

**Report of the Division of Historical Resources
To the North Carolina Historical Commission
For its March 2026 meeting**

**Ramona M. Bartos, Division Director and Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
March 11, 2026**

Division in general

Personnel matters.

New Assistant State Archaeologist. In March, we welcomed Dr. Amanda Burtt as our newest Assistant State Archaeologist. Originally from Greensboro and Raleigh, Amanda holds both a Ph.D. and master's degree, in Anthropology from Indiana University, Bloomington and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Anthropology from the University of California at Berkeley. She recently served as a Postdoctoral Research Associate in the School of Geographical Sciences at the University of Bristol (Bristol, United Kingdom), co-directing archaeological field investigations at the Gully Cave Site in Somerset, England. Prior to that project, she helped coordinate the careful curation and management of archaeological collections from the Angel Mounds State Historic Site at the Glenn A. Black Laboratory of Archaeology in Indiana and carried out field research at several precontact American Indian sites and historical archaeology sites in North America. A specialist in zooarchaeology, she is lead author on a [new publication](#) about the ecological resilience of European grey wolves over millennia documented through dental microwear analysis.

Resignations. Following the birth of her first child, Office of State Archaeology collections manager Courtney Page resigned to be a full-time mom earlier this year, and National Register Assistant Sharon Hope left for a job in local government closer to her home with more benefits.

Recruitment considerations. Recruitment and retention issues continue with our division's positions. Specifically some candidates continue to decline to move forward with the hiring process, or alternatively have discontinued their employment, citing low salaries or lack of affordable housing. For example, staff in the field during the statewide preservation conference in Asheville last fall noticed that advertisements in downtown Asheville real estate offices show *mobile homes* in Asheville suburbs selling for in excess of \$350,000. The same COLA stresses are true in western and coastal areas and the Triangle, and many state employees live far from our offices, meaning long and arduous commutes.

Teleworking continues to be a positive, **no-cost** opportunity that we can offer to aid in recruitment and retention, and we are appreciative of our agency's continued commitment to teleworking.

State Historic Preservation Office (HPO)

Historic Preservation Fund funding.

FY 2026 federal Historic Preservation Fund funding. We were pleased that FY 2026 funding was included in the continuing resolution passed in January following the government shutdown in November, meaning that our federal funding for HPO / OSA operations will continue through September 30, 2026. As a reminder, our federal funding is derived from the federal Historic Preservation Fund, which is derived from offshore oil and gas lease dollars. The 59 SHPOs in the states and territories received together \$62.15M; North Carolina's apportionment for operational funding is nearly \$1.3M and funds 14 FTEs (wholly or partially) plus travel and support monies (**this is 1/3 of our staff in the Division of Historical Resources, including several positions in the Office of State Archaeology**), and the Certified Local Government subgrant program (+/- \$130,000 statewide).

FY 2027 federal funding. Dr. Waters as State Historic Preservation Officer and DSHPO Ramona Bartos traveled to Washington, DC, in early March for the annual gathering of the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers, which included a briefing day on Capitol Hill to describe our office's activities and contributions. This included a **\$250M ask for the 250th** to increase funding available to both SHPOs, Tribal Preservation Officers, and constituents to undertake historic preservation activities.

Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund dollars. As reported previously, we applied in **June 2025** for emergency supplemental Historic Preservation Fund funding appropriated by Congress in December 2024 for SHPO capacity (personnel, survey, office efficiency measures) for Helene recovery as the need for our services will outstrip / is outstripping our capacity. For example, our Section 106 reviews have as usual increased by upwards of 40% after Helene, an increase to be expected during the multi-year recovery effort. We have as expected also experienced upticks in constituent outreach and technical assistance, including for historic tax credit project consultations in the Helene zone.

Our final ask for the SHPO capacity grant category was for **\$6.71 million** including additional term-limited personnel to meet this need, records digitization, and architectural and archaeological surveys to create a new baseline post-Helene. As of our last NCHC meeting in December, we were awaiting word of an award although we expected grant award news in **August 2025**.

In **late January 2026**, we received the very welcome and gratifying news that we indeed received not only our SHPO capacity grant in full but also had funded our \$180,000 grant request for a full conditions assessment report that will include plans for waterproofing, construction management, and repairs for the DNCR Western Office that has suffered multiple episodes of basement flooding because of heavy, prolonged rains, including from Helene.

What this means is that we will be creating several new positions (or recoding funding for receipts-supported positions) to serve Western North Carolina, including a Restoration Specialist, Environmental Review Specialist, a National Register reviewer, 2 Architectural Survey Specialists (to conduct surveys in Avery, Madison, and Mitchell Counties), and an

Archaeologist. We will also conduct outreach and training events for local government, as well as survey the newly acquired Pisgah View State Park for archaeological and architectural resources.

National Register Advisory Committee (NRAC) meeting. The first of our 3 NRAC meetings in 2026 was held on February 12, and a . [The National Register agenda](#) as usual was quite full and varied with 19 National Register nominations (8 more than the October meeting), again demonstrating the strong public demand for this program, along with over 20+ proposed Study List properties. Notably, we had the deliverables from an NPS Underrepresented Communities grant presented for a statewide Green Book Multi-property Designation Form, under which the Magnolia House in Greensboro was included as an individual listing for its Green Book history, and 7 other properties identified as likely eligible for the National Register, including the Excelsior Club in Charlotte.

Two other properties with nominations – Moorefields in Hillsborough (additional documentation) and Boney Mill in Wallace (new individual nomination) -- had benefitted from the Hurricane Florence subgrant program, our first Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund grant from NPS.

A follow-up meeting was held on February 26 to handle properties identified as Study-List eligible (first step to National Register nomination) during architectural surveys of Rocky Mount and Graham County.

National Register coordinator Jeff Smith and our entire NR team are to be greatly credited for maintaining a steady momentum with review and moving constituents' projects forward.

Local Government Preservation Commission activities / training. Local Government Coordinator Kristi Brantley and HPO colleagues will be conducting local government historic preservation commission training in the field this spring, including Hickory on May 1st, Durham on May 15, and Waxhaw on June 5.

We are fielding interest from Martin County and multiple town governments (Jamesville, Williamston, Robersonville) about establishing a county-wide historic preservation commission. Local government coordinator Kristi Brantley and other members of the HPO met with them on February 5; news coverage [here](#).

Another meeting was held in October 2025 with the Town of Nashville to likewise learn more about setting up a town-level historic preservation commission; again, Kristi Brantley along with HPO staffers based in Greenville (Reid Thomas, Wade Rogers, and Lauren Poole) were on hand to have a Q&A session with local constituents. News coverage [here](#).

Outreach efforts.

- **Johnston County (January 20, 2026):** Restoration Specialist Jeff Adolphsen presented at a seminar sponsored by the nonprofit Preservation Johnston County, Inc., at the Johnston County Museum, located at 329 E. Market Street, Smithfield. Jeff spoke about

topics such as historic rehabilitation tax credits, how to determine if a building is historic, how to apply for historic designation, and the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's standards for rehabilitation of historic buildings. This is an example of the kind of local outreach undertaken by the Restoration Branch, designed to foster use of the historic tax credit in North Carolina communities.

- **ADA Web Accessibility Standards (January 2026):** The HPO offered multiple online webinar trainings via Zoom to HPO consultants and HPO staff for National Register nominations and creating Historic Structure Survey Reports that comply with new ADA web accessibility standards coming into effect shortly; these nominations and reports are made available to the public on our websites. These webinars were well attended.
- **Mapping (February 10): Collaboration with the State Library for an online webinar:**

Upcoming Events at the SLNC

- Finding Maps and GIS Data with the State Historic Preservation Office Webinar, Feb. 10, 11 AM – 12 PM

- **Nonprofit Preservation Organization convening.** Ramona Bartos participated, representing the HPO, in a 2026 Preservation Nonprofit convening sponsored by Preservation North Carolina and the Richard Jenrette Foundation, held in Salisbury on February 25.

DOI audit. The overall Florence Yutu Michael (FYM) Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund program aka HPO Hurricane Grant program (started in 2019) is being audited by an external entity at the direction of the Department of the Interior. As mentioned previously, it is NOT an audit of DNCR's FYM grant, though we were asked for audit confirmations, and provided sampling materials in a timely fashion, demonstrating our proper drawdowns and administration of the program for North Carolina's grant. Next week, we will be hosting auditors from the DOI Denver office for multiple days of site visits of projects funded with Florence monies, including the USS NORTH CAROLINA (mast repairs) and Brunswick Town / Fort Anderson State Historic Sites (wave attenuators) plus a host of other properties owned and stewarded by either local governments or schools or private nonprofits. **The audit team has given us high marks for our administration of our program.**

Historic Tax credit statistics (through December 31, 2025 to date):

- completed historic tax projects since 1976 statewide = 4,455 (annual increase of 64, including multi-million dollar mill conversions);

- Nearly \$4 billion in tax credit-eligible private investment in North Carolina's historic buildings (annual increase of \$143 million, bringing number to \$3,995,784,829). A completed mill conversion in Elizabeth City for apartments this month will likely take us over the \$4 billion mark. Notably, this financial statistic has not been adjusted for inflation.

Office of State Archaeology (OSA)

Canoes. For some time, the Office of State Archaeology has led the recovery of multiple American Indian canoes – most over 500 to 1000 years old – from rivers and lakes throughout eastern North Carolina. We have recently learned that the American Indian canoe recovered from the South River appears to be red cedar, which may be rare in terms of woods used for known prehistoric canoes.

NAGPRA. OSA Research Center Supervisor Emily McDowell and Division Director Bartos attending virtual [11th Annual Repatriation Conference](#) sponsored by the national Association on American Indian Affairs to receive more NAGPRA training and learn of new developments in this area. This conference happened over several days (TBD) in February with viewing of sessions available on demand.

Lumbee recognition. The recent federal recognition of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina through Congressional action marks a new moment in North Carolina, especially for NAGPRA consultation. The Lumbee participated in their first NAGPRA consultation in late January for repatriation of ancestors originating from Town Creek Indian Mound; Mr. Harlan Chavis represented this Tribe and participated alongside the Catawba Nation and the Creek Nation. We also anticipate the Lumbee Tribe to apply for an official Tribal Historic Preservation Officer program with the National Park Service, enabling them to receive federal operational funding. We stand ready to provide technical assistance.

Coast Guard interaction. Deputy State Archaeologist Stephen Atkinson participated in a joint training exercise for oil spills with the US Coast Guard and other resource agencies and emergency management entities in February 2026 (aka Sector North Carolina's PREP TTX).

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

Division of Research and Publications

March 2026 Report

Submitted by Ansley Herring Wegner

In December the America 250 Research Historian resigned to take a position in Historic Sites. We were able to hire Jason Melius, who had been assistant site manager at Fort Dobbs/Shallow Ford. Jason brings an enormous range of knowledge and experience to the position. We have also hired Dan Brosz into the reclassified permanent Grants and Outreach Supervisor position that was described in my December report. He has been serving in that role in a time-limited role that was set to expire in June. The division is now fully staffed, although two of our other vital America 250 time-limited positions will all expire in June unless we are given lapsed salary money or a special provision in the budget.

Historical Publications

A Chronology of the American Revolution in North Carolina: A list of Dates in a National and International

Context, by Michael Coffey, is in the final design phase and is expected to be sent to the printer by the end of March. The book outlines the important events and dates of the American Revolution, with a particular focus on North Carolina. It includes the other major national and international events to inform the context of actions in the state and provides thoughtful connections to aid reader understanding. The *Chronology* utilizes a journal entry format organized by date, with helpful summaries introducing each part.



Digital Publications

Two interns from Meredith College, Livvie Copeland and Hailey Oswald, started working with Digital Publications in February. They work ten hours per week and are learning about archival research, transcription, and online exhibit design. They are currently transcribing documents, writing biographical IDs, finding artifact images, and writing exhibit text for the Civil War and Governors' Records MOSAIC projects. Their work is fully funded by Meredith College.

Historical Markers

The Highway Historical Marker Advisory Committee met in December and approved eight new markers. The subjects of the new markers are the following: musician Clyde McPhatter; Medal of Honor recipients Lawrence Joel and Henry Fred Warner; civil rights advocate Grady Davis; pioneering Black lawyer George

Mabson; judge and founder of Soul City Floyd McKissick; Lumbee educator English Jones; and mathematician Virginia Tucker.



The Moses Roper historical marker was unveiled recently in Semora with 22 people in attendance. Upcoming historical marker dedications include William H. Thomas, which will be rededicated with an updated inscription on March 5 at the Museum of the Cherokee People; Milton Quigless in Tarboro on March 14, Rufus Geddie Herring in Roseboro on March 21, Jane Pratt in Anson County on March 25, Zachariah Jacobs in Wilmington on March 26, and Andre the Giant in Ellerbe on April 23.

America 250 NC

Our commemorations team is incredibly busy now that we are in 2026. We are traveling to events all over the state engaging with people about various America 250 NC initiatives and grant projects and about North Carolina history.



With the support of a \$25,000 grant from Walmart, our team had a large footprint at the 250th anniversary of the Battle of Moores Creek Bridge at the end of February. We talked to thousands of people over the 3-day event.

America 250 NC is hosting the original North Carolina Brigade sketch from the Museum of the American Revolution from May until November. The sketch, drawn on Aug. 25, 1777, by Pierre Eugène du Simitière, is one of the few known eyewitness drawings of Continental Line soldiers. With support from the Richard

H. Jenrette Foundation and the North Carolina Society of the Cincinnati, we have purchased a special case that will allow the sketch to be viewed from both the front and the back, as there are character studies drawn on the reverse of the brigade scene. The brigade sketch tour will kick off on May 13 at the State Capitol where Museum of the American Revolution curator Matthew Skic will present his captivating lecture on finding the sketch and identifying the artist. Following the Capitol event, the sketch will be displayed the North Carolina Museum of Art, Tryon Palace, and Halifax State Historic Site. As part of the exhibit we will design two retractable panels to highlight the history of the sketch and du Simitière.

NC Historical Commission Report: December 11, 2025 – March 12, 2026
Division of State History Museums
19 March 2026

Exciting Changes Underway at the NC Museum of History



Figure 1: View of the NC Museum of History's front lobby, winter 2026.

The demolition phase of the renovation project at the North Carolina Museum of History (NCMOH) at 5 E. Edenton Street remains on time and on budget. The demolition phase is scheduled to last through summer 2026.

Staff continue to work at two different locations within the Triangle. There is also an additional warehouse where the “deep storage” of the State’s artifacts are kept that likely will not be in rotation for any upcoming exhibits or programs.



Figure 2: NCMOH front lobby, fall 2025.

NCMOH continues to work with GSM as their creative partner and design firm in charge of reimagining the main exhibit, which tells the story of the State of North Carolina. They also are the partners to install a brand-new exhibit on the first floor that tackles the subject of community in our state. GSM traveled to Raleigh to further plans with the museum’s curation and design teams. In summer 2026, museum staff plan to reengage with design firm Roto to plan the exhibits on the fourth floor. NCMOH staff reports a positive partnership with both organizations.

AACC at the NCMA:

This year marked 25th Annual African American Cultural Celebration (AACC) that united African American community members, organizations, authors, artists, musicians, filmmakers, scholars, and more, around a central theme to highlight the contributions that African Americans, past and present, have made to North Carolina’s history and culture. Multiple demonstrations, presentations, and performances reached over 5,276 attendees Saturday, February 28 at the North Carolina Museum of Art (NCMA) campus. This year’s AACC also marked the continued partnerships with other DNCR organizations, including the NCMA and the African American Heritage Commission.



Figure 3: Figure 3. 25th African American Cultural Celebration, January 28, 2026.

On Friday, February 27, the Museum Education Section’s K-12 Outreach Branch, Beyond the Exhibits, compiled a “best of” Cultural Education Day with presentations, storytelling, and musical performances from prior years for this year’s event. We are so pleased and grateful that these talented and inspiring creatives sharing history and cultural traditions reached so many people within the state, and beyond. The all-virtual day reached 6,394 students, educators, and members of the public in 61 North Carolina counties and 14 other states.

Regional History Updates:

The seven Regional History Museums are organizing and collaborating to best serve North Carolinians from the mountains to the coast. Site managers are making changes to better evaluate, improve, and strengthen their respective museums. **Tobacco Farm Life Museum,**

Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum, and **Mountain Gateway Museum (MGM)** all closed their doors for deep cleaning and other improvements. This helps to ensure that the treasured objects and artifacts of North Carolinians will be preserved for years to come. **MGM** also maintains their bi-weekly in-person construction progress meetings due to extensive damage caused by Hurricane Helene.

The **NC Maritime Museum at Beaufort** had its grand re-opening to the public on Saturday, February 21, after significant renovation during its year-long closure. On February 19, the museum hosted stakeholders and DNCR officials, including Secretary Pam Cashwell, who enjoyed the refreshed exhibits and two new displays. The opening of Gallants Channel at Beaufort expands the footprint of the museum to better include the community for educational programming and additional events.



Figure 4: Jamie McCargo (Site Manager), Sec. Pam Cashwell, and Tom Kies (President of Friends of the NC Maritime Museum) cut the ribbon at the reopening ceremony on February 19.

At the **Museum of the Cape Fear Historical Complex**, high level divisional staff met with the architectural firm regarding the layout of the Emancipation, Reconstruction and Civil War Museum planned to be constructed on the complex.

Staff Highlights:

Awards:

On February 9, the DNCR Secretary's Awards program recognized **RoAnn Bishop**, Mountain Gateway Museum, received the award for Outstanding State Government Service; and **Maria Vann**, Director of Regional History Museums, received the award for Excellence in Efficiency and Innovation.

Hiring and Promotions:

- **Erin Duprey** was promoted to the Administrative Officer at NCMOH.
- **Jenn Ballinger** was hired as an Administrative Assistant at the Maritime Museum at Southport.
- **Cyndi Brown** transitioned to Regional History Museums Public Information Officer.
- **Allison Kohne** was promoted to Collections Manager for the Maritime collections.

Retirements and Resignations:

- **Tessa Johnstone** resigned as the Maritimes Collections Manager.

Public Programming & New Exhibits:

NC Museum of History:

Programs:

NC Museum of History Pop-Up: Southeast Raleigh YMCA (January 20) Participants could spin the Wheel of History, pick up a family craft kit, and hear about the museum building renovation, while learning something new and exploring the state's fascinating history.

AACC Education Day (February 27) All-day virtual, K–12 programming. See description above.

African American Cultural Celebration (February 28) All-day programming. See description above.

Sally Bloom participated in an interview with **Monticello** and **New American History** on Wednesday for their Declaration of Independence video project.

NC Museum of History Pop-Up: Celebrate Valentines Day (February 7) The museum hosted a pop-up at the Museum Shop, inviting visitors to create their own valentines.

American Revolution Lecture Series with Rick Atkinson (February 19) The museum hosted its annual *American Revolution Lecture Series* featuring guest speaker Rick Atkinson in the DNCR building. Atkinson is the author of such historical works such as *The Fate of the Day: The War for America, Fort Ticonderoga to Charleston, 1777–1780*. Drawing from his latest book, Atkinson explores various historical figures, his research process, and the significance of the American Revolution as we approach the 250th anniversary of American independence. (See Figure 4 below.)



Figure 5: Rick Atkinson (left) answers questions from Andy Morse, President of the General Society of the Cincinnati in D.C., during the American Revolution Lecture Series.

The spring issue of *Tar Heel Junior Historian* magazine was printed, and clubs will soon begin registering for the Annual Convention, scheduled for April 17 in Winston-Salem.

Storytime Stewards at Book Harvest (March 12) At the Book Harvest in Durham, staff read *Mae Among the Stars* by Roda Ahmed, a picture book based on the true story of Dr. Mae Jemison, the first African American woman to travel into space. Afterwards, they explored North Carolina's connections to the space race. Participants could obtain a free copy of the book and make a take-home craft.

Exhibits:

The museum continues to partner with the Wilson Library at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill for the yet untitled temporary exhibit about the American Revolution. The exhibit is to be located at the library for the Independence Day weekend through fall 2026.

Regional History Museums

Museum of the Albemarle

Programs:

History for Lunch: Families of Soldiers - U.S. Colored Troops and Genealogy (January 7) Marvin Tupper Jones of the Chowan Discovery Group discussed the genealogical methods he used to learn about his numerous ancestors and ancestral neighbors who served in the Civil War and their roles in ending slavery.

Tot Time: Birds of a Feather (January 8). Children 3-5 discovered the colorful life of the northern cardinal.

History for Lunch: Sawdust in Your Pockets (January 21) A History of the North Carolina Furniture Industry.

History for Lunch: The 75th Anniversary of the Historic Pasquotank Elementary School (February 4) Eddie Davis and Dimples Armstrong, of Elizabeth City, recognized former students who experienced the transition into Pasquotank Elementary School. Audiences learned about the experiences of the former students and the educational conveniences that Pasquotank Elementary brought to their quest for education.

Talking Drums (February 13) Educational event.

Green Saves Green: Plant a Valentine (February 14) Educational environmental event with a Valentine's Day theme.

History for Lunch: The 1898 Wilmington Massacre – Could It Have Happened in Elizabeth City? (February 18) The 1898 Wilmington Massacre is one of the most infamous events in North Carolina history.

History for Lunch: From Ocracoke to Valley Forge (March 4) David Bennett, curator of maritime history at the North Carolina Maritime Museum in Beaufort, discussed how North Carolina developed a maritime logistics system that funneled desperately needed military supplies from Europe and the West Indies into neighboring colonies to equip the Continental Army and colonial militias.

Tot Time: Dr. Seuss Makes Reading Fun! (March 12) Children discovered the creative world of Dr. Seuss.

Exhibits:

Are We There Yet? NC's Variety Vacationland (Through March 7) This traveling paneled photography exhibit, on loan from the North Carolina Museum of History in Raleigh, "looks back at an era when tourism boomed thanks largely to a state-run marketing effort called "Variety Vacationland." The Variety Vacationland campaign was successful in creating a unified tourism industry in North Carolina from the 1930s to the 1970s by depicting our state as both modern and progressive, but with strong ties to its past. However, true to the Jim Crow era, most sites promoted were marketed (and accessible) to White tourists only; people of color were neglected and even exploited at times, an attitude this exhibit attempts to point out where possible."

Public Exhibit Opening: Race What You Bring (February 28 through 2029) Racing in northeastern North Carolina is thriving. Whether we participate or are amongst those in the grandstands, racing can occur through any medium. Spectators vie for something more, something different. Something that allows them to sense that they are a part of a community: a community where competitors race what they bring.

NC Maritime Museum at Southport

Programs:

Spirited Exertion in the Common Cause: The Cape Fear at War July 1775 to January 1777 (January 13) Curator of Education John Moseley presented the above historical event to the Southport Historical Society.

Skippers Crew: Hearts and Craft Day (February 14) Children's program making arts and crafts with a Valentine's Day theme.

250th Anniversary of the Battle of Moores Creek / First in Freedom Festival (February 21-28) Museum presented and performed live demonstrations at Moores Creek. (See picture below.)

Figure 6: (Right) John Mosely from Southport demonstrates natural dyeing at Moores Creek.

Rice Festival (March 7) Staff hosted a booth at the Brunswick Town/Fort Anderson State Historic Site.

NC Maritime Museum at Beaufort

Programs:

Kids' Cove: Beaufort Train Depot
(January 14)

Coastal Culture and Waterfowl

Watching Excursion (January 15) Full-day educator-led tour to observe wintering waterfowl at Lake Mattamuskeet and Pungo Lake national wildlife refuges

Maritime Heritage Series Lecture: Whales in North Carolina (January 22) Lectures series focused on North Carolina's rich maritime history, coastal environment, and culture.

Kids' Cove: Sharks (February 11) Free-play program designed for children ages 0-5 and their caregivers with a different maritime themed craft and wiggle activity.

Maritime Heritage Lecture Series: Love at Sea (February 12) Duels and deathbed confessions were included in these local love stories recounted in honor of Valentine's Day. Associate Education Curator staff shared eight of their favorite maritime-themed love stories for this special holiday presentation.

Maritime Heritage Lecture Series: Heart of the Sea (February 14) Lectures series focused on North Carolina's rich maritime history, coastal environment, and culture.

Maritime Heritage Series Lecture: *North Carolina's Role in Supplying the American Revolution by Sea* (February 26) During the American War of Independence, the British Royal Navy blockaded or occupied major colonial ports. However, they dedicated few ships to patrol the Graveyard of the Atlantic. This allowed ships to bring much-needed wartime supplies into Ocracoke Inlet and through North Carolina's rivers and sounds to supply the Continental Army.

Novel Navigators Book Club: *A Voyage for Madmen* (February 26) Program located in the Museum auditorium.

Exploring Coastal Habitats on the Rachel Carson Reserve (March 11) Guided tour through natural areas to discover the local ecosystem.



Kids' Cove: Sailors (March 11) Free-play program designed for children ages 0-5 and their caregivers with a different maritime themed craft and wiggle activity

Maritime Heritage Lecture Series: Wreck of Caribsea (March 12) On March 11, 1942, the cargo freighter, Caribsea, was sunk by German U-boat 158 off Cape Lookout while heading from Santiago de Cuba to Baltimore, Maryland.

Bonehenge Family Friendly Tours and Public Tours (Ongoing) Tour of Bonehenge Whale Center.

Introduction to Wooden Boat Building (Ongoing) Class at Harvey W. Smith Watercraft Center.

Introduction to Woodworking (Ongoing) Class at the Harvey W. Smith Watercraft Center.

Lofting a Boat (Ongoing) Class at Harvey W. Smith Watercraft Center

Mountain Gateway Museum

Exhibits:

Shadows of Incarceration and People of Colonial North Carolina Friday, February 6 –exhibits open at MGM.

Museum of the Cape Fear Historical Complex

Programs:

A Poe Christmas Carol (December 12–13), 6–9 p.m. –Theatrical Night Tours at the 1897 Poe



House, part of the HistoryLive! at the Poe House Fall Program series. Final rehearsals will take place December 9 and December 11. Supported by the Arts Council of Fayetteville/Cumberland County and the Museum of the Cape Fear Historical Complex Foundation.

Figure 7: (Left) Carolers sing on the front porch of the Poe House.

USCG Surfman Pinning Ceremony (February 19) Event hosted at the museum.

Tobacco Farm Life Museum:

Storytime with Santa and Mrs. Claus (December 13) Program included story time, gallery exploration, and holiday-themed crafts. For all ages.



Figure 8: (Left) Tobacco Farm Life Museum staff participate in children's activity.

Hands-on History: Object Investigations (February 7) Children's program to investigate objects and artifacts.

Exhibits:

When Are We Us? (February 3–March 14) temporary exhibit, created by the DNCR America 250 NC team.

To Preserve the Blessings of Liberty: State Constitutions of North Carolina (March 6) A one-day-only exhibit from the State Archives featuring copies of North Carolina's founding documents and key amendments.

News from the Division of State Historic Sites and Properties: March 2026

Michelle Lanier, Director

Overview

- North Carolina Historic Sites reported total onsite visitation of **864,667 for FY 2025-2026** to date, an 8% increase from the same period in FY 2024-2025.
- During FY2025-2026, **258,242 school-aged children** participated in tours, events, and programs at our Historic Sites.
- In 2025, Historic Sites welcomed a record **2,017,880** visitors, a 15% increase from 2024, and the first-time attendance surpassed 2 million in a calendar year.
- Historic Sites welcomed **775,609** youth in 2025, a 19% increase over the previous calendar year.
- In this quarter, social media has continued to grow with **2,018,851** impressions in January, a 20% increase.

Personnel

- **Jack Weaver** joined Historic Sites as the new site manager for **Fort Dobbs**. Jack comes to us from West Virginia University, where he earned his Ph.D. and wrote his dissertation, "Rifles and Riflemen: Material Culture, Violence, and Early American Identity, 1720 – 1820." He brings strong experience in public history and museum work, having worked with several museums and historic sites specializing in 18th century history, including Old Fort Niagara, Fort Ticonderoga, and Colonial Williamsburg.
- Assistant site administrator at the **North Carolina State Capitol**, **Diana Mauney**, received an inaugural Spirit of DNCR Award for her exceptional service to the State of North Carolina.



Figure 1: Diana Mauney received Spirit of DNCR Award

America 250 NC

- **Historic Halifax** will host "Halifax Resolves Days" April 10- 12 to commemorate the 250th founding of our nation.

News from the Division of State Historic Sites and Properties: March 2026

Michelle Lanier, Director



Figure 2: Site staff at Best of US event in Pinhurst

- Site staff participated in the Best of Our State event in Pinehurst. They had a great time interacting with attendees and sharing the history of our sites and all the programming we have planned this year for our nation's 250th anniversary. Our team was represented by interpreters based at: **Historic Halifax, House in the Horseshoe State Historic Site, Alamance Battleground State Historic Site, and Reed Gold Mine State Historic Site.**

Curatorial Services

Elizabeth Reighn, Michael Moore, Michelle Lanier, and Terra Schramm met the Gee's Bend quilters at QuiltCon, where they learned more about their internationally renowned artistry and historic ties to North Carolina State Historic Sites.

Digital Interpretation and Media Updates Project to Update State History (PUSH)

As part of the Project to Update State History (PUSH), work continues to progress on new orientation videos for **Aycock Birthplace, Bennett Place, Bentonville Battlefield, Fort Fisher, Historic Edenton, Historic Halifax, House in the Horseshoe, Town Creek Indian Mound, and Vance Birthplace.** The project also includes digital updates to exhibits in the form of touchscreens, animated maps, and other augmented-reality products. These updates aim to reflect expansive narratives and current scholarship, enhancing the visitor experience across these historic sites.

As part of this project, Bennett Place hosted stakeholders from within Historic Sites, as well as representatives from the NC American Indian Heritage Commission and the NC



Figure 3: Michelle Lanier works on quilt with Gee's Bend Quilters.

News from the Division of State Historic Sites and Properties: March 2026

Michelle Lanier, Director

African American Heritage Commission. They gathered for a discussion and brainstorming session on a new touchscreen “build your own unity monument.” The rich and thoughtful conversation helped the site staff think through issues and blind spots and will help inform the final offering.

Digital Information Technology/ Office of Digital Equity and Literacy Grant (DIT/ODEL)

The DIT/ODEL Grant supports efforts to improve accessibility at North Carolina’s historic sites through immersive 360-degree virtual tours. Initiated in 2024 and scheduled for completion in December 2026, the project continues to progress as it enters the text development phase, focusing on America 250 NC sites to make these historic spaces more accessible to all. Two temporary employees were hired to help complete the project: **Sharice Lloyd** and **Khiyah Ward**.

Project Highlights

- We are developing 25 virtual tours of our sites, with a primary focus on America 250 NC locations, and we are making strong progress.
- We have nearly completed five recorded 10-minute talks covering American Indian, Revolutionary War, Civil War, Civil Rights, and women’s history.
- We have successfully completed the 3D scanning of 30 artifacts.
- We are also planning to host three teacher workshops to introduce educators to online resources that can enrich and deepen their curriculum. These workshops will be led by our **Education Branch**, recorded, and uploaded to our website so that additional educators and community groups can access the training. Planning is underway, and we anticipate offering the workshops in early summer.

East Region

- The **CSS Neuse** is hosting a panel exhibit on loan from the **Museum of the Albemarle** through February 3, titled "Steeped in Time: Tea and Traditions," highlighting the history of tea.
- **Roanoke Island Festival Park** is preparing for the rescheduled Kool & The Gang concert on June 13, 2026.

News from the Division of State Historic Sites and Properties: March 2026

Michelle Lanier, Director

- Construction of the new visitor center at **Halifax State Historic Site** is now complete, and the site is thrilled to welcome guests back just in time for Halifax Resolves Days.

 	
Prelude to Revolution: Halifax Resolves Days Commemorating 250 Years Friday, April 10, 2026	
All Day Events	
10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Historic Buildings open for tours from 10 – 5. Living history Demonstrations, including hearth cooking and blacksmithing at Bradford-Denton House Naval Stores Display and Meet the Experts at Edward Cheek House, 10-5 Tours of the Royal White-Hart Lodge, 10-4, Self-Guided Underground Railroad Trail 10-5 Halifax County Library, Genealogy Display, 9-4 Restaurants, Food Trucks, and Shops in the business district throughout the day
Scheduled Events	
11:00 a.m.	History Presentation: First Baptist Church, “Naval Stores and the Real Tar Heels: A History of the Long Leaf Pine Forest”, Earl James
12:00 p.m.	Colonial Music – Syllabus Trio – Tent at Colonial Courthouse Site
1:00 p.m.	History Presentation: Halifax County Library, “Free People of Color: Patriots from Halifax County and Descendants”, Steven Green & Ayo Heinig Majwood
2:00 p.m.	Musket-firing Demonstration on Market Square
3:00 p.m.	History Presentation: Visitor Center, “African American Soldiers in the Continental Army”, Trevor Freeman
5:00 p.m.	Ticketed Event: Masonic Dinner at The Hen and the Hog, sponsored by Royal White-Hart Lodge, No. 2
Saturday, April 11, 2026	
All Day Events	
10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Historic Buildings open for tours from 10 – 5. Living history Demonstrations, including hearth cooking and blacksmithing at Bradford-Denton House Naval Stores Display and Meet the Experts at Edward Cheek House, 10-5 Tours of the Royal White-Hart Lodge, 12-4 Open Houses at Historic Churches, 10-4 Halifax County Library, Genealogy Display, 9-3, Underground Railroad Tours, 2-4 Restaurants, Food Trucks, and Shops in the business district throughout the day
Scheduled Events	
10:00 a.m.	Native American Ceremony at Magazine Spring, led by the Haliwa-Saponi Indian Tribe
11:00 a.m.	Military Parade on King Street
11:15 a.m.	Historic Weapons Demonstration – Small Arms & Artillery
11:30 p.m.	Living History Vignette: Tap Room Tavern, “The Provincial Delegates Debate Independence”
11:45 a.m.	Music from Tryon Palace Fife and Drum Corps. – Market Square
12:00 p.m.	Living-History Vignette: Owens House, “Teatime with the Ladies of Halifax”
12:30 p.m.	History Presentation: Visitor Center, “Taken at the Battle of Moore’s Creek Bridge”, Frank McMahon
1:00 p.m.	Historic Weapons Demonstration – Small Arms & Artillery
1:30 p.m.	Living History Vignette: Owens House “Teatime with the Ladies of Halifax”
2:00 p.m.	Interactive Interpretation: Colonial Courthouse Site - The Ratification of the Halifax Resolves
2:45 p.m.	Living History Vignette: Edward Cheek House - Meet Piety, a Freedom Seeker
2:45 p.m.	Music from Tryon Palace Fife and Drum Corps. – Market Square
3:00 p.m.	History Presentation: Visitor Center, “Willie Jones”, Dr. Jim Beckwith
3:30 p.m.	Historic Weapons Demonstration – Small Arms & Artillery
3:45 p.m.	Living History Vignette: Edward Cheek House, “Meet Piety, a Freedom Seeker”
4:00 p.m.	Meet George Washington at Eagle Tavern
4:45 p.m.	A Gathering at the Liberty Pole at the Colonial Courthouse Site
5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.	Ticketed Event: Tea and Toddies with George, Under Tent adjacent to Colonial Courthouse Site - Dinner, Dancing, & Entertainment

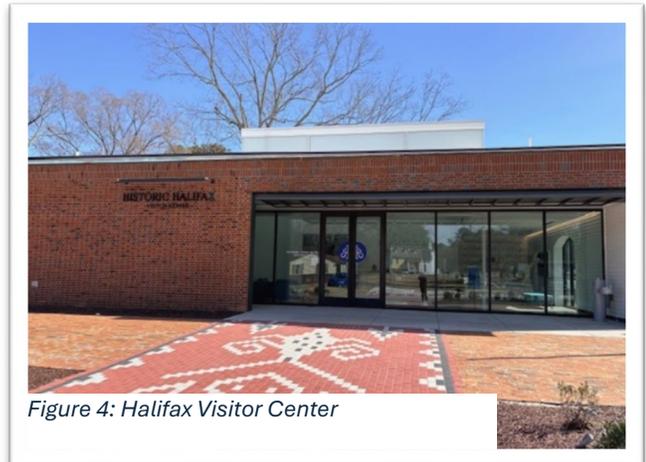


Figure 4: Halifax Visitor Center

“Prelude to Revolution: Halifax Resolves Days” will be April 10-12, 2026.

Piedmont Region

NC Historic Sites marked a major milestone at **House in the Horseshoe** with a groundbreaking ceremony for the new visitor center on December 1, 2505. The event, attended by DNCR stakeholders, the Alston House Association, local DAR and SAR chapters, local media, the project architect, and the contractor, celebrated a transformative project that will enhance visitor services and interpretation. The site is closed for construction until further notice.

News from the Division of State Historic Sites and Properties: March 2026

Michelle Lanier, Director



Figure 6: Monks at North Carolina State Capital State Historic Site

- The **North Carolina State Capitol** held two significant programs this quarter. The site hosted a documentary screening with Frederick D. Murphy featuring descendants of **Historic Stagville**. Later, they welcomed the Governor and dignitaries from all levels of state government to the historic House Chamber to commemorate the 160th anniversary of North Carolina's ratification of the 13th Amendment.
- The Walk for Peace stopped at the North Carolina State Capitol on January 24, drawing an estimated **10,000 participants**, the largest crowd in recent memory, as they continued their 2,300-mile journey to Washington, DC.

West Region

- Western Region Supervisor Jeremiah DeGennaro held interviews for the open site manager position at **Fort Dobbs**. The division is celebrating the completion of the new **Fort Dobbs** visitor center. However, the site is temporarily closed to the public as staff relocate to their new offices, move site operations to the new space, train and onboard new employees, begin exhibit fabrication, and stock the expanded gift shop. **Fort Dobbs** anticipates welcoming the public back in mid-April with a soft opening of the new visitor center. A date for the grand opening will be announced later this spring.
- The **N.C. Transportation Museum** was awarded a \$50,000 grant from Norfolk Southern's Thriving Communities Grant for restoration and electrical repair of the museum's turntable at the Bob Julian Roundhouse, a mechanical engineering historic landmark built in 1924.



Figure 7: New Fort Dobbs Visitor Center

News from the Division of State Historic Sites and Properties: March 2026

Michelle Lanier, Director

Cross-Division Collaboration & Special Programs

- The **State Capitol** collaborated with Tryon Palace to bring the site's USCT color guard to the ceremony marking the 160th anniversary of the state's ratification of the 13th Amendment. They also worked with the State Archives to display the Amendment for the day.



Figure 8: Site staff and guest at “Thomas Day Narrative Expanded” event

- To mark Black History Month, several Historic Sites offered specialized tours that were well-received by visitors. At the **Charlotte Hawkins Brown Museum State Historic Site**, “The Lives That Shaped Canary Cottage” drew strong attendance. At **Duke Homestead State Historic Site**, “Field & Factory: A Look at Tobacco’s Laborers” successfully highlighted the experiences of Black workers in both agricultural fields

and industrial spaces. “The Thomas Day Narrative Expanded” at the **Thomas Day State Historic Site** drew audiences interested in Day’s craftsmanship, entrepreneurship, and the broader context of free Black life in the 19th century.

North Carolina Historical Commission Report
Division of Archives and Records
March 19, 2026

On behalf of the Division of Archives and Records, I am pleased to provide updates on recent division activities and programming for the Winter of 2025-2026. This quarter has been dominated by preparation for America 250 commemorations; community collaborations through exhibits, workshops, and grants; and the Governor's Executive Order No. 24 on AI use by the executive agencies.

Key Highlights:

The Western Regional Archive completed a loan agreement with the Black Mountain College Museum and Arts Center for materials related to BMCMAC's exhibit "Dialogue: Lindenfeld + Lindenfeld," which will run through May 9, 2026.

The division's first America 250 lunch and learn of the year, "Marching Toward Revolution," on February 19, attracted 114 attendees. Archives staff Alison Thurman, Josh Hager, and Katie Crickmore discussed the Battle of Moores Creek Bridge, the first Revolutionary War skirmish in North Carolina.

The Traveling Archivist Program has selected 5 community archives to support this year (Badin Museum, Mitchell Community College, Person County Museum, Sandhills Elementary, and Southeastern Community College) and may add a sixth organization after an upcoming consultation. Staff are in the process of recruiting 2 TAP interns, who will be working with the Brown Library in Washington, NC, and the Historic Turner House in Raleigh, NC.

A cross-unit group from the Digital Services Section and the Government Records Session has produced a draft guidance document on public records and the use of artificial intelligence in government business. The draft is with the DNCR AI Oversight Council for review. The Archives has also submitted an AI Use Case to DIT for metadata transformations related to our ADA compliance efforts for online resources.

Tours:

The Division offered 24 tours with 138 participants. The tour participants included members of the legislature's Semiquincentennial Committee (6), folks from *Tar Heel Junior Historian* (8), students from the Exploris School (13), and participants in the Governor's Page Program (36).

Events:

- January 22: "New Year, New Collections," Lunch and Learn. A panel of Archives staff provided an overview of new accessions and newly processed collections now available for researchers to access. 67 attendees.

- February 2: “Wake County Veterans in 20th-Century Conflicts,” Wake County Historical Society. Military Collection archivist Ashley Latta spoke on the experiences of local veterans.
- February 4: “Bound by Law: Limits to Emancipation during the Revolution,” Lunch and Learn. Archives staff Adrienne Berney and Alana Gomez shared the stories of two men who were affected by these laws and emancipated as a result of their actions during the war. 44 attendees.
- February 11: National Genealogy Conference Open Forum, NC Breakout Session with Doug Brown. 25 attendees.
- February 12: “Language and Life on Ocracoke” speaker event with Dr. Jeffrey Reaser, Friends of the Outer Banks History Center and College of the Albemarle, Manteo, NC. 28 attendees
- February 19: Women’s Suffrage Leaders presentation to 8th Graders in Wake Young Women’s Leadership Academy, Adrienne Berney and Dani Shirilla, City of Raleigh Museum. 22 attendees.
- February 28: African American Cultural Celebration information table, Community Building Committee (Mitzi Townes, chair). 177 attendees.
- March 4-7: Revolutionary War/Tribal Exhibits Room, United Tribes of NC 2026 Unity Conference, Raleigh, NC. Archives staff provided exhibit panels, repro documents, on Cherokee and eastern tribal interactions with colonial/state government in the Revolutionary War period.

Workshops:

- February: GRS conducted 2 virtual Managing Public Records for State Agencies (virtual, 697 attendees), 1 Managing Public Records for Local Agencies (in-person, 24 attendees), and 3 Disaster Preparedness workshops (in-person, 187 attendees)
- February 3: “Preservation Basics” workshop by Adrienne Berney, Lee County Public Library. 7 attendees.
- February 16: Workshop on conducting virtual oral histories by John Horan, for the Dix Park Conservancy. 2 attendees.

America 250 Programming:

The One Day Wonder State Constitution exhibit began traveling again in February. Sites visited include Jones Lake State Park (2/14), Southport/Fort Johnson (2/21), Moores Creek National Battleground (2/24), the Tobacco Farm Life Museum (3/6), and the Museum of the Albemarle (3/19). Next up, the exhibit will travel to the New Hanover County Public Library for the Azalea Festival on April 11 and to Rowan County Public Library on April 14.

The Archives has a new landing page for our America 250 resources, available at <https://archives.ncdcr.gov/about/america-250-state-archives>.

The Friends of the Archives have officially committed to funding travel for the Archives' A250 traveling exhibit schedule, and they have applied for a Duke Energy A250 grant to further support the One Day Wonder exhibits as well as other planned activities.

Collections Management Branch head Camille Hunt has been working with DNCR A250 lead Ansley Wegner and staff from Historic Sites and Tryon Palace to discuss options for exhibiting a loaned Revolutionary War brigade sketch at various locations around the state.

The Outreach team along with our Oral Historian, John Horan, have been working on the New American Oral History project as part of the "When Are We US?" component of the department's America 250 programming. They will also be presenting a lunch and learn in April to celebrate New Americans in North Carolina.

Outreach:

In December, the Outreach team mailed more than 400 sets of community archiving materials (1 guidebook, 27 tipsheets) to 86 library systems, each with multiple branches, as part of the NHPRC funded grant to the North Carolina SHRAB for 2024-2025. Staff have completed and submitted their last quarterly report for that successful grant project.

In this quarter, Kelly Policelli completed interviews with *IndyWeek*, *Charlotte Talks* (WFAE Charlotte), and *On Second Thought* (WHKY Hickory).

Facilities:

The HVAC/Vent Project at the State Records Center (215 N. Blount Street) is under way: The project officially kicked off on February 23; we are awaiting a final construction schedule but have been told that global supply chain disruptions put the lead-time on most of the equipment at 22-30 weeks. The first step will be asbestos remediation. The work will require Archives staff to vacate the building for 3 months at some point in the schedule.

There are ongoing temperature and humidity issues in the Archives stacks in both the A&H building and the SRC. Staff have been working with facilities/DOA and with other DNCR divisions, particularly the State Library, to resolve these issues. Conditions are affecting the preservation of records, especially the AV materials.

Collections:

During this quarter, the State Archives accessioned 132.86 cu. ft. of physical records, 39.82 gigabytes of electronic records, and 305 reels of microfilm. Below are highlights of the collections accessioned for this period.

- County Records
 - Madison County, various record series, 1850-1968, 15.4 cu. ft.
 - Halifax County, Court Records and Estates, 1900-1968, 67 cubic feet
 - Lenior County, Estates/Accounts Papers, 1960-1969, 8 cubic feet

- Audiovisual Materials
 - Accrual to the Drew C. Wilson Photograph Collection, 1996-2005, OBHC, 38 GB
- Special Collections:
 - Duck Woods Ladies Golf Association (Outer Banks), 1969-2021, 10 cu. ft.
- State Records
 - NCMA Education Department Audiovisual Materials, 1958-1972, 2 cu. ft.
 - Office of Administrative Hearings, Director's Correspondence, 1989-2021, 3 cubic feet

Technical Services:

The Digital Access Branch has completed 4 digitization projects: the General Assembly Session Records; a selection of Colin Shaw papers, relevant to an America 250 anniversary; the Hyalie Yamins and Gisela Kronenberg Letters from Black Mountain College, for Women's History Month.

Government Records has had multiple requests to access semi-confidential records that require redaction. In this quarter, Government Records staff redacted more than 3,000 pages of Department of Social Services records (SR.97) and worked to make the minutes of the Eugenics Board (SR.149) accessible for research.

Staff continue to work to meet the late-April deadline for ADA compliance in online communications (i.e., websites and PDFs published online).

Staff:

The division's Conscious Description Committee is providing professional development workshops for staff related to best practices for archival description in February through April.

Staff member Josh Hager was appointed cochair of the Council of State Archivists' Annual Meeting in Columbia, SC, in late September; SANC will serve as "cohosts" for the event.

The Archives has 1 current opening and celebrated the retirement of a long-time staff member (and the promotion of another):

- Eric Moser retired as Microfilm Unit lab supervisor on January 30 after more than a decade of service to the Archives; Charles Murray has taken over his duties.
- We are adding a staff member to the Conservation Unit; we will be hiring a Lead Conservation Technician: https://nc.wd108.myworkdayjobs.com/en-US/NC_Careers/job/Lead-Conservation-Technician---AR60083397_JR-110961