graham Alexander (born 1874) owned this highly decorative mesh bag. As with many fine luxury items of the time, it bears the owner's initials. This Violet Alexander was the granddaughter of Violet Winslow Graham Alexander, whose portrait is shown in this exhibit.

Julia Alexander never married and died at 81 in 1957. Her tombstone inscription summarizes her life with the words: Lawyer, Patriot, Author, Historian, Civic and Religious Leader.



“Preserving Mecklenburg’s Heritage”

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