

North Carolina Historical Commission Report-December 18, 2024
Division of Archives and Records

On behalf of the Division of Archives and Records, I am pleased to provide updates on recent division activities and programming. Since your September meeting we welcomed Delaney Schurer to the Digital Services team in the digitization group. We also welcomed Frieda Gonzales-Morales to the Imaging Unit in the Collections Services Section. Brittney Rankins left her position in Digital Services for a position out of state, and Cindy Brandley will leave her position as Collections Management head to transition to her new role leading the Tobacco and Farm Life Museum as part of the Division of State History Museums.

Tours of note from the last three months included one for eighth graders from Exploris Middle School in Raleigh, as well as tours and research trips for a class of undergraduates at UNC Pembroke and the NCSU public history graduate program. Additionally, we were pleased to host the president of the French Society of the Cincinnati as well as some other guests for an in-depth tour of our collections and programming plans for America 250 NC. The team from *Our State* magazine spent time with us in December learning about our vast and varied collections.

Staff continue to provide a variety of workshops and presentations across the state. Some recent programs of note included two trivia events in Raleigh. The audio-visual unit hosted a Raleigh-themed trivia event at the Green Monkey Tavern on October 11. Sixty participants enjoyed this special program. The NC Trivia team from the Archives and the State Library hosted an in-person event at the Raleigh Times on November 20 for 43 attendees. Sarah Koonts provided a Constitution Day program at Alamance Community College on the theft and recovery of the Bill of Rights. Some division staff attended the annual conference for the Council of State Archivists held in St. Louis September 18-20. During that conference Becky McGee-Lankford presented a session on the division's reappraisal project for government records. Sarah Koonts and Josh Hager participated in a panel session on outreach programming for state archives. Cindy Bradley and John Horan participated in the September 20 training for certified local governments, a program of the State Historic Preservation office. They covered preservation and oral history best practices. They covered preservation and oral history best practices. Five division staff members also traveled to Columbia, SC to attend the annual Southeastern Archives and Records Conference which includes participants from state archives across the southeastern US. The oral history unit presented a lunch-time session at the recent Rosenwald School Convening organized and hosted by the NC African American Heritage Commission November 21-22. They covered how the oral history program manages collecting initiatives related to school integration and desegregation in NC. Alison Thurman provided a session on research NC Revolutionary War records for the America 250 Local Grant supported conference at UNC Pembroke November 15. The division participated in the annual American Indian Heritage Celebration on November 23. Led by the division's Community

Building Team, these representations as booths for festivals and community events help build awareness about the division, our collections, and programming.

Two major events were hosted or co-hosted by the division this fall. The Family History Fair returned on October 26 after a multi-year hiatus. This Saturday program has been hosted by the division, State Library, and the Friends of the Archives. This year's program featured sessions on food and history. The annual Friends of the Archives meeting and program was held November 1 with in-person and online participation. The program called "From Edenton to Congress" was longer this year and featured multiple sessions on activism and civic participation by women. It was scheduled to coincide with the 250th anniversary of newspaper reporting on the Edenton team party. Sessions for that program are now [available](#) on the division's YouTube channel. The annual meeting of UNC system records officers was held September 10. As noted in the September 2024 report, all division staff participated in training November 18. Hosted by the Society of American Archivists, instructor Helen Wong Smith presented her course on cultural competency in the archives.

The DocsBox primary source-based lesson plan program funded by a federal budget earmark continued to progress despite the unexpected departure of the contract teacher developing content for the program. The division's outreach team focused their efforts this fall on ensuring that the initial kit's contents would be ready for the teacher advisory committee's review in early December. The first kit covers the history of the state constitutions. The kit's teacher instructions, class activities, and contents are being reviewed by the advisory group.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Helene, the Western Regional Archives was closed to the public along with the department's Western Office. Several division staff spent time working on assessing reports on potential damage to public records and cultural heritage collections in the region impacted by the devastating storm. Adrienne Berney led that work for cultural heritage collections on behalf of the agency's Cultural Resources Emergency Support Team (CREST). She tracked reports of potential damage to collections, sent mold remediation and other resources to several institutions, and organized a CREST workday at the Mountain Gateway Museum. She also collaborated with division and agency staff based in the region on some damage assessment visits to cultural heritage groups. Kayla Leonard, the division's analyst specializing in consultations on protection of essential public records, led the division's efforts to track and advise on damage to local government offices experiencing records damage. Kayla coordinated the division's consultation efforts to all local government offices and organizations of public officials, such as the NC Association of Registers of Deeds and the NC Association of Municipal Clerks. Records damage reports range from reports where clerks were able to protect records using safes to other offices and courthouses where records are severely damaged or destroyed. Kayla continues to advise public records custodians on next steps for inventorying and recovery of damaged records. Both Kayla and Adrienne maintained spreadsheets of all contacts, damage reports, and other information related to Hurricane Helene-related impacts on

documentary heritage collections and public records. All of this work is ongoing and both teams will be plugged into state recovery efforts as they develop.

Collaboration with regional and local cultural heritage partners has been an important area of emphasis for several years. Regional archivists and collections managers have assisted the division with programs such as the Traveling Archivist Program and State Historical Records Advisory Board programming grants. Division staff regularly identify areas where we can partner with other professionals in the state to advance the preservation of and access to our rich cultural heritage assets. This summer and fall staff in the division and agency have been collaborating with staff at the NC Digital Heritage Center at UNC Chapel Hill and other Raleigh cultural heritage partners on opportunities to support any needs the special collections at St. Augustine's University may have. Many of the same partners and others involved in the statewide CREST team share opportunities for cultural heritage professionals to collaborate on specific preservation needs from the areas impacted by Hurricane Helene.

The Outer Banks History Center entered into a second collaboration with Rayolight Productions and the Town of Nags Head on another video related to local history, this one about the history of ocean rescue services. Their previous collaboration on the video related to the Ash Wednesday Storm of 1962 proved very popular both for in-person programming and online viewing (over 86,000 views to date). The Center is currently closed from November 1-February 1 to accommodate for some planned facility upgrades. This includes the replacement of the Halon fire suppression system in the stacks and some upgrades to the Center's reading room and office areas.

In the Government Records Section, staff continued to eliminate the backlog of records destructions of state agency records that have reached their required retention. State Records Center manager Ryan Walch and his team focused on this project and have made good progress. Meanwhile, records analysts and government records archivists from the section began focusing on issues surrounding the transfer of paper and electronic records for Council of State offices experiencing a transition in leadership after the 2024 election. This included 7 offices including the Governor and Lt. Governor. As noted in the September report, records analysts worked on the major update to the *Functional Schedule for State Agencies* and the new schedule is ready for adoption by state agencies. The records description archivists in the section had a collective "map madness" event where they worked together over several days to process and catalog 272 maps transferred from the Department of Administration, Office of Policy and Planning. They also collectively completed the transfer and accessioning of a major group of records from Davie County Clerk of Superior Court (108 volumes and 51 boxes). While all the archivists in the unit have individual projects, they often find that these collective project workdays make great progress on larger projects such as processing, rehousing, or barcoding.

As the division looks forward to 2025 annual inventory will be held January 6-9. As an inaugural round of teaching fellows sponsored by the agency come onboard, the division

will host a tour and session on use of archival resources in K-12 instruction. The Community Building Team is planning their participation in the upcoming African American Cultural Celebration later in January. A new round of Traveling Archivist Program will be advertised for applications in early 2025. The new year also promises to have multiple opportunities to use our original collections in a variety of outlets related to the America 250 NC commemoration programming.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah E. Koonts

**Report of Division of Historical Resources
To the North Carolina Historical Commission
For its December 18, 2024, meeting**

**Ramona M. Bartos, Division Director and Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
December 8, 2024**

Division in general

Western Office in Asheville: We are very thankful that our Asheville-based staff (OSA, HPO, and Administration) is safe although some experienced damage at their own homes. Located in east Asheville next to Oteen VA Hospital, our Western Office experienced basement flooding plus felled trees across its driveway and elsewhere on site (now cleared). Power and internet have been restored, but the building was still without water service (as was much of Asheville and other communities) for some time, with potable water only recently becoming available. Some staff evacuated out of the area for the time being to stay with friends or family and therefore teleworked.

Hurricane Helene response: Beyond Western Office response, we began our overall Helene response starting to help with selection of debris sites for trees / damaged buildings, and have been working with FEMA counterparts (being deployed to NC) for historic buildings' needs since the first week post-storm. The Restoration Services branch as well as local government coordinator are working with constituents who would like our technical assistance, including how to dry out flooded buildings. The full scope of damage in more remote areas continues to be understood and we have compiled verified damage reports and mapping. We also have been holding a "hurricane huddle" for staff in our division that are working directly with constituents to share information and needed insights; the western service territory has been augmented by Raleigh-based staff to aid our Western Office staff

We together with representatives of the CREST program, State Archives, and State Arts Council also met with FEMA's [Heritage Emergency National Task Force \(HENTF\)](#) early on post-storm.

As a reminder, cultural resources are included as part of the State Recovery Task Force that the Department of Public Safety likely will be reactivating for Helene.

Recovery work will likely take years, and we look forward to helping constituents in coming days as emergency operations continue to stabilize.

Hurricane Helene recovery package for preservation. Multiple national preservation organizations have lately sent a letter of support to Congress, asking for an emergency supplemental Historic Preservation Fund appropriation for Hurricanes Helene and Milton relief. (The HPO is currently administering a grant program under such an appropriation for Hurricanes Florence and Michael recovery.) *Letter attached.*

Damage estimates for Hurricane Helene for historic buildings. HPO GIS analyst / cartographer Andy Edmonds shared the statistics below based on FEMA declared counties in the Helene zone (damage not verified).

OVERALL: A quick count of how **many NR-listed or DOE (Determined Officially Eligible) historic properties** are located within the boundary of any of the disaster declaration counties:

- **1,799 total individual properties and 366 historic districts**
 - 919 individual NRs + 860 individual Determined Officially Eligible for the NR (DOE)
 - 255 NR districts + 111 DOE districts
- Ballpark estimate of 50 contributing resources per district would be about **18,000 historic buildings**

KNOWN FLOOD ZONES (NOTE: flooding likely exceeded these recognized areas), or within 100- or 500-year flood zones of the disaster declaration counties:

- **183 individual resources within a flood zone**
 - 36 NRs
 - 147 DOEs
- **88 historic districts at least partially within a flood zone**
 - 40 NR districts
 - 48 DOE districts
- **PLUS about 150 additional NR and 150 additional DOE properties are at least partially within a flood zone**

Retirements announced. Two long-tenured colleagues in our division announced their retirements, both to take place in late January 2025:

- **Jeff Futch** is a 30+ year veteran and serves as our Western Office supervisor, working closely with public history institutions throughout western North Carolina, serving as a CREST team lead for cultural resource disaster outreach, and as the daily steward of the Western Office, which now houses multiple divisions of our agency serving the western region.
- **Mitch Wilds** began his career with the Restoration Services branch of the State Historic Preservation Office in 1983, now serving as the branch's supervisor. During his career, his deep expertise in North Carolina's historic building stock and preservation skills is exceeded only by his dedication to public service and ease of communication to provide stewardship advice ranging from the most humble historic buildings in rural counties to the Executive Mansion and State Capitol and to a wide variety of constituents from local developers to the highest elected officials in North Carolina.

We await action by HR regarding candidates for our vacant **Restoration Specialist position** for an eastern region, last held by Reid Thomas before he was promoted to Eastern Office Supervisor, and the Deputy State Archaeologist (Underwater) last held by Chris Southerly before his promotion to State Archaeologist.

Staff needs. In our last few reports, we have continued to flag the need for additional staff resources to maintain our service levels to constituents.

We were very heartened by management’s favorable view of our three-time renewed request for 4 positions for the new biennium FY 2025-2027 – again for an Environmental Review Specialist for Section 106 cases, a Cemetery Program assistant, and a full-time NAGPRA specialist, but shifting the specialist for the State Historic Preservation Office to one for the Restoration Services branch because of even more demand for services, especially consultations for high “return on investment” historic tax credit projects and overall constituent technical assistance. Conversations with the Office of State Budget and Management are scheduled for mid-December regarding this ask.

We believe that our contributions are both measurable – in terms of dollars invested in historic places and a greater knowledge of our history – and immeasurable – in terms of our commitment to protecting and preserving those places that define our continued identity and shared history as North Carolinians and Americans.

Decennial Rules Review beginning. The Division has been working with our Legal Counsel’s office to begin to undertake our every decade administrative rules review / revisions process required by state law. We look forward to your engagement in this process.

State Historic Preservation Office (HPO)

Statewide Preservation Plan. We appreciate email feedback from Commissioner Bushyhead Condill on the draft state plan presented to you at your September meeting; we incorporated that feedback into the final draft before you for action at this meeting.

Upon your action for approval of the final draft and submission, we will transmit to the National Park Service for their approval, as mandated by the National Historic Preservation Act, and by state law. The deadline for our submission is December 31, 2024.

National Register Advisory Committee (NRAC) meeting. The third of our 3 NRAC meetings in 2024 was held on Thursday, October 10. The National Register agenda was quite full and diverse with twelve National Register nominations, again demonstrating the strong public demand for this program. The final agenda is available [here](#). A second NRAC meeting for Study List properties derived from some of our county-wide architectural surveys was held two weeks later.

Dr. Waters as State Historic Preservation Officer made new appointments for our term-limited NRAC members, and we welcome NCHC member Noah Reynolds and Dr. Jim Harper ([history professor at North Carolina Central University](#)) and to archaeologist Shawn Patch serving as our new chair.

Presentation on Apotropaic Marks in NC Historic Buildings. HPO Eastern Office Supervisor Reid Thomas presented “The Discovery of Hidden Symbols and Marks: Exploring Historic Graffiti and Folk Magic in Northeastern North Carolina’s Early Architecture” to a group of about 60 people on November 4th in Martin County. News coverage [here](#). Apotropaic marks are a North American (and Australian / New Zealand) inheritance from [British building customs](#). We hope to have an article about this phenomenon in the [North Carolina Historical Review](#) in the future.

National Register Certificate ceremony at Geer Cemetery in Durham. On October 23, Deputy Secretary and State Historic Preservation Officer Darin Waters, accompanied by DSHPO Ramona Bartos, presided over a National Register Certificate ceremony at the historically African American Geer Cemetery in Durham to commemorate [its recent listing in the National Register of Historic Places](#), which was an outcome of the State Historic Preservation Office's hurricane grant funding for its repair from damage from Hurricanes Florence and Michael. The ceremony was organized by the [Friends of Geer Cemetery](#) and [Preservation Durham](#).



Historical Research Office

The December Highway Historical Marker meeting will be held on December 17. **New marker proposals under consideration include:**

1. Octagon House in Hyde County
2. Hannah Crafts
3. Mebane Holoman Burgwyn
4. Moses Grandy
5. Bazemore v. Bertie County Board of Elections
6. Gertrude Caraway
7. Hurricane Floyd
8. Sam Ragan
9. Fultz quadruplets
10. Moses Roper
11. Andre the Giant
12. Piedmont Credit Union
13. Mary Sands
14. Drexel Heritage Furniture
15. Mary Louisa Stepp Burnette Hayden

Office of State Archaeology (OSA)

In FY2023-2024, the Office of State Archaeology (OSA) has been undertaking a **North Carolina Shorescape Survey** to identify and document archeological resources within state-owned and -managed lands in twelve coastal counties (Beaufort, Bertie, Brunswick, Carteret, Craven, Dare, Hyde, New Hanover, Onslow, Pamlico, Pender, and Tyrrell) that are most at risk of being damaged by storm events. The focus is on identifying and documenting terrestrial and underwater sites within 200 ft (60 meters) each side of the shoreline. These surveys are allowing OSA to determine the location and extent of shoreline archaeological resources, the conditions of these sites and their associated shorelines, the historical significance of these resources, and management strategies to preserve these shoreline archaeological resources. The project will also support the ongoing effort to digitize existing paper records.

At the same time, OSA has been conducting a **North Carolina Coastal Cemetery Archaeological Survey** to identify, document, and assess the condition of historical cemeteries on state lands in nine coastal NC counties (Beaufort, Brunswick, Carteret, Dare, Hyde, New Hanover, Onslow, Pamlico, and Pender). In addition to treefall and wind-borne debris damage, fragile and environmentally sensitive historic cemeteries and their features are under threat from erosion, subsidence, flooding, and storm surge. Particular attention will be directed toward recording those cemeteries traditionally associated with enslaved and African American communities, which are underrepresented in state records.

Last month, OSA made presentations at the NC Maritime History Council, Southeastern Archaeological Conference, and NC Coastal Conference about these post-Florence [Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund Shorescape grant project](#), focusing on state-owned archaeological sites at State Parks and State Wildlife refuges on the coast.

Our deep thanks to the Commission for its support of and engagement with our Division.



November 26, 2024

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chair, Committee on Appropriations
S-128, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
Vice Chair, Committee on Appropriations
S-128, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chair, Committee on Appropriations
H-307, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member, Committee on Appropriations
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Chair Murray, Vice Chair Collins, Chairman Cole, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

On September 26, 2024, Hurricane Helene made landfall as a Category 4 storm initially impacting the Big Bend region of Florida. Inundating Tampa Bay, Helene shattered storm surge records. With sustained winds of 140 miles per hour, Helene was the deadliest hurricane to hit the United States mainland since Katrina in 2005.¹ This intense storm generated catastrophic rainfall which triggered immense flooding in western North Carolina, East Tennessee, and southwestern Virginia. As recovery efforts from Helene continued, Hurricane Milton made landfall near Siesta Key, Florida as a Category 3 storm.

These devastating storms took the lives of over 250 people and destroyed or damaged residences, businesses, roadways, utilities. The six states impacted by these hurricanes are home to 5,440 listings on the National Register of Historic Places (including 746 National Register Historic Districts and 81 National Historic Landmarks), as well as 962 historic tax credit projects. Preserving these historic sites is essential to safeguarding our cultural heritage and maintaining the unique character of these communities for future generations. As the effort to rebuild continues, we call upon Congress to aid in the rehabilitation of significant historic properties in the path of these storms.

The varying regional impacts of these storms requires a variety of tools in a disaster assistance package to stabilize and remediate damage in **Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia**. We were pleased to see recognition of the catastrophic Maui fires and support the proposed \$20 million for historic preservation and cultural resources

¹ Shapiro, Emily et al. ABC News. October 7, 2024. [Hurricane Helene updates: Death toll surpasses 230 as rescue efforts continue.](#)

restoration through supplemental appropriations under the Historic Preservation Fund. Likewise, we seek funds to rebuild after the most recent disasters across the Southeast.

1. Historic Preservation Disaster Relief Grants

Create a \$100 million grant program within the federal Historic Preservation Fund for the repair of damaged historic properties to be used for eligible activities outlined by the National Historic Preservation Act, including the survey & compliance, preservation, stabilization, rehabilitation, and repair of historic structures and sites listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Projects that receive insurance payments and other state or federal credits or grants remain eligible for these grants but must clearly demonstrate that these funds will be used for projects not fully covered by insurance or other state or federal funding sources. Grants are to be administered by the State or Tribal Historic Preservation Officer in each State and would be available to non-federal owners of National Register or National Register-eligible properties including individuals, non-profit organizations and developers, and do not require a non-federal match.

2. Adjustments to the Federal Historic Tax Credit Program

Increase the rehabilitation tax credit for properties eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places from 20% to 26%. Additionally, the substantial rehabilitation test shall be lowered to 50% of a building's adjusted basis, in order to qualify more income-producing buildings.

Disaster Relief Grants Proposed Legislative Text:

For an additional amount for the "Historic Preservation Fund" for necessary expenses related to the consequences of Hurricanes Helene & Milton and safeguard from future damages, \$100,000,000, to remain available September 30, 2029: Provided, That of the funds provided under this heading, shall be provided to State and Tribal Historic Preservation Officers, after consultation with the National Park Service, for costs necessary to complete eligible activities as outlined by the National Historic Preservation Act, including compliance activities required by section 306108 of title 54, United States Code, survey work, and costs needed to administer the program: Provided, That grants shall only be available for areas that have received a major disaster declaration pursuant to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.): Provided further, That individual grants shall not be subject to a non-Federal matching requirement: Provided further, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 253(e)(2) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

Federal Historic Tax Credit Program Proposed Legislative Text:

INCREASE IN REHABILITATION CREDIT.—In the case of qualified rehabilitation expenditures (as defined in section 47(c)) paid or incurred during the period [CONFORMING DATES WITH THE REST OF THE PACKAGE] with respect to any qualified rehabilitated building or certified historic structure (as defined in section 47(c)) located in areas that the President determines to be a major disaster under section 102(2) of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5122(2)) due to [CONFORMING LANGUAGE WITH THE REST OF THE PACKAGE], subsection (a) of section 47 (relating to rehabilitation credit) shall be applied by substituting ‘26 percent’ for ‘20 percent’ in paragraph (2) thereof.

As national historic preservation organizations, we and our members appreciate your thoughtful consideration of this request to support the communities affected by these devastating disasters. We are ready to assist in any way we can with these requests.

Sincerely,

National Trust for Historic Preservation

National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers

Preservation Action

American Cultural Resources Association

National Alliance of Preservation Commissions

CC: The Honorable Earl Blumenauer, Co-Chair Historic Preservation Caucus
The Honorable Mike Turner, Co-Chair Historic Preservation Caucus
The Honorable Teresa Leger Fernandez

North Carolina Historical Commission Report

December 2024

North Carolina Museum of History

Visitation: August 1, 2024, through October 31, 2024, we welcomed 58,225 members of the public.

Exhibits- *The Duke Endowment Traveling Exhibit: Now on display in the museum lobby.* The Duke Endowment supports higher education, health care, children's welfare, and spiritual programs in North Carolina and South Carolina. As part of the yearlong centennial celebration, a traveling exhibit is touring both states to educate and engage the public about the vision of James B. Duke, the endowment's founder. The exhibition will be available in the museum lobby through December.

Through interactive content and videos, visitors will learn how Duke and the endowment helped shape the Carolinas and how his generosity continues to support the region today. The exhibit also features stories of the endowment's grantees over the past 100 years. On one side of the exhibit, visitors can learn about the Duke family, its legacy of community building and philanthropy, and the creation of the Duke Endowment. The other side shares the story of the endowment today and the lasting impact of its work. In addition to the traveling exhibit, the endowment offers a virtual exhibit that mirrors this physical exhibit. The virtual exhibit provides an engaging opportunity to explore the endowment's history and impact today.

Public Programs- *Jim Thorpe, North Carolina Baseball, and the 1912 Olympic Scandal.* Speaker: Matthew Andrews, teaching associate professor, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. More than a century ago, events from two summers in North Carolina led the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to strip two gold medals from American Indian athlete Jim Thorpe. Once considered the greatest athlete in the world, Thorpe found himself at the center of a major sports scandal. In 2022, nearly 70 years after his death, the IOC renamed Thorpe the sole winner of the 1912 Olympic decathlon and pentathlon. *The Evolution of Mortuary Science.* Participants joined the Ghost Guild on a journey through the history of mortuary science, exploring its origins, cultural significance, and evolution from ancient Egypt to the present day. This presentation provided a comprehensive overview, including ancient embalming techniques, medieval burial practices, modern innovations, and contemporary trends. Additionally, the guild uncovered the mysteries of the H. J. Brown Coffin House in Raleigh, shedding light on its historical significance and the findings from its investigation.

History at High Noon: *The Determined Story of North Carolina's First Congresswoman.* With 22 years of experience as a congressional secretary, a \$100 campaign budget, and determination, Jane Pratt became the first congresswoman to represent North Carolina on May 25, 1946. She was the only woman elected to the US House of Representatives from the state until 1992. Pratt brought attention to flood disasters in western North Carolina and focused on the Atomic

Energy Act during a career that lasted through the Roaring Twenties, the Great Depression, World War II, and the Cold War.

Concerts- *Moonshine and Motorsports Music: Raleigh.* Celebrated North Carolina's unique story of moonshine and motorsports featuring NC legend of Americana, Jim Lauderdale, and the iconic bluegrass trio, the Kruger Brothers. The first of a three-part series, this concert was held in the Daniels Auditorium of the museum. Inspired by the Moonshine and Motorsports Trail developed by the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR), this series blended music with storytelling as it moves from Raleigh to Charlotte to Elizabeth City over the next six months, highlighting the historic places on that very trail. *Tar Heel Troubadours: Shannon Whitworth and Woody Platt, Tar Heel Troubadours: Rissi Palmer and Miko Marks, Tar Heel Troubadours: Henhouse Prowlers.* This series celebrated Americana, roots, bluegrass, and traditional music performed by artists from and/or living and working in North Carolina.

Family Programs- *Weaving Wednesdays.* Experts practiced the craft of handweaving and spinning and told stories about their works in progress, *Hands-on History, Make a Kite.*

North Carolina REGIONAL HISTORY MUSEUMS

Museum of the Albemarle

At the Movies: *Soul.* Pixar Animation Studio's film *Soul* introduces Joe Gardner, a band teacher who gets the chance of a lifetime to play at the best jazz club in town. Event was sponsored by Friends of the Museum of the Albemarle.

Moonshine and Motorsports at Dixieland Speedway. Participants celebrated the Moonshine and Motorsports Trail under the lights and the sounds of roaring engines at Dixieland Speedway in Elizabeth City, NC. Event was sponsored by Friends of the Museum of the Albemarle.

History for Lunch: *When Ghosts Made Moonshine: Prohibition in the Albemarle* (lecture and book signing). Chris Barber provided insight into the complications of enforcing Prohibition in a rural and remote area where liquor was transported by both boat and automobile, some of it along the Atlantic seaboard to Norfolk, VA, and beyond. *Virtual Walking Tour of "Old" Elizabeth City.* Participants took a stroll down memory lane through Edward Fearing's collection of photographs of "old" Elizabeth City dating back to the turn of the century. They explored Elizabeth City's growth over the last 125 years. *The Spanish Colonial Trail: Catawba Chiefs & Spanish Armies 1566-1568.* Chris Meekins, born and raised in Elizabeth City, has been a Public Historian with the state of NC for over 30 years. Most of his career Chris was an archivist but in March 2020 he switched hats to become an editor for the Roster project. Tasked with packing up the old Roster office, Chris decided to also track the history of the project. Since the Civil War there have been several attempts to document the service of NC men in the war.

Tot Time: *Are We There Yet?* Participants discovered their next North Carolina vacation by learning about our state's tourist attractions from the mountains to the coast. They read a book and participate in a hands-on activity. *Surf's Up!*. Cowabunga! Visitors discovered the story of surfing on the Outer Banks and explored the museum's newest exhibit *Where the Waves Break*.

School Day: H.A.S. IT (History, Art and Science) – SPLASH 2023. Visitors enjoyed a morning in the park with Arts of the Albemarle, Museum of the Albemarle, and Port Discover Science Center as artists showcased, demonstrated, and educated about a variety of artistic mediums and provided students with a more in-depth look in the world of art.

Halloween Fun & Treats: Take It, Make It! The public stopped by the museum for a treat, not a trick, and picked up a free Take It, Make It packet to celebrate Halloween.

North Carolina Maritime Museum, Southport

ANCHORS AWEIGH: Getting the Message Through: Cyphers and Codes. The program was geared toward families and all ages, featured hands-on activities focused on a specific part of Lower Cape Fear and North Carolina history.

SKIPPER'S CREW: Totally Turtles and SKIPPER'S CREW: Spooky Sharks. Were designed for all ages, but specifically geared toward younger patrons, the free Skipper's Crew program featured hands-on activities and crafts focusing on combining arts and history. Lights were dimmed, and interactives muted during the first two hours to provide a calmer environment for those with sensory sensitivities.

THIRD TUESDAY: Federal Navy at Fort Fisher. Rod Gragg presented the program as part of the museum's Third Tuesday lecture series, which was held at the Southport Community Building, and geared for ages 16 years and older

DEEP DIVE INTO HISTORY: Torpedoes of the American Civil War. Visitors delved into the fascinating technology behind the development and use of torpedo technology during the American Civil War. The program was part of the museum's free Deep Dive into History drop-in series, which gives visitors a deeper understanding of our shared past through costumed interpreters and artifacts. The program was designed for all ages.

Maritime Museum at Beaufort

Build a Boat in a Day. Participants assembled a prepared kit for a small flat-bottomed plywood boat suitable for paddling in this course, held in the museum's Harvey W. Smith Watercraft Center. The boat is 12 feet long, 32 inches wide, and weighs about 40 pounds. Each boat is completed to a watertight condition and ready to take home for paint or varnish.

Kids' Cove. This program was offered each month. Kids' Cove is a free-play program designed for children ages 0-5 and their caregivers with a different maritime themed craft and wiggle

activity each month. This is a screen-free program meant to help caregivers connect with their little ones, each other, and their local maritime heritage. The program is designed so that participants can stay for as short or as long as they want, arriving and leaving at any time during the scheduled program.

Seashore Life II. Students entering grades five and six investigated estuarine habitats, plants, and animals through field and lab studies. This three-day course included a field trip to the Rachel Carson National Estuarine Research Reserve, water quality testing, plankton identification, and many more activities.

Behind the scenes at the Whale Center. This program was offered each month. This free 40-minute behind-the-scenes look at the Bonehenge Whale Center, which operates as a partnership between the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources and the Carolina Cay Maritime Foundation. Participants learned about the marine mammals, including bottlenose dolphins, that live off the coast of North Carolina. The preparation of marine mammal skeletons for educational display was also covered.

Exploring Coastal Habitats on the Rachel Carson Reserve. This program was offered each month. Participants joined a member of the museum's education team to discover the various plants and animals of the salt marsh and tidal flats at the Rachel Carson Reserve. The guided hike was through the different habitats and the sandy, muddy, and wet terrain found on Town Marsh and Bird Shoal.

Kayak the Salt Marsh. This program was offered each month. Participants joined our education team for basic kayak instruction and safety lessons on shore followed by a 1.5-mile paddle through the salt marsh in our sit-in cockpit touring kayaks. The program, sponsored by the Friends of the Museum, was recommended for ages 12 and up. All participants under 18 were accompanied by an adult.

Screw Pile Lighthouses of North Carolina. Education Curator Benjamin Wunderly presented an overview of the screw-pile lighthouses that dotted the state's internal waters and what life was like for the keepers who maintained them. The program was part of our Maritime Heritage Series, informal lectures held in the museum auditorium and focused on North Carolina's rich maritime history, coastal environment, and culture.

Introduction to Wooden Boat Building. This program was offered each month. Participants explored the art of boatbuilding — beginning with lofting, and moving on to the setup, steam bending and different methods of creating the backbone of small boats — in this two-day, hands-on course. They learned planking methods, both carvel and lapstrake, and use of appropriate fasteners. After two days, they had the knowledge, skill, and confidence to choose a design and style of boat to build on their own.

Hiking and History on Shackleford Banks. Participants joined our education team to experience Outer Banks history and wildlife with a guided hike on Shackleford Banks, part of the Cape Lookout National Seashore.

Diamondback Terrapins: Uncovering Their History and Shell-celebrating Their Future.

Diamondback terrapins, a unique and striking marsh turtle, have a long history in Beaufort, from collection and farming in the 1900s to present-day conservation efforts. Associate Curator of Education Courtney Felton helped participants to discover how terrapins went from being considered a delicacy to being protected. Along the way, they uncovered what makes this species turtle-y awesome. The program was part of the Maritime Heritage Series.

The Story Behind Echo the Whale and his Skeleton. This program was offered each month. Natural Science Curator Keith Rittmaster presented an informal discussion about “Echo” (the museum’s 33.5-foot sperm whale skeleton) and his heart. When the adolescent male whale came ashore at Cape Lookout in 2004, his bones and heart were preserved for study and display. Keith covered the step-by-step process of retrieving, preserving, and displaying the specimen that now resides in the museum gallery.

The Price of Victory: Federal Confiscation of Watercraft in Civil War North Carolina. During the Civil War, federal soldiers in coastal North Carolina confiscated civilian watercraft on behalf of the war effort. After the war, affected civilians could file for compensation through the Southern Claims Commission. The applications for compensation provide insights into the maritime lives of ordinary people in coastal North Carolina before, during, and after the Civil War.

Mountain Gateway Museum

Birds & Blooms. This family-friendly crafts class was held on Father’s Day weekend, children and adults of all ages built and decorate a wooden birdhouse and created a bouquet of button-and-felt flowers to take home in a glass vase of their choice.

Red, White, and Blue Ice Cream Social. Free ice cream, watermelon, a ducky derby, and a voter registration drive happened at the museum’s annual "Red, White, and Blue Ice Cream Social." before the annual Old Fort 4th of July Parade. This year, we also welcomed back the Old Fort Ruritan Club and their Ducky Derby fundraiser.

Sunday Afternoon Music Jam. The Mountain Gateway Museum hosted a free bluegrass music jam from 2 to 4 p.m. every Sunday—except during major holiday weekends—on the museum’s front porch. Participants brought their own instruments and joined in or they just sit back and enjoyed!

Scavenger Hunt. Ongoing, available during regular hours. Can’t get your fill of fun historical facts? Then follow the clues and search the museum's galleries, grounds, and two historic cabins to find 48 objects and a treasure trove of historical info. Participants who successfully complete the hunt can select a prize.

PATH Outdoor Explorer Packs. Ongoing, available during regular hours. Go outside, get moving, and learn more about North Carolina’s natural world with these loanable backpacks filled with

fun and educational activities for the entire family. Provided by DNCR's Education Outreach Section with additional items from the Mountain Gateway Museum.

Marker Dedication. The Railroad and Incarcerated Laborers (R.A.I.L.) Committee dedicated three interpretive signs commemorating the imprisoned railroad workers who were forced to help build the steep section of the Western North Carolina Railroad between Old Fort and Ridgecrest. The dedication was held near I-40 Exit 66, overlooking the Swannanoa Gap. MGM staff participated in the program.

PATH Outdoor Explorer Packs. Ongoing, available during regular hours. Go outside, get moving, and learn more about North Carolina's natural world with these loanable backpacks filled with fun and educational activities for the entire family. These "Parks and Trails for Health" packs are provided by DNCR's Education & Outreach Section.

NC Kids' Exploration Journal. Ongoing, available during regular hours. Provided by the DNCR Education & Outreach Section, these journals give children the guidance to create something unique, express themselves, and create their own experiences as they explore the outdoors. The targeted audience is 1st- through 5th-grade students.

exoExplore Program. Ongoing, available during regular hours. (Experiences Promoting Learning Outdoors for Research and Education) is a free, incentive-based community science program for children in grades K-8. Developed by the North Carolina Arboretum, this innovative program combines science exploration with kid-friendly technology to foster a fun learning environment for children while encouraging them to explore the outdoors and participate in community science.

The Museum closed due to damage from Hurricane Helene. All staff are safe, and will reopen as soon as cleanup and restoration are complete.

Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum

Maritime Crafts for Kids. The drop-in style free maritime craft classes were open to the public, and all supplies were furnished. Registration was not required. Children were accompanied by an adult.

Jockey's Ridge State Park. The informal lecture on Jockey's Ridge State Park was part of the museum's Salty Dawg Lecture Series, which features presentations on North Carolina maritime history and culture.

Outer Banks Wreck Diving and Photography. Participants joined diver Marc Corbett for a presentation on shallow and deep-water wrecks in the area. The informal lecture was the last program scheduled in this year's Salty Dawgs Lecture Series, which featured presentations on North Carolina maritime history and culture.

Museum Mysteries: A Hatteras Island Halloween Tour. The Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum, along with Chicamacomico Life Saving Station, Frisco Native American Museum, and The Lost Colony Museum shared tales full of mystery, shivers and chills with the first "Halloween Mystery

Tour.” Each site offered their own tales at different times. Chicamacomico Life Saving Station, Rodanthe; Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum, Hatteras Village; Frisco Native American Museum & Natural History Center, Frisco; Lost Colony Museum, Buxton.

Museum of the Cape Fear

Hallowe’en Revels: Poetry and Prophecy. Guests were transported back in time, witnessing a series of short vignettes while becoming immersed in early 20th century cultural norms, traditions, and poetry through this scripted short play. This was a unique opportunity to experience historical theater in an actual historic home. The tours were open to people of all ages and give a non-scary glimpse into how Halloween used to be celebrated. Hosted in partnership with Sweet Tea Shakespeare.

Trick or Treat at the Poe House Participants met Joy the Clown who perform a magic show. She provided balloon twisting and face painting throughout the event. Trick or treaters received a treat bag and played old fashioned games in the backyard. There were hayrides, music and MORE! Activities took place outside in the backyard of the 1897 Poe House and in Arsenal Park.

Halloween Craft for Kids. Visitors made free Halloween-themed crafts during this drop-in style class.

Division wide digital program participants July through October was 189,618

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Michelle Lanier, Director

Overview

- North Carolina State Historic Sites reported total onsite visitation of 802,952 for FY 2024-2025 to date (June 2024 through November 2024), a 7.4 percent increase from fiscal year 2023-2024. Visitation statewide was affected by two major severe weather events in September.
- State Historic Sites has had 241,363 website visitors in FY 2024-25 to date and has a total of 377,493 followers on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

Personnel

Terra Schramm has been named Public Information Officer of the **Division of State Historic Sites**. Terra joined the North Carolina State Capitol team in 2006 after earning degrees in public history from East Carolina University and N.C. State University. She served as education coordinator and later managed the docent and tour program at the Executive Mansion. She was named site administrator in 2014 and most recently led the project *From Naming to Knowing: Uncovering Slavery at the North Carolina State Capitol*.

Catherine Harper has been named Curator of the Division's **Collections Branch**. She has served as the Division Registrar since 2022. Catherine holds a B.A. in History from Western Carolina University and an M.A. in Public History from N.C. State University. Before joining State Historic Sites, she worked for the Country Doctor Museum and the Fayetteville History Museum.

Hannah Browning was named Historic Interpreter I at **Fort Dobbs/Shallow Ford**. Hannah has a bachelor's degree in history from Lenoir-Rhyne University and has worked at Historic Bethabara Park for more than two years.

Gregory Murphy is the new Maintenance/Construction Technician at **Fort Dobbs**. Gregg worked as a firefighter in Charlotte for 25 years and has extensive experience in landscape maintenance, carpentry, plumbing, and automotive repair.

Lucas McInnis has joined the team at **Historic Halifax** as a Historic Interpreter. Lucas holds a bachelor's degree in history from UNC-Pembroke. He completed an internship at the Museum of the Southeast American Indian and has worked part-time at the House in the Horseshoe.

Malia Lyles has joined the **North Carolina State Capitol** as Volunteer and Tour Coordinator. A graduate of N.C. Central University with a bachelor's in public history and historic preservation, Malia served as an HBCU intern at the Capitol in 2022. She is

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currently completing an M.A. in history at NCCU with a research focus on the local impacts of integration.

Sam Berrini is the **James K. Polk site's** new Maintenance/Construction Technician. Sam studied film, theater and media at Penn State University and worked as a set decorator in Los Angeles for 15 years before relocating to Charlotte in 2021.

DeAsia Noble has been named Site Manager for **Thomas Day State Historic Site**. DeAsia holds a B.A. in History from N.C. A&T University and an M.A. in Public History from N.C. State University. She completed internships for The Greening Youth Foundation, the Claiming Freedom Project, the Historic Magnolia House, and the City of Raleigh Museum, and has worked for the National Park Service at historic homes in Washington, D.C., and on the America 250 commemoration.

David Rayburn has been named Assistant Site Manager for **Thomas Day State Historic Site**. David has a bachelor's degree in history from UNC-Asheville and a master's in public history from Appalachian State. He attended Jamestown Archaeological School, worked at the Biltmore Estate for two years, and worked at the Thomas Wolfe Memorial for 10 years.

Ricky Stroud has been named Maintenance/Construction Technician for **Thomas Day State Historic Site**. Ricky has extensive experience as a tradesman, shipyard worker, and furniture maker. He holds an associate's degree in microbiology from N.C. State University.

Sean Moon is the new Maintenance/Construction Technician at the **N.C. Transportation Museum**. Sean joins the division after 16 years with UNC-Greensboro as a steam distribution technician and plumbing supervisor.

Division-Wide Summit

Employees from across the state gathered in Raleigh on September 16-17 for the Division's annual summit, providing staff with the opportunity to network with colleagues and partners from across the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, share news and celebrate the accomplishments of the past year, and participate in professional development programming.

Panel presentations included discussions on strategic and



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exhibition planning, capital project development, site safety, ethical historic interpretation, and America 250 programming. Richard M. Josey Jr. of Collective Journeys LLC delivered a keynote address devoted to museum practices centering on discovery, resilience, and belonging. At the conclusion of the summit's formal programming, staff split into groups for tours of the Capitol, the Executive Mansion, the State Archives, the Archaeology Lab, and the Museum of Natural Sciences.

Severe Weather Impact and Response

On September 16, the storm referred to as Tropical Cyclone 8 (TC8) led to widespread flooding across Eastern North Carolina. Though **Brunswick Town/Fort Anderson** sustained only minimal damage and did not lose power, the causeway across Orton Pond was destroyed, impeding access to the site, and the flooding of the septic system raised concerns about well contamination. The site reopened on December 3.



Due to flooding from TC8, which dropped 18 inches of rain and delayed progress on the reconstructed earthworks, the **Fort Fisher** Visitor Center grand opening, scheduled for September 26, was postponed to October 29.



The Thomas Wolfe Memorial, before and after the tree was removed.

As Hurricane Helene approached North Carolina from the south, many historic sites closed as a safety precaution. Several sites in the West Region reported downed trees, power outages, and flooded roads. **Vance Birthplace** and the **Thomas Wolfe Memorial** experienced the most adverse effects from Helene. A large silver maple fell against the side of the Thomas Wolfe house, but minimal damage was reported to the interior of the historic

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home. Several trees were downed at the Vance Birthplace and an outbuilding window was blown out, but otherwise damage to the site was minimal. The site's oldest standing tree, a black walnut tree, is still standing. At both sites, power was restored within a matter of days, and all employees were safe and accounted for. The region's boil water advisory was lifted on November 18, clearing the way for both historic sites to reopen on December 10.

As part of the Division's response to the natural disasters, **Craft Services'** Mark Graves provided on-site support to staff at the **Mountain Gateway Museum** and **State Capitol**. Curator Kara Deadmon coordinated virtual learning efforts to support public schools in Western North Carolina, connecting teachers with staff at **Duke Homestead, Bentonville Battlefield, Historic Stagville**, and the **Charlotte Hawkins Brown Museum**.

When Are We *US*? and America 250

Division Director Michelle Lanier was joined by Piedmont Region Manager Jennifer Farley, **Fort Dobbs'** Jason Melius, and **Bennett Place's** Kaitlin O'Connor in presenting "When Are We *US*? Re-examining Democracy's Messy Business," at the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) Conference in Mobile, Alabama, on September 10-13. Amid a broader dialogue at AASLH about America 250, Historic Sites staff representing the **Charlotte Hawkins Brown Museum, Historic Stagville, the State Capitol, and Vance Birthplace** delivered the presentation "Moving Mountains: Creating Sustainable Change in Interpretation."

As the America 250 commemoration gathers momentum, Historic Sites staff participated in planning for A250 education packets and engaged with A250 leadership across the DNCR as event planning, community outreach, and social media marketing increase leading into 2025.

Homeschool Day at House in the Horseshoe – On November 1, House in the Horseshoe hosted homeschool groups for an immersive experience illustrating 18th century life, including woodworking, musket demonstrations, tinsmithing, and more.

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Edenton Tea Party – On October 25-26, Historic Edenton hosted a series of events honoring the 250th anniversary of the Edenton Tea Party, a significant N.C. event in the months leading up to America’s independence, including the living history demonstrations “Acts of Rebellion” as well as “A Society of Patriotic Ladies,” commemorating the 51 women who led the colony in protest of “taxation without representation” in October of 1774.



In October, 30 Wake County teachers spent two days at Historic Halifax for *Freedom for All: Quests for Liberation in Halifax*. This professional development opportunity, which explored the history of freedom seekers and members of the Haliwa-Saponi tribe, was made possible by a grant from America 250 NC.

Curatorial Services

During the fall, Curatorial Services staff contributed to a variety of projects across the Division. Director of Curatorial Elizabeth Reign collaborated with partners across the Department on a website dedicated to abandoned DNCR loan property (to foster compliance with N.C. Gen. Stat. 121-52), participated in meetings on new visitor center development at **Historic Stagville** and restoration of Freedom House in **Historic Edenton**, helped coordinate the relocation of a statue of Governor Aycock from Washington, D.C., to the **Aycock Birthplace** site.

The Collections Branch worked with **Historic Somerset**, **CSS Neuse**, **Historic Stagville**, **Historic Halifax**, **the James K. Polk site**, **the House in the Horseshoe**, and **Historic Edenton** on artifact loans, artifact selection for future exhibitions, and accessions and deaccessions.

Education and Interpretation Supervisor Andrew Duppstadt coordinated the Division’s Military Appreciation Day program at **the N.C. State Fair** on October 23, participated in planning for the **Fort Fisher** grand opening ceremony on October 29, and held the Historic Small Arms Training and Certification class on November 16 at Camp Butner, with staff participation from across the state. Heritage Trades Specialist Bob Bemis contributed to many sites’ fall themed events, including the construction of a unique booth for **Duke Homestead**’s Phantasmagoria event, in which he produced a replica conversation piece that utilizes expert craftsmanship alongside 3D printing.

In September, Research Historian Michelle Witt provided research support to Vera Cecelski of **Historic Stagville**, Frank McMahon from **Historic Halifax**, and Karen Hayes from

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Historic Somerset. Additionally, she continued to work with the **State Library of North Carolina** on efforts to catalog the Division Library, with a target completion date of 2026, and finished work in November on a Division-wide digital archiving project.

PUSH Projects

Work continues on Priority Updates to State History (PUSH) initiatives. The Division's audiovisual partner, Horizon Productions, began filming interviews with a broad array of historians at locations around North Carolina, including Tucker House in Raleigh, Fort Macon, and 5th Street Hardware Restaurant in Greenville.

Additionally, the Horizon team produced speculative visuals and production teasers for new orientation videos and "Historian on Demand" vignettes, with the goal of adding depth and variety to sites' digital offerings. Sound installations and "magic windows" will provide additional dimension to interpretation at sites including the **Aycock Birthplace**, **Bennett Place**, and **Bentonville Battlefield**. Completion of Phase 1 video and other multimedia content for sites is slated for 2025.



West Region

Fort Dobbs

On September 28, Fort Dobbs hosted its Fall Living History event, which was scaled back slightly because of Hurricane Helene. This event showcased everyday life for the garrison of Fort Dobbs, including barracks life, cooking, woodworking, and weapons demonstrations. On November 9, the site welcomed the public for its Military Timeline event, in which costumed soldiers and support personnel share experiences from the American Revolution, Civil War, World Wars and other conflicts in North Carolina history.

The North Carolina Land and Water Fund has awarded the Division \$114,500 to acquire five acres of land adjacent to Fort Dobbs, supporting the site's continuing efforts to preserve open land and protect important archaeological resources. In preparation for construction of its new visitor center, the site's portable classroom building was demolished.

Horne Creek

The site's annual Cornshucking Frolic took place on October 19. This flagship event, which draws significant community participation from around Surry County, featured

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demonstrations of quilting, basketweaving, knitting, blacksmithing, and log hewing as well as preparation of traditional foods including apple butter and sorghum syrup.

N.C. Transportation Museum

The annual POLAR EXPRESS experience, which takes place weekends in November and December, sold out for 2024. This popular all-ages event transports visitors through time and space with a ride in a historic train car to the North Pole. In 2023, the POLAR EXPRESS set new attendance records at the Museum.

Polk Birthplace

In *Soul of the Hearth: African American Roots in 18th Century Cooking* (November 9), Dontavius Williams prepared an 18th century meal and shared stories and insights on the contributions of African Americans to U.S. cuisine. Visitors learned about the flavors, techniques and culture that continue to have a profound impact on our food today.



Reed Gold Mine

Reed Gold Mine's Homeschool Day (November 8) provided students with the opportunity to explore a variety of STEAM topics by stepping into the shoes of historic miners and traversing 450 feet of restored tunnels in the site's underground mine.

Piedmont Region

Alamance Battlefield

Civil Engagements: Elections in the Backcountry (November 2) recreated an American Revolution-era election that pitted Herman Husband, a leader in the Regulator Movement, against loyalist Edmund Fanning. Costumed interpreters demonstrated how votes were cast, the ways candidates observed the process, and the tradition of treating voters to free drinks.



Duke Homestead

In *Field & Factory: A Look at Tobacco's Laborers* (September 28), staff led a walking tour of

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the site that highlighted the contributions that different groups of tobacco workers made to North Carolina's culture and economy in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

On Vintage Base Ball Day (September 28), Duke Homestead's vintage baseball team participated in a tournament at Durham Athletic Park that honored the struggles and achievements of Black and White athletes throughout the history of the game. Players wore historic uniforms, used historic equipment, and followed the 1860 and 1869 Beadles Rules of the game.

At the site's annual Phantasmagoria event (October 25), costumed interpreters from several Historic Sites came together to share spooky lore, Victorian customs, and seasonal treats under the veil of candlelight.

Historic Stagville

The art exhibition *Maya Freelon: Whippersnappers* opened November 16. This large-scale installation in the Bennehan House, inspired by the artist's research on enslaved children in North Carolina and at the Library of Congress, uses large-scale sculpture, archival photography, paintings, and collage to capture and honor enslaved children's experiences.

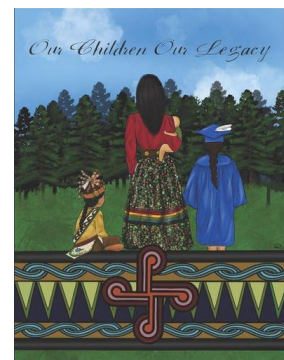


"The exhibition is about the preciousness and the joy of childhood," Freelon is quoted as saying in an *Independent Weekly* article (11/12/2024). "How a child can find a happy place in anything." The exhibition also earned coverage in [Garden & Gun](#) (12/4/2024).

Town Creek Indian Mound

In celebration of American Indian Heritage Month, Town Creek Indian Mound unveiled original artwork by Raven Dial-Stanley, a member of the Lumbee Nation.

The site highlighted the work of Lakota John, a blues slide guitar player from the Lumbee and Oglala Lakota Nations, on the Division's Singing on the Land virtual music project to promote the American Indian Heritage Celebration in Raleigh (November 22-23).



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East Region

Historic Bath

Bath Towne After Dark (October 11-12) provided visitors with an immersive theatrical experience grounded in Eastern North Carolina folklore and legends. Preparations for the event began in August with script review, and participants rehearsed twice weekly through the month of September.

Bentonville Battlefield

The site hosted the American Battlefield Trust (September 21) for a special tour led by Civil War historians and authors Garry Adelman and Chris Makowski. The event provided an opportunity to raise awareness of the ongoing collaborations to preserve additional acreage at the site. Nearly 100 people – filling two buses – attended the event.

Bentonville's Fall Festival (October 26) drew more than 750 visitors. The event featured live music by the Huckleberry Brothers and WaterBound Dulcimers, demonstrations of historic trades, wagon rides, old-time kids' games, crafts and activities, and food trucks.



Fort Fisher

The grand opening of Fort Fisher's new visitor center took place on October 29, bringing together longtime supporters, military veterans, state and local leaders, and members of the Black and American Indian communities to honor the enlisted, conscribed, and enslaved people who labored to build the fort during the Civil War, as well as the men and women who made history there in the 19th century and up to the present. The visitor center

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and newly rebuilt earthworks officially opened on October 30 with an overwhelmingly enthusiastic response from the public.

Historic Halifax

Demolition continued as work on the new visitor center moves forward; field trips and tour groups continue unimpeded. Filming for two projects took place at the site in September: for the N.C. Museum of History's Tar Heel Junior Historians program, and for an episode of the nationally syndicated PBS program *Travels with Darley*.

Somerset Place

The Cabarrus family reunion took place on the grounds of Somerset Place in September, with 70 descendants in attendance. Charlotte Cabarrus was a free Black laborer who worked for the Collins family; she died at Somerset Place in 1860.

Harvest Time on the Shoreline (November 2), which coincided with the start of American Indian Heritage Month, featured exhibits and demonstrations centering the lives and experiences of the historic Lake Scuppernong indigenous community.

Michelle Lanier, Director

Feedback From Our Visitors

“As a 13-year-old boy attending this celebration, I had no idea of the magnitude and legacy that was before me. I thank my Aunt Dot for all the hard work she did to bring this history to life.”

Historic Somerset visitor

“Horne Creek Farm was really neat, and the history was so interesting and I enjoyed my grandson showing me around the farm.”

Horne Creek Farm visitor
via Facebook

“Found this site recommended on a Facebook group page. So glad we stopped by to see it! Very historical site, with lots of detailed information about the site and excavation by archaeologists in the late '30s. Spiritually moving site. Would recommend visiting.”

Town Creek visitor Genesis Irick, via Google Reviews

“Bath is a wonderful town rich in history. I’ve enjoyed every moment.”

Historic Bath visitor,
via Google Reviews