

**Report of the Division of Historical Resources
To the North Carolina Historical Commission
For its September 2025 meeting**

**Ramona M. Bartos, Division Director and Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
September 12, 2025**

Division in general

Personnel matters.

Restoration Specialist (western Piedmont service territory). Following the promotion of Brett Sturm to Restoration Services Branch Supervisor, we are in the process of filling his specialist position vacated upon his elevation, and have moved its duty station to Asheville so it can more easily handle the western Piedmont than from Raleigh. We also expect to reconfigure our western service territories as Asheville-based Restoration Specialist Jennifer Cathey – to date our only specialist there – has handled +/- 25 counties singlehandedly for a prolonged time.

Restoration Specialist (Eastern service territory). Likewise, we had filled the position left vacant in the east by the promotion of Restoration Specialist Reid Thomas because of his own promotion to Eastern Office Supervisor. Chris Stone joined us from the Missouri SHPO, but left last month after only 5 months, citing difficulty finding housing in the area; he has joined his father's construction company in western North Carolina. As a result, we are advertising that position presently.

Environmental Review Specialist. We recently also said a bittersweet goodbye to Katie Harville, who has been with the Preservation Office since 2017, serving as one of our Environmental Review team's specialist, charged with reviewing Section 106 submissions statewide. She took a related job at NCDOT, and we will be advertising her position soon which is paid for by federal funds.

New Assistant State Archaeologists. This summer, we also welcomed two new colleagues in the Office of State Archaeology – Jill Shuler with the Underwater Branch (following Stephen Atkinson's promotion to Deputy State Archaeologist – Underwater) and Juliette Vogel with the Raleigh office. Jill was previously our IMLS-grant-funded research fellow delving into the history of a noted shipwreck off of Beaufort (aka La Concorde) before it became a noted pirate's flagship. Juliette has both FEMA experience as well as serving as the former Assistant State Physical Anthropologist for the State of Washington.

Helene retrospective. With this month's one-year milestone post-Helene, I wanted to include some information again about our Helene recovery work:

- Damage from Hurricane Helene forced one site in our division to close: **DNCR's Western Office in east Asheville for 52 days** due to lack of water and power and

basement flooding. DNCR's Western Office is listed in the National Register and suffered flooding damage to its basement. Repair amounts are still being finalized but work is underway.

As a sampling, **these areas have National Register-listed or -eligible districts with multiple buildings damaged or lost (verified by our reports):**

- Asheville's River Industrial (aka River Arts) and Biltmore Village districts, Boone, Canton, Chimney Rock, Hot Springs, Lansing, Marshall, Montreat, Old Fort, Penland, Saluda, Spruce Pine, Swannanoa, Todd, Valle Crucis, Blue Ridge Parkway, Green River Plantation in Rutherford County
- **notable historic properties lost:** Governor Locke Craig House in Swannanoa, Flowering Bridge in Lake Lure

Additionally, multiple cemeteries suffered damage, including National Register-listed Riverside Cemetery in Asheville with tree falls disturbing graves. Other cemeteries suffered damage, including dislocation of multiple burials.

We continue our work to handle Section 106 environmental review submissions — Helene-related submissions overall represent a third of our statewide submissions received these days; we aim to complete these reviews in an expedited fashion — 10 calendar days or less (normally we have 30). These efforts speed recovery and aid to constituents from federal and state sources.

The overall number of projects related to Helene sits at 900:

FEMA- 469

Disaster Debris sites (administered by DEQ, with 3-day turnaround times) - 185

Renew NC properties - 185

Miscellaneous projects that referenced Helene - 61.

And I would be remiss to point out that DNCR Western Office staff were themselves victims of the storm, including several individuals whose homes suffered flooding or tree fall damage.

State Historic Preservation Office and Office of State Archaeology staffers based in Asheville include Restoration Specialist Jennifer Cathey, Survey Coordinator Elizabeth King, Preservation Specialist Hannah Beckman-Black, Survey Specialist Audrey Thomas, Deputy State Archaeologist Dylan Clark, Assistant State Archaeologist Michael Nelson, and Staff Archaeologist Rachael Denton. In the midst of dealing with their own personal situations, severely limited communications, and transportation challenges all caused by Helene, they can be credited with continuing their professional work to assess damage to historic properties (publicly and privately owned), to offer assistance for Restoration services,

including advice on how constituents can start to work on having their homes recover from flooding, to start historic tax credit consultations for repairs to damaged historic buildings, and to assist constituents with damaged cemeteries and archaeological sites. They were our eyes and ears to the needs of western North Carolina, and have continued this vital constituent-oriented work since Helene's arrival.

State Historic Preservation Office and Office of State Archaeology staff based elsewhere likewise traveled to affected areas to help with constituent assistance, including OSA Cemetery Specialist Melissa Timo.

One story is particularly poignant from the aftermath of the storm that illustrates the power of preservation in the midst of the losses wrought by Helene (told in the words of Sarah Woodard, our Survey / National Register Branch Supervisor but edited to maintain the constituent's confidentiality):

[In November], Beth King and Audrey Thomas conducted a site visit at a constituent's request in [a rural community] in Mitchell County. The family of the man they met owns [a locally historically significant building] and he wanted to learn how to get it listed in the National Register. That's all they knew going into this site visit.

As it turns out, his family also owns/ed the house that stood next door. The house was swept away in the Helene's flooding, taking his daughter, son-in-law, and two grandchildren with it. They were four of the fatalities from this tiny little place where six people died.

He told Beth King that he wants to save it and list it because it's all he has left.

State Historic Preservation Office (HPO)

Historic Preservation Fund funding.

FY 2026 federal Historic Preservation Fund funding. As reported previously, the President's FY2026 "skinny" budget calls for **zeroing out all** federal appropriations for the Historic Preservation Fund, which supplies needed funding for both (1) competitive bricks and mortar and planning grants for the public and (2) the **vital annual operational funds shared by the State Historic Preservation Office and Office of State Archaeology**. Both types of grants (competitive and operational) totaled \$158M for the *entire country last year*, a little under half of which is for **ALL** 59 SHPOs nationwide (**\$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**), and the Certified Local Government subgrant program. HPF funding is derived from offshore oil and gas lease dollars.

Despite the President's proposal, both the US House and Senate included level funding in their respective FY2026 budgets, which bodes well for the Historic Preservation Fund's ultimate inclusion in the final FY2026 federal budget (or continuing resolution).

SHPO annual operational funds made available for FY 2025. Federal funds for SHPOs (and Tribal Historic Preservation Offices) for Fiscal Year 2025 were not made available until July 2025, despite the fact those funds were passed by the Congress and signed into law in March of this year. Many, including the National Trust for Historic Preservation, urged Administration officials and Members of Congress in both chambers to make these funds available as quickly as possible. We understand that the proposed grant notice of funding for SHPO operational monies was under review by the federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) during the March to July time period. We have successfully applied for, and gratefully received these funds, which are being used to fund salaries and travel for both the HPO and OSA.

Emergency Supplemental Historic Preservation Fund dollars. We applied 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 usually increase by 40% after a hurricane, especially when recovery is underway over many years. We also are experiencing 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**. We are still at this time awaiting word of an award and expected news in August.

The agency also applied for a \$175,000 grant from the same program but for bricks and mortar projects for Helene recovery to conduct 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. We are still at this time awaiting word of an award.

HR 3418. As a reminder, the Historic Preservation Fund is derived from off-shore oil and gas lease monies to turn a non-renewable resource into a renewable one (historic places). The authorization for this Fund has expired, and needs to be reauthorized. [HR 3418](#) was introduced by bipartisan sponsors on 5/14 to do so, including setting a new annual minimum of \$250M; the prior minimum of \$150M was last set over 4 decades ago and has not at all kept up with inflation.

Of those dollars, North Carolina has received +/- \$1.3M for our state's funding for SHPO operations annually in the last few years. Those dollars pay for the salary of the aforementioned 14 FTEs, travel statewide, and \$130,000 of grants for local governments.

We appreciate our agency legislative liaison Anne Evangelista in organizing and including us in a briefing / orientation about our programs with congressional district offices this week

(9/9 and 9/12); staffers from Senators Budd and Tillis, and Representatives Foushee, Harrigan, Knott, and Moore participated.

Civil Rights Grant (NPS). Despite funding challenges with our regular HPF funding, Phase 2 of our northeastern NC Civil Rights grant (NPS) is getting underway with architectural surveys of buildings (identified in Phase 1) associated with the Civil Rights movement in this part of the state (many of which have never before been surveyed). We hope to identify candidates for National Register nomination from this work.

Collaboration with Historic Sites. We continue through our Restoration Services Branch to work with our colleagues at House in the Horseshoe on a building analysis of the Austin House, which with archaeological investigation, are providing more clues to the Revolutionary War combat that took place on the property.

National Register Advisory Committee (NRAC) meeting. The second of our 3 NRAC meetings in 2025 will be held on Thursday, October 9. The National Register agenda will be quite full and varied with 11 National Register nominations, again demonstrating the strong public demand for this program, along with an expected 20+ proposed Study List properties. The final materials will be available online in coming days. National Register coordinator Jeff Smith is to be greatly credited for maintaining a steady momentum with review and moving constituents' projects forward.

Local Government Preservation Commission training. Local Government Coordinator Kristi Brantley and HPO colleagues have been conducting local government historic preservation commission training this fall, including Hendersonville (September 5), and upcoming Southern Pines (October 3). We also will hold our annual local preservation planners workshop in mid-November here at 109 Jones Street in Raleigh. Details forthcoming as logistics fall into place. Our in-person training was delayed as a result of federal funding delays as our travel is covered largely by federal funds.

National Trust for Historic Preservation. DSHPO Ramona Bartos has been invited to participate in a panel of State Historic Preservation Officers and Deputy SHPOs at the National Trust for Historic Preservation's annual conference in Milwaukee in September. The goal is to promote dialogues with the audience – giving them an opportunity to ask questions about SHPOs, what they do, why they do it, etc. The SHPOs of Iowa and Tennessee and DSHPO of Michigan will also be on the panel.

Office of State Archaeology (OSA)

OSA at *La Dia de la Ciencia*: The Office of State Archaeology hosted a table at the NC Museum of Natural History's *Dia de la Ciencia* (Day of Science) on August 3: "Learn more about North Carolina's archaeological conservation program, explore artifacts from some of our state's most important historic sites, and experience NC Digs!"

Cemetery workshops being planned. We are working with the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training (an NPS unit based in Louisiana) to put on some

cemetery workshops in Asheville next week (week of September 15th), including field demonstrations. We welcome Secretary Cashwell's participation on September 17th.

OSARC demolition. As reported previously, the state budget over the last few years has included funding for demolition of buildings on Caswell Square in Raleigh, returning the block to a park. One of those buildings is our Office of State Archaeology Research Center (OSARC), and as requested by Dr. Waters, our division prepared a proposal as to the needs for a successor facility (which is not to our knowledge funded). OSARC is the permanent curation facility for over 1 million archaeological artifacts and ancestors' remain (both those subject to and not subject to NAGPRA).

We understand there is continued interest in moving forward with these plans, but there is no plan as of yet to rehouse these vital collections and staff. Secretary Cashwell is interested in visiting OSARC anew with members of our leadership team in coming weeks given the urgency of the situation.

State Archaeologist Chris Southerly and OSARC Supervisor Emily McDowell have done an excellent job in articulating OSARC's needs for a new facility.

The demolition is slated for 2027-2028.

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

NC Historical Commission Report: June 4 - September 3, 2025
Division of History Museums
16 September 2025

NC Museum of History Has Moved Out!

The NC Museum of history has cleared out of 5 East Edenton Street so that the renovation and exhibit redesign can begin. Staff has temporary offices at Smoketree Court and there are nearby “deep storage” storage facilities at Harrod Street. Additionally, there is artifact storage space as well as office space for collections staff at Swabia Court near Research Triangle Park.

Construction Fence: While the NC Museum of History is undergoing renovation, a construction fence was designed and installed to wrap around the building. This alerts visitors and other passers-by to the exciting developments for the new building as well as highlighting events from America 250.

Outreach: Our building might be closed, but we are not closed down – we are expanding into the community. For example, our Curators are continuing to travel across the state to build relationships with different communities to continue our outreach initiative. And our Educators continue to plan and execute programs that engage local residents. They also have plans to travel outside of the area starting late 2025 or early 2026.



Personnel:

Hiring and Promotions:

- **Amber Revels Stocks** Promoted to the Executive Editor for the Marketing and Communications Section.
- **Sarah Beach** Hired as Objects Conservator for the Collections Section.
- **Xavier Klonowski** Hired as Registrar for the Collections Section.
- **Madison Phillips** Hired as the Public Programs Branch head for the Education Section.
- **Karen Essic** Hired as a Graphic Designer for the Editorial and Graphic Design Section.
- **Felton Foushee** Hired as Site Manager for the Museum of the Cape Fear Historical Complex (New Position).
- **Sarah Morrell** Hired as Site Manager of Tobacco Farm Life Museum.

- **Shannon Walker** Hired as Site Manager of the NC Maritime Museum at Southport (New Position)

Retirements and Resignations:

- **Brooke Csuka** Resigned as Section Manager of Editorial and Graphic Design.
- **Jennifer Gonzales** Resigned as Budget Officer and Section Manager of Administration.
- **David Reid** Retired as Site Administrator from the Museum of the Cape Fear.
- **Cindy Bradley** Resigned as the Site Manager for Tobacco Farm Life Museum.

Public Programming:

NC Museum of History:

Filming with actors for *It's Revolutionary!* will conclude on Friday, June 13. The next phase of the project will focus on photo research, video editing, and the review of accompanying notebook lesson plans.



The museum's planning committee for the American Indian Heritage Celebration (AIHC) and African American Cultural Celebration (AACC) continued to meet. Additionally, museum staff will meet with representatives from the North Carolina Museum of Art to discuss partnership opportunities related to hosting the upcoming cultural festivals.

Paint and Sip: NC Lighthouses (July 19). Join the museum as we kick off our new paint and sip program, this time featuring NC lighthouses! Curator of Community and Social History Yvette Pino will guide you through painting a lighthouse scene, letting you pick your favorite to finish your painting. You'll also get a firsthand look at a rarely seen item from the museum's collection relating to NC lighthouse history, shared by a museum curator! Drinks, including your favorite libation, are available as a separate purchase from one of Transfer Co. Food Hall's numerous vendors.

Paint and Sip: NC Lighthouses (July 26). Join the museum as we kick off our new paint and sip program, this time featuring NC lighthouses! Curator of Community and Social History Yvette Pino will guide you through painting a lighthouse scene, letting you pick your favorite to finish your painting. You'll also get a firsthand look at a rarely seen item from the museum's collection relating to NC lighthouse history, shared by a museum curator! Drinks, including your favorite libation, are available as a separate purchase from one of Transfer Co. Food Hall's numerous vendors.

North Carolina Museum of History Pop-Up! Oak City Brewing Company (August 6). Visit the museum at Oak City Brewing Company to play NC trivia for your chance to win a special prize and learn about the museum building renovation. Learn something new and explore our state's fascinating history!

Regional History Museums

Museum of the Albemarle

The local group Just Girls will visit the Museum of the Albemarle on Tuesdays throughout the summer for weekly movie viewings and activities, weather permitting.

Take It, Make It: Celebrate Freedom on Juneteenth (June 14). Stop by the museum and pick up a free Take It, Make It Packet to celebrate Juneteenth! You'll find at-home activities, learning resources, and regional sites that explore the history of slavery and emancipation in the Albemarle region.

Summer Fun Day: Archaeology 101 (June 18). Put your video games down, get dirty, and become an archaeologist for the day! Dig into the past like an archaeologist by conducting an excavation and learning the scientific methods of identifying, labeling, and cleaning artifacts. Participate in fun hands-on activities with the tools of the trade.

History for Lunch: Shipwreck Rescues on the Outer Banks (June 18). Author James D. Charlet chronicles the extraordinary men of the US Life-Saving Service who dared to challenge the lethal waters known as the Graveyard of the Atlantic. Through meticulously researched accounts and firsthand knowledge, Charlet will bring to life the heart-stopping rescues, tragic failures, and enduring mysteries that have shaped the legendary reputation of the Outer Banks

History for Lunch: The Hard Luck Career of the CSS Neuse (July 2). Andrew Duppsstadt, education and interpretation supervisor for the North Carolina Division of State Historic Sites, will examine the hard luck career of the CSS Neuse and its crew during the Civil War and beyond.

At the Movies: The Parent Trap (August 5). Hallie Parker, a hip Californian, and Annie James, a proper London miss, are identical twins who don't know the other exists until they accidentally meet at summer camp. Now they're up to their freckles in schemes and dreams to switch places, get their parents back together, and have the family they've always wished for!

History for Lunch: "Old" Nags Head (August 6). Take a stroll down memory lane through Edward Fearing's collection of photographs. Fearing will present photographs of "old" Nags Head and surrounding communities that date back to the turn of the century. Enjoy exploring Nags Head's growth over the past 125 years.

History for Lunch: Conserving and Commemorating the Great Dismal Swamp (August 20). Public historian Perri Meldon explores what became of the Great Dismal Swamp after 1865. What decisions made by Black, White, and Native farmers, landowners, hunters, and

lumbermen shaped the vitality of this wetland? When so many other southern swamps were drained, cultivated, and built upon in the 20th century, how did the Great Dismal Swamp retain its original ecosystem? Meldon invites attendees to reflect on this place's cultural and environmental stories —past, present, and future

NC Maritime Museum at Southport

Paper Marbling (June 18). Using a centuries old process, visitors will create their own marbled masterpiece to take home. The program is part of the museum's Anchors Aweigh series, which features hands-on activities that focus on a specific part of Lower Cape Fear and North Carolina history. Anchors Aweigh is geared toward families and all ages. These free programs are drop-in style.

Paint-A-Revolutionary (June 25). Practice your painting skills by decorating a miniature Revolutionary War soldier to take home with you. The program is part of the museum's Anchors Aweigh series, which features hands-on activities that focus on a specific part of Lower Cape Fear and North Carolina history. Anchors Aweigh is geared toward families and all ages. These free programs are drop-in style.

In the Glorious Cause of Liberty: The 250th Anniversary of the Burning of Fort Johnston (July 19). The burning and destruction of Fort Johnston by more than 500 Whig militiamen during the summer of 1775 spurred the colony of North Carolina into the Revolutionary War. The North Carolina Maritime Museum at Southport, in conjunction with the City of Southport, will mark this historical event with a free symposium, living history demonstrations, and nighttime commemoration.

Skippers Crew: Go Fish (August 2). Go "fish" for a wooden fish swimming in a sea of blue tissue paper, then decorate your fish and take it home. The program is part of the museum's Skipper's Crew series. Designed for all ages, but specifically geared toward younger patrons, Skipper's Crew features hands-on activities and take-home crafts focusing on combining arts and history. Lights will be dimmed and interactives muted during the first two hours to provide a calmer environment for those with sensory sensitivities

Maritime Weapons of the 18th Century (August 16). Join a costumed interpreter at the North Carolina Maritime Museum at Southport to learn about weapons used at sea during the 1700s. The program is part of the museum's Deep Dive into History series, which is designed to give visitors a deeper understanding of our shared past through costumed interpretation. Visitors can interact one-on-one with the presenter at any time during the program.

NC Maritime Museum at Beaufort

Construction closure. The museum remains closed to the public for planned HVAC construction. A re-opening date has not yet been set.

‘It’s Electrifying!’: Electrolytic Reduction in Archaeological Conservation (June 12). Join museum Conservator Michelle Crepeau as she discusses electrolytic reduction; what it is, how it works and why conservators use electrochemical reactions to clean and desalinate marine archaeological metals.

Friends of the Museum’s Boat Shoes & Bow Ties (June 13). The Friends of the Maritime Museum hosts its one-of-a-kind themed gala, Boat Shoes & Bow Ties, at the Harvey W. Smith Watercraft Center. Members and guests will enjoy heavy hors d’oeuvres and libations, live music and dancing overlooking Taylors Creek. There will be a live and silent auction.

Introduction to Wooden Boat Building (June 14-15). Explore 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. You’ll also learn planking methods, both carvel and lapstrake, and use of appropriate fasteners.

Hiking and History on Shackleford Banks (June 18). Educators lead a guided tour that focuses on Outer Banks history and wildlife on Shackleford Banks, part of the Cape Lookout National Seashore. The program is one of the museum’s fee-based field programs, designed to give participants a hands-on experience with North Carolina’s environment, history, and culture.

Trying Women: A History of Women in the Whaling Industry (June 19). Using information gathered from whaling communities around the North Atlantic, Associate Curator of Education Christine Brin will discuss the history of women in the whaling industry. These roles range from net mending, to running stores, to processing whale meat, and occasionally even joining their husbands at sea. This program is part of the museum’s Maritime Heritage Lecture Series, informal lectures focused on North Carolina’s rich maritime history, coastal environment, and culture.

Kayak the Salt Marsh (June 26). Learn about salt marshes and wildlife while on the water during this educator-led tour. Basic kayak instruction and safety lessons on shore are followed by a 1.5-mile paddle through the salt marsh in our sit-in cockpit touring kayaks. The program is recommended for ages 12 and up. All participants under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Participants must know how to swim; some kayak experience is recommended.

Gone with the Sea Breeze: Coastal Tourism in Antebellum North Carolina (June 26). During the summer months of the antebellum period, Eastern North Carolinians retreated to the coast to escape the outbreak of diseases, such as malaria. This summertime exodus spurred the development of second homes, rental properties, and hotels. While staying at the coast, tourists engaged in a variety of recreational activities to pass the time. Learn about the early development of tourism along the North Carolina coast.

Model Boats (June 26-27). During this course students entering grades 3 and 4 will build a model boat at the museum’s Watercraft Center. They will also learn about work boats and

boats used for charter fishing and commercial fishing, as well as the types of fish targeted by people fishing aboard these vessels.

Build a Boat in a Day (June 28). Participating teams of up to four people assemble 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.

Seashore Life I (July 1-2). During this course students entering grades 1 and 2 will investigate coastal marine life of the tidal flats, salt marshes and sounds on local islands. Field-based classes include ferry ride, barrier island hiking, and animal identification. Fee is \$90. The program is part of the museum's Summer Science School, which is designed to give children entering grades one to ten hands-on experiences with North Carolina's environment, history, and culture.

Battle of Beaufort, American Revolution (July 17). Some historians argue that the final battle of the American Revolutionary War occurred in Beaufort, North Carolina, in April of 1782. Join Associate Curator Christine Brin for a discussion of this dramatic event. This program is part of the museum's Maritime Heritage Lecture Series, informal lectures focused on North Carolina's rich maritime history, coastal environment, and culture. It is being held in the auditorium at Fort Macon State Park while the museum is closed.

Friends of the Museum's 19th Annual Crab Cake Cook-off (July 18). Taste delicious crab cakes made by four volunteer guest chefs and vote on your favorite at this ticketed Friends of the Museum members only fundraiser, held annually at the Harvey W. Smith Watercraft Center. The event also has a slaw taste-off.

Pirates! (August 7-8). Young sailors entering grades 1 and 2 will join their fearless captain and work together to learn about life at sea and how pirates of long ago lived. The crew will build their own boats, set the rules of the ship, and go on a treasure hunt to find the hidden treasure. The program is part of the museum's Summer Science School, which is designed to give children entering grades one to ten hands-on experiences with North Carolina's environment, history, and culture.

Introduction to Wooden Boat Building (August 9-10). Explore 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. You'll also learn planking methods, both carvel and lapstrake, and use of appropriate fasteners.

Kids' Cove: Whales (August 13). 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 monthly 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. There is no fee.

Hiking and History on Shackleford Banks (August 19). Educators lead a guided tour that focuses on Outer Banks history and wildlife on Shackleford Banks, part of the Cape Lookout National Seashore. The program is one of the museum's fee-based field programs, designed to give participants a hands-on experience with North Carolina's environment, history, and culture.

By Hook or By Crook: Women Pirates Anne Bonny and Mary Read (August 21). Anne Bonny and Mary Read are ranked amongst the fiercest pirates from the "Golden age of Piracy." Join Associate Education Curator Christine Brin in to learn about their life stories, how they came to be pirates, and their subsequent fates. This program is part of the museum's Maritime Heritage Lecture Series, informal lectures focused on North Carolina's rich maritime history, coastal environment, and culture.

Mountain Gateway Museum

Second Saturday Workshops (June 14). The Mountain Gateway Museum is offering a summer workshop series called "Second Saturdays." June's workshop focus will teach participants how to make a bark-covered berry basket with a handle, using all-natural materials. Joe Williams, a sixth-generation basket-maker and longtime craft demonstrator, will teach the class.

The museum is partnering with McDowell County Public Library to launch the "Mountain Stories Book Club" at MGM, beginning in June.

Red, White, and Blues Ice Cream Social (July 4). The Mountain Gateway Museum will host its annual Ice Cream Social to celebrate the 4th of July at the historic Morgan Cabin. Guests are invited to enjoy a summer afternoon of sweet treats and community fun.

Mountain Stories Book Club (July 30). Mountain Gateway Museum, in partnership with the McDowell County Public Library, soon will launch a new monthly book club exploring regional history through literature.

Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum

Kids Crafts (June 12 – August 25). Join staff and volunteers for free crafts on Mondays through Aug. 25. The crafts will be offered in the museum library/education space located off the lobby. The program is free and open to the public. Advance registration is not required.

Sea Shanties (June 17). Join JR Shanty Co for a performance of original and classic sea shanties. The performance is part of the museum's Salty Dawgs Lecture Series, which features presentations on North Carolina maritime history and culture. These programs are scheduled at 11 a.m. on Tuesdays through Aug. 26 in the museum.

Shipwreck Rescues of the Outer Banks (July 1). Join historian James Charlet for part 2 of a three-part presentation on his new book, "Shipwreck Rescues of the Outer Banks," which

chronicles the United States Life-Saving Service's missions and rescues off the North Carolina coast. The program is part of the museum's Salty Dawgs Lecture Series, which features presentations on North Carolina maritime history and culture. These programs are scheduled at 11 a.m. on Tuesdays through Aug. 26 in the museum.

My Daily Bounded Realm: A Journal of Daily Life in the Outer Banks in 1900 (July 22). Join local history buff, genealogy researcher, and keeper of lost things Robin Holt for a reading from her book and discussion about life on the Outer Banks at the turn of the 20th century. A book signing in the lobby will conclude the talk. The program is part of the museum's Salty Dawgs Lecture Series, which features presentations on North Carolina maritime history and culture. These programs are scheduled at 11 a.m. on Tuesdays through Aug. 26 in the museum.

Jockeys Ridge State Park (August 5). Join N.C. Park Ranger Austin Paul to learn about Jockeys Ridge State Park, home to the tallest living sand dune system on the Atlantic coast. The program is part of the museum's Salty Dawgs Lecture Series, which features presentations on North Carolina maritime history and culture. These programs are scheduled at 11 a.m. on Tuesdays through Aug. 26 in the museum. The series is free and open to the public.

Shipwreck Rescues of the Outer Banks (August 19). Join historian James Charlet for the final program in a three-part presentation on his new book, "Shipwreck Rescues of the Outer Banks," which chronicles the United States Life-Saving Service's missions and rescues off the North Carolina coast. The program is part of the museum's Salty Dawgs Lecture Series, which features presentations on North Carolina maritime history and culture.

Museum of the Cape Fear

Groundwork is underway in Arsenal Park for the construction of the North Carolina History Center on the Civil War, Emancipation, and Reconstruction. Construction fencing is being installed, and public access to portions of the park will be limited during this phase.

Echoes of Emancipation: Juneteenth and North Carolina (June 16). As part of the sixth annual Hari Jones Memorial Lecture Series, the NC History Center on the Civil War, Emancipation & Reconstruction will present Khadija McNair, manager of Freedom Park in Raleigh.

Summer Camp at Museum of the Cape Fear (June 23-27). Thirty children ages 9–12 will attend *Decoding the Past*, a weeklong summer camp exploring how historians use personal objects, archaeology, and research to uncover and share stories from the past. Funded by the Cumberland Community Foundation's Summertime Kids Grant program.

The History Center Inside and Out (July 25). The North Carolina History Center on the Civil War, Emancipation and Reconstruction will host a media availability to announce the start of construction on its main facility. The presentation will feature a model of the building's exterior, interior renderings, and details about the construction timeline, including when work will begin and the stages the public can expect to see as the project moves forward.

Division of Research and Publications

Ansley Herring Wegner, Director

In May Historical Research and Publications added to its ranks America 250 NC (Historical Commemorations) in the wake of Sarah Koonts' retirement. The newly merged components were reorganized into a new division, the Division of Research and Publications (RAP), with Ansley Herring Wegner as the director. The combined staff was organized into four workgroups with supervisors for each. They are: Projects and Commemorations; Research Historians; Digital Publications; and Grants and Outreach.

From Branch to Division

The old Research Branch was removed from Preservation and Archaeology in 1985 and placed directly under the Director of the Division of Archives and History because it was determined that the work of the office was "divisional in scope." A major reorganization in the 2000-2002 biennium created three major divisions and the Office of Archives and History (OAH). The nascent Division of Historical Resources included the Research Branch, the Western Office, Historic Publications, Historic Preservation, Archives and Records, and the Office of State Archaeology. Historical Publications was administratively a section, on the same level as the State Archives, until the reorganization of 2000-2002. With the early history of the agency in mind, an office that combines historical research, publications (both print and digital), commemorations, and grants and outreach support can be seen as serving the OAH broadly enough to report directly to the deputy secretary of Archives and History. The work of the office directly supports, reflects, and impacts the OAH as a whole and the oversight of the office should be with the head of the OAH. In that way the office will have both the opportunity and responsibility to serve broadly.

Internal Structure

Projects and Commemorations houses commemorations and print publications. **Digital Publications** includes Colonial Records, Civil War Records, and Governors Records—all previously published as series of print volumes. They are now creative and dynamic exhibits on MOSAIC. The **Research Historians** unit includes the Historical Marker Program and research historians. **Grants and Outreach** manages the \$2.2 million in America 250 NC grants that were dispersed as well as the hectic America 250 NC outreach and events schedule.

Recent Research and Publications Activities

In June America 250 NC hosted a fantastic party at the Governor's Mansion for legislators, cabinet members, and the Supreme Court justices. We brought in 7 costumed interpreters, including Drew Neil from Alamance Battleground State Historic Site, who also played the fife on the grounds. We had the America 250 NC airstream parked in the driveway, a popup exhibit from the Museum of History, a One Day Wonder exhibit from the State Archives, and a picture taking station where people could put on tricorne hats or mob caps to take pictures with interpreters in front of a backdrop from our children's book about the Edenton Tea Party.

The office published two children's books this summer: *Freedom's Howl: Song of the Red Wolves* (about the Red Wolf in colonial North Carolina) and *Blue's March: An Overmountain Men Tale*. Like *Within Our Power: The Story of the Edenton Ladies' Tea Party*, the books are gloriously illustrated and are written for children of all ages (but specifically targeted to grades three to five).

Digital Publications has published two new exhibits since the Historical Commission last met in June. The office hosted two students through the State of North Carolina Summer Internship Program, each of whom published an exhibit on MosaicNC.org pertaining to Revolutionary War-era documents in the State Archives. The first, by Charlotte Thomas of Meredith College, is on [Nonimportation in Revolutionary Era North Carolina](#). The second, by Emma Roy of Western Carolina University, is titled [Quake, Rattle, and Roll: Quakers in Revolutionary Era North Carolina](#). This quarter we hired Brooke Csuka, formerly of the Museum of History, to serve as the Governor's Papers Editor. She has begun work on the William W. Kitchin Papers.

The **Highway Historical Marker** Advisory Committee approved seven new markers this year. The historical marker program identified 10 Revolutionary markers to be updated and replaced in 2025. Staff took the opportunity to make the inscriptions more informative.

Upcoming Event of Note

On October 1, 2025, **America 250 NC**, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill History Department, and UNC Press are hosting a panel discussion entitled Teaching the Foundations of American Democracy. The event features distinguished UNC historians Kathleen DuVal, W. Fitzhugh Brundage, and Joseph T. Glatthaar, and will be moderated by Deputy Secretary for Office of Archives and History, Dr. Darin Waters. Tickets are free but registration is required at to following website: <https://events.dncr.nc.gov/event/teaching-the-foundations-of-american-democracy>.

America 250 NC will have a large presence at the State Fair, October 16 through 26. We will staff the lobby of Dorton Arena and fill it with displays, including one of our traveling exhibits and an interactive kiosk designed and crafted for us by the America Battlefield Trust.

News from the Division of State Historic Sites and Properties: September 2025

Michelle Lanier, Director

Overview

- North Carolina Historic Sites reported total onsite visitation of 372,347 for FY 2025-2026 to date (a 7 percent increase from the same period in FY 2024-2025).
- During FY2025-2026 103,897 school aged children participated in tours, events, and programs at our Historic Sites.
- Historic Sites had 115,845 website visitors in FY 2025-26 to date and has a total of 447,514 followers across all social media platforms.

Personnel

- **Mary Kate Mauney** joined the staff of **Historic Stagville** as Interpreter I.
- **Amanda Brantley** was named the new site manager of **Reed Gold Mine**.
- **Alicia Lewis** joined the **Historic Sites Business and Finance** team in Raleigh.
- **Debi Causey** joined the staff of **Fort Fisher** as Event Coordinator.
- **Marisa Balatico** joined the staff of **Duke Homestead** as Interpreter I.
- **Julie Herczeg** joined the **Curatorial Services Section** as Education and Training Specialist.
- **Cari Boyce** assumed the role of Interim Executive Director of **Roanoke Island Festival Park**.



Historic Sites Annual Summit

Staff from across the division came together in Raleigh this month for our annual summit. The day was filled with sessions designed to help staff expand their skills and explore new areas of professional growth. We were also joined by many of our colleagues from DNCR, who contributed to the energy and collaboration throughout the event.

News from the Division of State Historic Sites and Properties: September 2025

Michelle Lanier, Director

Highlights of the day included sessions on stress management strategies, tools for Comprehensive Museum Planning, values identification, updates to safety and emergency action plans, and innovations in digital exhibits. Our keynote speaker, Donovan Zimmerman of the Paperhand Puppet Project, inspired us with his creative insights and powerful storytelling.

America 250 NC

Staff from Alamance Battleground, Historic Halifax, and House in the Horseshoe attended a reception hosted by Governor Stein and the First Lady at the NC Executive Mansion in celebration of the upcoming 250th anniversary of the American Revolution.



Historic Halifax had the opportunity to use A250 funds to purchase a reproduction cannon for use in site demonstrations and other programs. South Bend Replicas from Indiana was the vendor and partnered with Trail Rock Ordnance in Tennessee to build the British Light 6-pounder gun. The barrel was cast by South Bend and the carriage built by Trail Rock. Through research by site staff, we know a cannon of this type was in Halifax at some point during the American Revolution. We're pleased to announce that this project is complete!

Curatorial Services

Throughout the summer Curatorial Services staff continued to work with site staff, architectural firms, builders, and exhibit design firms to advance work on permanent exhibit projects and exhibits at Historic Halifax, Fort Dobbs, Historic Stagville, House in the Horseshoe, Town Creek Indian Mound, Somerset Place, and Thomas Day.

Digital Interpretation and Media Updates

Project to Update State History (PUSH)

As part of the Project to Update State History (PUSH), work is progressing 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 inclusive narratives and current scholarship, enhancing the visitor experience across these historic sites.

News from the Division of State Historic Sites and Properties: September 2025

Michelle Lanier, Director

DIT/ODEL grant

The DIT/ODEL Grant supports efforts to improve accessibility at North Carolina's historic sites through immersive 360-degree virtual tours. Over the past year, DNCR Marketing has captured tour footage at 26 sites, and the project has now entered its implementation phase. Two temporary positions have been filled by Sharice Lloyd and Khiyah Ward, who are currently working to refine and finalize the 360 tours, making these historic spaces more accessible to all.

West Region

Fort Dobbs

Construction of the new visitor center is well underway. The roof has been “dried in” and all interior framing is complete. Staff from Curatorial Services visited the site in August to tour the facility and discuss the layout of the exhibit gallery.



NC Transportation Museum

Several building restoration projects have progressed over the summer months including:

- Track repair and siding installation on the Car Repair Shed
- Concrete work and painting in and around the Powerhouse and restrooms

All Aboard! Thomas the Tank Engine, everyone's favorite #1 blue engine, is coming to town and we're celebrating big this year for Thomas and Friends™ 80th Anniversary. “Day Out With Thomas: The Party Tour” will be stopping at the North Carolina Transportation Museum on September 26-28 and October 3-5, 2025. “Day Out With Thomas” is a fun-filled family event that takes place at Heritage Railways across the world. Each ticket includes a train ride with a life-sized Thomas the Tank Engine as well as access to a full day of activities for all to enjoy.



Shallow Ford

This summer, the State Construction Office opened the bid process for the construction of a parking lot and restroom facility at Shallow Ford. A contractor was selected, and planning work has begun.

Michelle Lanier, Director

Thomas Wolfe Memorial announced the site's annual Student Writing Competition is open for submissions through September 27. This year's chosen short story by Thomas Wolfe is "The Sun and the Rain." Staff developed an accompanying lesson plan for the writing competition that is adaptable to both classroom and online learning environments. The competition is open to North Carolina students in grades 4-5, 6-8, and 9-12, with cash prizes awarded to the first, second, and third place winners in each category. Teachers of first-place winners will also receive a cash donation to assist with classroom needs and materials. Full details are available at <https://wolfememorial.com/student-writing-competition/>

Piedmont Region

Alamance Battleground

Site Manager Nathan Schultz was inducted to the board of the Association for Living History, Farm and Agricultural



Museums (ALHFAM). Board members are responsible for the overall management and direction of the organization, including setting policies and ensuring sound fiscal management. They also supervise management, monitor policy implementation, and provide for independent reviews of other institutions.

Nathan was also a featured guest on the latest episode of the *Ben Franklin's World* podcast, produced by the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. In this deep-dive episode, Nathan offered his insights on why farmers in North Carolina's Piedmont region organized against corrupt officials and land speculators in the 1760s and explained how the Regulator Movement culminated in a deadly confrontation at the Battle of Alamance in May 1771. The podcast is available on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, Amazon Podcase, Pandora, and YouTube Music.

Charlotte Hawkins Brown Museum

The Museum recently embarked on a partnership with the NC Agriculture Cooperative Extension. Together, they are working to advance plans for a site-based community garden, reflecting a growing focus on sustainability and local partnerships.

House in the Horseshoe

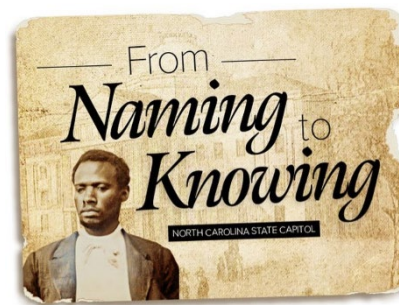
The annual reenactment of the 1781 Tory and Whig skirmish at House in the Horseshoe took place on July 26. The event highlighted the struggles of the backcountry as the

Michelle Lanier, Director

Revolutionary War engulfed North Carolina. Activities and historic demonstrations were offered throughout the day as well as a battle reenactment.

North Carolina State Capitol

The American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) has selected the **North Carolina State Capitol** as a 2025 Award of Excellence winner for the site's digital humanities project, "From Naming to Knowing: Uncovering Slavery at the North Carolina State Capitol." The project was researched, developed, and published by staff public historians Kara Deadmon, Natalie Rodriguez, and Terra Schramm. The AASLH



Leadership in History Awards, now in its 80th year, is the most prestigious recognition for achievement in the preservation and interpretation of state and local history. "Naming to Knowing" (NTK) is a research project and accompanying website (www.namingtoknowing.org) that seeks to name and share the stories of the enslaved men who built and maintained the State Capitol from 1833-65. The website, launched in February 2024, lists every known enslaved person who worked on the Capitol and includes narratives for almost two dozen individuals, tracing some of their stories from the 18th century through Emancipation. NTK's website was developed over several years, utilizing staff research and multiple rounds of community feedback. In addition to the website, NTK also informs about temporary exhibits and public programming at the State Capitol. The project is an ongoing effort, and additional research and findings will be added as they become available.

On September 6, the North Carolina State Capitol opened a new temporary exhibit, "A Place We Call Home: Indian Americans in North Carolina." The exhibit features a variety of topics, ranging from the Indian community in North Carolina, to traditional Indian culture, weddings, and festivals. It also highlights Indian American contributions in business, science, and academia in our state.

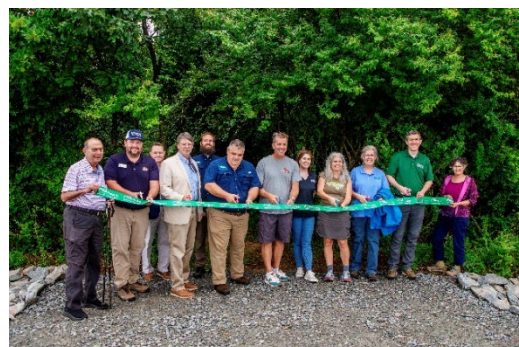
News from the Division of State Historic Sites and Properties: September 2025

Michelle Lanier, Director

East Region

Bentonville Battlefield

In May, the site celebrated the opening of a new section of trail in partnership with Johnston County Parks and Recreation, Johnston County Visitors Bureau, and the Mountains-to-Sea Trail. This portion of the trail will interpret Mower's Charge and other actions on the third day of the battle.



Brunswick Town / Fort Anderson

The news of the significant shipwreck discovery (including the possible remains of the 1748 Spanish privateer ship La Fortuna) at **Brunswick Town/Fort Anderson State Historic Site** continues to garner worldwide attention. The story has been picked up by major publications, including Popular Science and Smithsonian Magazine. ECU reported that in the first 9 days after the announcement, the story earned 872.3 million impressions online.



DNCR has received a \$2.5 million grant from NOAA to continue important coastal resiliency work at **Brunswick Town/Fort Anderson State Historic Site**. The grant will allow DNCR to continue building and installing a system of wave attenuators that protect the shoreline from erosion. This approach has documented success in reducing wave action, mitigating shoreline erosion, protecting wildlife, facilitating the growth of natural habitat, and safeguarding historical resources still buried at the site. The living shoreline makes BTFA more resilient from natural disasters and supports the community through sustained education, recreation and tourism. The BTFA Shoreline Restoration Project is a collaborative effort between DNCR, UNC Wilmington, and the N.C. Division of Coastal Management. "In the last 81 years, Brunswick Town/Fort Anderson has lost over 12 acres of shoreline from accelerating erosion, endangering an untold number of historical and cultural resources," said Michelle Lanier, director of North Carolina Historic Sites. "The good news is, since 2017, Brunswick Town's living shoreline has become a national model for coastal resiliency. We are thrilled that this critical project will continue thanks to the support of our partners at NOAA."

News from the Division of State Historic Sites and Properties: September 2025

Michelle Lanier, Director

Roanoke Island Festival Park

Live from OBX hosted eight concerts on the Pavillion lawn as part of the summer long *Live from OBX Summer Concert Series*.

June 20 – Charles Wesley Godwin with Drayton Farley & Mikele Buck Band

June 26 – Travis Tritt with Vincent Mason

June 28 – Jake Owen with Uncle Kracker & Alyssa Flaherty

July 8 – Railroad Earth, Yonder Mtn. String Band, Daniel Donato's Cosmic Country

July 22 – Whiskey Myers with Josh Meloy & The Droptines

July 23 – Aaron Lewis & The Stateliners with Colin Stough & RT Johnson

August 7 – Muscadine Bloodline

October 16-18 - 14th Annual Outer Banks Bluegrass Island Music Festival

RESCHEDULED from August 30, 2025 to June 13, 2026 –

Kool & The Gang with Divergent Soundz

Somerset Place

Somerset Place went viral in June! An 8th grade student visiting as part of a school group recorded TikTok videos of three segments of their guided tour led by Historic Interpreter, Amanda Williams. The first video went viral with 1.1 million views, a second one with 55,000 views, and the third with 8,370 views. As a result, two visitors to recently drove from South Carolina (6 hours) to visit Somerset Place, stating they specifically made the site visit because of the videos.

North Carolina Historical Commission Report-September 23, 2025
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 for the summer of 2025. This quarter has been active with numerous tours, volunteer opportunities, social media content, and programs.

The Outer Banks History Center reopened in July after being closed for renovation. The grand re-opening will be held on September 30, 2025. In August, staff of OBHC contributed a blog post on the history of the Outer Banks History Center in recognition of their re-opening.

Tours:

Staff provided 32 (253 participants) tours including school groups, legislative representatives and their families, Court of Appeal interns, and General Assembly pages.

Volunteers/Interns:

Summer is a busy time for our intern/volunteer programs. All parts of the Archives had interns/volunteers who contributed over 3,009.5 hours. This summer the Friends of the Archives sponsored two paid internships. The FOA conservation intern Alison Schaefer contributed a blog post describing what she learned during this internship opportunity.

Outreach - DocBox Initiative:

In August, the outreach team finalized the two primary sourced-based DocsBoxes (state constitutions and the Revolutionary War). They distributed 150 boxes to social studies teachers for use during this school year. The group will be distributing additional boxes in October.

Outreach/Training:

- In July, staff from the oral history and outreach programs provided training to community college archivists at the annual meeting of the North Carolina Community Archives Association meeting held in Flat Rock. The topics focused on developing an oral history program, and the SHRAB archival resources available for community archives.
- Division staff conducted 13 workshops with 1,078 attendees. The staff of the records analysis unit conduct 4 Disaster Preparedness workshops with 918 attendees. This is bi-annual push to provide essential records guidance and disaster prep to state and local government officials.

Collections:

- In June, special collections and conservation began work on the transfer of approximately 350 cubic feet of transcripts and private collections materials from Saint Andrews University. The State Archives took possession of these materials when the university closed in June.

- Staff from Lt. Governor Hunt's office visited the Archives to review the records transferred at the end of the Lt. Governor Mark Robinson's administration. Staff also requested records from Governor Hunt's administration.

America 250 Programming:

Becky McGee-Lankford continued to lead the planning efforts for our special "One Day Wonder" exhibits around the America 250 NC commemoration. The exhibit on the state constitutions exhibit is being scheduled for events through the end of 2026. She also completed the draft exhibit on the soldiers' experiences during the Revolutionary War. The soldier's exhibit will be ready to travel by the end of 2025.

- On July 3rd and 4th the State Capitol hosted the State Archives traveling exhibit which includes the 1776 State Constitution, 1776 Declaration of Rights, 1868 State Constitution, and a letter from John Adams. The exhibit includes panels tracing the history of the state constitution, as well as activities to enrich the experience. There were over 400 attendees during the two-day event.
- Throughout 2025, the Division is commemorating the 250th anniversary of the founding of the Armed Forces. During this quarter, staff has continued to publish blogposts relating to this theme, including: *Commemorating 250th the Birthday of the U.S. Army*; *Elmer Gibson and the Desegregation of the Armed Forces*; and, *The United States*; *Life-Saving Services and the Pea Island Life-Saving Station*.
- Other America 250th themed post, include: a post celebrating Juneteenth focusing on the early Emancipation Celebrations in North Carolina, and a post highlighting "this day in history" event which focused on the Wilmington Committee of Safety requiring members to sign an oath of allegiance to the patriot cause issued in 1775.
- On June 14, the Archives worked with the A250th teaching fellows cohort to provide original source overview for teachers to use when covering A250 curriculum.

Staff:

- In July, Heather South returned to work at the Western Regional Archives after an extended leave of absence.
- The following positions were filled during this quarter: Archivist I: Western Regional Archives (Cheri Miller), Archivist III: Private Manuscripts (Jillian MacKinnon), Social Media/Outreach Archivist (Brittany Joachim), Preservation Officer (Camille Hunt), HR Liaison/Administrative (Kaitlyn Briggs), and Administrative Specialist – Budget (Jocelyn Wright).