

From the Incoming President ... Barbara Jackson

Happy New Year! I wish each one of you a productive 2005, a year in which your life will be built upon the structure of a reasonable portion of good health and embellished with happy moments spent with family and friends.

I am a Philadelphawean (Delawareans who are/were in Philadelphia as regularly as they were in Delaware during previous centuries). My husband Robert and I have lived in Charlotte since the spring of 1999. I am always interested in the history of places in which I find myself. Through MHA I am beginning to learn about the geography, people, and events of this region. I have been able to continue guiding, my avocation and vocation, which has been practiced in museums, on city streets, in parks, and in historic houses.

I extend appreciation to the retiring officers who led us so diligently through 2003-2004. I want to thank Rachel for her helpfulness in sharing information which will prepare me to assume the duties and responsibilities which you have entrusted to me. With your support, your new officers and I will continue the outstanding work of the MHA Docents.

From the Past President ... Rachel Abernathy

Dear Docents,

January and a New Year are almost here and as usual we will make resolutions to be kept or discarded. I suggest you make one to become a more active Docent in '05 and let's have our best year yet! And this one is a "keeper." Barbara is making plans for our Retreat in January, and the new Executive Board will be deciding which paths we will travel for the rest of the year. We'll have some fun things and some serious things to take part in, so be ready to volunteer.

On a more serious note, we are sad to learn of the death of Bertie Anderson. Bertie was one of our best supporters and we who were privileged to know her will miss her. Cards to her family can be addressed to her daughter, Mrs. Diann Gardner, 205 Carls Road, Matthews, NC, 28104.

Have a safe and happy holiday and don't forget to come to Rosedale on January 4th for General Meeting. See you there!

In Memorium

Bertha Rogers (Bertie) Anderson
October 27, 1922 – December 18, 2004

Rev. Jeff Lowrance Update

Betty Pierce, member of Hopewell Presbyterian Church and friend of Rev. Lowrance, advises that he is doing well. He has had a second chemotherapy treatment and has resumed his regular duties, including being in the pulpit on Sunday mornings! Please continue to keep Jeff in your thoughts and prayers.

News from Latta Place

Kristin Toler

As winter began to set in, Latta prepared for the holiday season with traditional backcountry Christmas decorations and seasonal events. On December 4th, we celebrated *A Plantation Christmas*. Public visited the candlelit Latta Home and experienced Christmas in 19th century style. As people walked through the house, they learned of 19th Century Christmas traditions and how they changed from the early to late 1800s. Afterwards people visited the kitchen and enjoyed Mrs. Latta's Gingercake and hot cider, while volunteer BeeJay Caldwell interpreted slave life during the holidays.

On December 9th, volunteers came for a Christmas Party. Guest Speaker Kathy Herran, author of *They Married Confederate Officers*, gave a book talk and described the lives of Anna Morrison Jackson (wife of Stonewall Jackson) and her sisters. Herran's book is very interesting and connects the Morrison family to Charlotte's history in a very intricate and personal way.

On December 10th and 11th we had our first annual "St. Nick Visits Latta Plantation". Families called ahead for a time slot to visit St. Nick in the candlelit home. They brought one gift for their child and one to donate for Marine Toys for Tots. The response was wonderful and guests described both nights as "magical." We did not charge an admission for the event, as this was a chance for Latta to give back to the community.

Despite the cold weather, we have a number of exciting events planned for the next couple of months! Our event schedule is as follows:



Winter Quarters: January 8 (10am-4pm) – 9 (1pm-4pm) – Visit a soldier as he survives a North Carolina winter away from home.

Ladies of the House: January 15 (10am-4pm) – 16 (1pm-4pm) – The Colonel Francis Marion Parker Civilian Alliance (of the 30th NC Troops) will be displaying the duties and privileges of the Plantation Mistress and her house staff.

The Art of History: January 29 (10am-4pm) – 30 (1pm-4pm) – Both a Civil War Sketch Artist and a Period Photographer exhibit their skills in and around the historic home.

Voices Yet to Be Heard: February 12th (10am-4pm) – Formal dedication of the Slave Cabin and African American Experience Exhibit. The daily life of an enslaved family is examined to include living conditions, food, duties, and social interactions. "Voices of the Past", an African American reenactment group, along with Latta volunteers, will demonstrate slave life in the Carolina Backcountry.

*Colonial Dancers*Nancy Follette

Come join us at the Hezekiah Alexander Homesite on Saturday, January 8 from 6:30 pm – 9:00 pm for a Scots-Irish Celebration! We will be hosting a Twelfth Night Ball, Back-countrystyle! Find out how much fun being a colonial dancer is first hand ... and then come practice with us the 1st and 3rd Mondays of every month from 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm at the Charlotte Museum of History to learn the latest 18th Century steps! Practice dates for the next two months are January 3 & 17 and February 7 & 21. For details, contact Nancy Follette at 704-845-1252. See you there!

*Charlotte Museum of History and Hezekiah Alexander Homesite***Saturday, January 8, 6:30 – 8:30 pm**

Celebrate the old tradition of Twelfth Night at the Hezekiah Alexander House! Enjoy open-house tours of the 1774 Rock House, storytelling around the bonfire, colonial crafts, the opportunity to participate with colonial dancers at the Twelfth Night Ball, and open-hearth cooking demonstrations. At 7:30 pm join in the cutting of the Twelfth Night cake and learn about the traditions of this historic celebration, including a holly toss and musket firing!

Reservations required by calling 704-568-1774

Admission \$6.00 per person.

January 15, 2005, 7:00 pm

This bilingual photographic exhibition will introduce Museum visitors to some of the newest members of our Charlotte community – our Latino neighbors. You will meet Mary, a hairdresser who runs her own salon; Jorge, a minister and middle school counselor; Michel, an artist; and Rafael, a baker as well as seventeen other members of Charlotte's fastest growing community. Many of these featured community members will be present for an opening night event featuring food and entertainment from the Latin-American community.

Reservations requested by calling 704-568-1774.

Free admission.

Saturday, February 5, 2:00–4:00 p.m.

Join editor and author Dr. William Andrews as he explores the accounts of the lives of slaves in North Carolina through letters and journals composed while living in bondage. This text provides a rich insight into the hearts and minds of enslaved people, while presenting different perspectives on slave work and the problems they encountered. A booksigning of *North Carolina Slave Narratives* will follow the lecture.

Reservations required by calling 704-568-1774.

Free with regular Museum admission.

Saturday, February 12, 1:00–4:00 p.m.

Spend the afternoon learning more about your family quilts and how to preserve them with hands-on workshops for adults. Quilt historian, Kathy Sullivan, will be on hand to identify quilts brought in by the community and share quilts from her own collection. Kids can make their own felt square quilts in the Hands-on-History. Everyone is invited to enjoy quilting demonstrations in the interactive exhibit space.

No reservations required.

Free with regular Museum admission.

*To Arms! General Cornwallis and the British
Are Crossing the Catawba River!*

Rural Hill Farm
Center of Scottish Heritage
4431 Neck Road, Huntersville, NC, 28078
www.ruralhillfarm.org

Keets F. Taylor, Executive Director
office@ruralhillfarm.org
704-875-3113

Huntersville, NC, 1781 – See the Spirit of the Hornets Nest! Just as it was in the days of the American Revolution, Patriots and Redcoats will clash in battle as the Battles of Cowan's Ford and Cowpens are re-enacted at Rural Hill Farm on February 19th and 20th, 2005.

The gates open at 10:00 am. Learn from demonstrations such as a Militia Drill, 18th Century dancing, and weaponry displays. Experienced folk artisans demonstrate 18th Century skills and crafts such as basketry, candle dipping, cooking, pewter smithing, spinning, weaving, blacksmithing, soap making, quilting, woodworking, storytelling and music. See what they wore (clothing). Learn and enjoy Colonial children's games.

The co-hosting reenactment units are The 6th North Carolina, The 2nd Regiment South Carolina Line, Continental Establishment and The Royal North Carolina Regiment

On Saturday, February 19th the reenactment of the Battle of Cowan's Ford will be presented at 2:00 pm followed by the pageantry of the Grand Muster and Parade.

On Sunday, February 20th the Memorial to General William Lee Davidson will be presented at 11:30 am, musket demonstrations at 12:30 pm, the reenactment of the Battle of Cowpens at 2:00 pm followed by the Grand Muster and Parade.

Admission for Adults - \$6.00; Seniors (60+) - \$5.00; youth (5-17 years) - \$4.00; 4 and under Free. (\$1.00 off each ticket purchased by February 10, 2005.) MC/VISA accepted. Admission includes the re-enactment activities and tours of the Cultural Center. Concessions and Colonial crafts are available for purchase.

Alcohol is prohibited. All events handicap accessible. Access to Cultural Center limited. **All events will be held rain, snow, sleet or shine.** Remember, there is no such thing as bad weather, just improper clothing. **There will be NO REFUNDS.**

The Spirit of the Hornet's Nest is sponsored by:

Corporate partners: Coca-Cola Consolidated, The McIntosh Law Firm and McCall Brothers, Inc And supported by EnergyUnited, Town of Cornelius, Tathwell Printing, Town of Huntersville, Lake Norman Convention & Visitors Bureau, Windswept Hills Carriages, Hauser Rentals, McMahan Audio Visuals, Family Cleaners and Artisan Signs & Graphics.

Rural Hill Farm-Center of Scottish Heritage is a Mecklenburg County historic property managed by the Catawba Valley Scottish Society, Inc. (CVSS), facilitated in cooperation with Mecklenburg County Park & Recreation. The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission has oversight of plans for restoration and preservation. The CVSS was chartered in 1992 and has received confirmation of its non-profit 501c3 status.

(See related article on page 5)



The Story of the Battle of Cowan's Ford

Keets F. Taylor

During the last weeks of January 1781, Lord Cornwallis, the British commander in the South, was in hot pursuit of patriot forces under General Daniel Morgan following his victory over the British Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton at the Battle of Cowpens on January 17th. General Morgan sent orders to General William Lee Davidson of the Salisbury Militia District to muster his forces and defend the Catawba River crossings, giving General Morgan's forces time to link up with General Nathanael Greene's troops.

General Davidson summoned the men of Mecklenburg and Rowan counties, gathering 800 men at Rural Retreat (the modern Rural Hill Farm), the home of Major John Davidson, William Lee Davidson's cousin. From Rural Retreat, the militiamen marched to Beattie's Ford on the Catawba River where, on January 31st, they confronted the British advance. The presence of so many armed men gave Cornwallis pause. His hesitation was reinforced when he noticed that the American Southern Commander, General Nathanael Greene, was present on the opposite bank of the river.

Because of the uncertainty of the situation, Cornwallis did not try to cross the Catawba that day. During the night the British army divided, with half of the troops remaining on the western bank at Beattie's Ford, while the other half marched down the Catawba River to Cowan's Ford. The plan was to have the troops at Beattie's Ford feign an assault; the troops sent to Cowan's Ford would cross the river and deliver the knockout punch from an unexpected direction.

General Davidson, however, knew about Cornwallis' preferred battle tactics and moved to counter the British plan. He assembled a total of 300 men at Cowan's Ford. When the 1,200 British troops began to advance at dawn, there was no surprise, except possibly for the British! Patriot musket fire greeted the British as they crossed the river, slowing down their progress. The Patriot forces were too small to do more than delay the British crossing. Slowly, the Patriots made an orderly retreat to a ridge about 120 yards from the river's edge. Then, as General Davidson was organizing a new battle line, a single shot killed him.

The sight of their fallen leader took all the fight out of the Patriot forces. They had fought courageously against a much larger force for about 45 minutes, but now without a General to lead them they turned and fled, scattering in all directions while the British turned their attention to securing the field of battle. Cowan's Ford was a Patriot defeat, but it did give Daniel Morgan's men time to get across the Yadkin River and unite with Nathaniel Greene's forces. Cornwallis' effort to catch Morgan had failed.

The Patriots may have lost the battle, but their main objective was accomplished. But who shot General Davidson? The fatal rifle bullet was a small one, not a regulation size round from a Brown Bess musket. Suspicion immediately fell upon Frederick Hager, a local loyalist who had guided the redcoats to Cowan's Ford, as it was known that he owned a rifle which could have fired the shot. Hager did nothing to change people's minds, fleeing to Tennessee and remaining there even when other Loyalists returned to North Carolina around the end of the war. He then moved on to the Arkansas River country with eight or ten others, all said to be "fugitives from justice" when members of the Davidson family moved into Tennessee some years later.

Cowan's Ford was located on the Catawba River just north of Highway #73 where the Cowan's Ford Dam hydroelectric plant is now located. A monument to General William Lee Davidson is located near by as well as one at Hopewell Presbyterian Church where he is buried.

Abigail Adams

In March 1777, after not having heard from John for months, she said, "Posterity who are to read the blessings will scarcely be able to conceive the hardships and sufferings of their ancestors."

Program Information

Wanda Hubicki

Refreshments 9:30 am — Meeting 10:00 am — Program 11:00 am

February – To Die For: The Ultimate Comfort Food

On Tuesday, February 1, at 11:00 AM, Kathleen Purvis, *Charlotte Observer* Food Editor, will present a program on the role of food in funeral rituals of the American South. As well as discussing “funeral foods”, Ms. Purvis will talk about burial customs in general. Please join us to learn about the fascinating rituals associated with our final farewells to those we love and how they have changed through time. If you have documented information on funeral foods or funeral rituals at an historic site where you volunteer or are employed, please bring it to share.

Kathleen Purvis



Dr. Tom Hanchett



March – Charlotte: Growth of a New South City

On Tuesday, March 1, Dr. Tom Hanchett, historian of the Levine Museum of the New South, will speak to us about the development of Charlotte from a sleepy backcountry settlement to the national banking center it is today. Dr. Hanchett is author of the book *Sorting Out the New South City: Race, Class, and Urban Development in Charlotte, 1875–1975*. Please note that Dr. Hanchett will speak at 10:00 AM. Our business meeting will follow.

MHA Dues

Valerie Jones

As the New Year rolls in, it is time once again to pay your MHA dues. I realize that it seems like we just finished dealing with this, but the truth is an entire year has slipped passed. (Our MHA year runs from January 1 to December 31.) Since we docents are a committee of the Mecklenburg Historical Association, we pay our dues to that parent organization. To facilitate our record keeping, the docent board asks that you pay your dues through the docents. The docent treasurer then will remit one large check, along with a detail sheet listing who has paid dues and at what level, to the MHA treasurer and to their membership chairman. Hopefully you also will receive a dues notification from the MHA sometime later this year, and if you have already paid dues this year, 2005, through the docents, just disregard the letter. If you have not yet paid your dues through the docents, then regard that letter as a reminder that your dues still need to be turned in to us. Please do not send your dues directly to MHA as this makes it difficult to determine for our records if your dues have been paid.

Make checks payable to MHA Docents and give them to Valerie Jones, your docent treasurer. If you cannot be at the monthly meetings, please mail your check to Valerie at 4700 Coronado Drive, Charlotte 28212. And if you have any questions, call her at 704-567-0599.

Levels of MHA Membership

	<u>Single</u>	<u>Couple</u>
General	\$25.00	\$45.00
Senior (over 60)	\$12.50	\$20.00
Patron	\$50.00	\$90.00
Life (single payment)	\$300.00	\$500.00
Student	free	n/a



*Culture and Heritage Museums Events
(South Carolina)*

Joetta Talford

January

Saturday Sampler: What Makes a Bird a Bird?

Saturday, January 15

10:00 – 11:00 am

Museum of York County, 4621 Mt. Gallant Road, Rock Hill, SC 29732

This is a special 45-minute program with an exhibit tour and a hands-on activity. For ages 5 and up with an adult. Learn adaptations of what makes a bird a bird. Find them in the Museum collection, and make a bird feeder.

Free with museum admission. Free to all CHM members. For more details, call 803-329-2121 to reserve a space.

Reach for the Stars: Settlemyre Planetarium Program

January 22

10:00 am

Ages 7 and up

Museum of York County, 4621 Mt. Gallant Road, Rock Hill, SC 29732

This 45-minute family program will help you to locate many of our brightest stars and constellations and will provide hints for stargazing on your own. Includes a constellation craft or activity, children must be accompanied by an adult.

Free with Museum admission, and free to CHM members. Please call 803-329-2121 for reservations.

Adult Lecture Series: “Mark Catesby: A Naturalist in the American Wilderness”

Sunday, January 23

3:00 pm

Museum of York County, 4621 Mt. Gallant Road, Rock Hill, SC 29732

“Mark Catesby: A Naturalist in the American Wilderness” is part three of the series designed to deepen our understanding of the “Our Changing Landscape, Early Views of People and Place in the Carolina Piedmont” exhibit. In association with the Smithsonian Institution, Ms. Leslie Overstreet, Curator of Natural History Rare Books for the Smithsonian Institution Libraries, and an expert on Catesby, will present a fascinating look at one of the most influential naturalist of the 18th century at the Museum of York County.

For details call 803-329-2121.

Arts in Education Series: Rapunzel

January 28

9:00 & 11:00 am

McCelvey Center, 212 E. Jefferson Street, York, SC, 803-684-3948 ext 21

A rappin’ narrator, a kooky enchantress with terrific tresses collides in the Porkchop Productions performance of this fairy-tale classic. This updated adaptation includes audience participation and teaches important life lessons. All performances meet specific NC/SC Curriculum Standards.

Admission is \$3 per person. For information or to make reservations, please call 803-684-3948.

(Continued on page 8)

Culture and Heritage Museums Events

(Continued from page 7)

February

Culture & Heritage Museums Annual Gala

February 5

7:00 pm – Midnight

Museum of York County, 4621 Mt. Gallant Road, Rock Hill, SC 29732

Benefiting children's education programs and exhibitions. Silent auctions, food and live music with a Mardi gras theme, CHM's largest fundraiser of the year.

Tickets \$350 per couple. For tickets, call 803-366-2010 ext 223.

Arts In Education Program: The Billy Goat's Gruff

Friday, February 18, 10:00 am

Saturday, February 19, 3:00 pm

This classic fairy tale of three Billy Goat brothers who take on a nasty, bridge blocking troll with wit and cunning is retold via music and voice. Opera Express features the music of Mozart, Rossini, Donizetti and more in this fanciful and imaginative adaptation that is sure to delight audience members of all ages.

Saturday Sampler: What's Bugging You?

Saturday, February 19

10:00 – 11:00 am

Museum of York County, 4621 Mt. Gallant Road, Rock Hill, SC 29732

Special 45 minute program with an exhibit tour and a hands-on activity. For ages 5-up with an adult. Take a tour of the exhibit that highlights bugs, vultures, slugs, and snakes that make us say "Eewww, yuck!" After the exhibit tour, stay to participate in a yucky activity to take home!

Free with museum admission. Free to all CHM members. For more details, call 803-329-2121 to reserve a space.

I Heard Their Voices: Memories of an Enslaved People

Saturday, February 19

11:00 – 3:00 pm

Historic Brattonsville 1444 Brattonsville Rd McConnells, SC 29726 803-684-2327

Hear narratives and dramatic presentations based on the stories of over 2,000 former slaves collected in the 1930s. Letters, speeches and stories will be presented to provide a link to those that endured slavery to reach freedom.

Performances begin at 11:00 & 1:30, admission is \$6 adults, \$5 seniors, \$3 students and free to children under 5. For details call 803-684-2327.

Africa Alive!

Saturday, February 26, 2005

10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Museum of York County, 4621 Mt. Gallant Road, Rock Hill, SC 29732

Headlining this year's festival will be the Kusun Ensemble, an extraordinary ensemble of musicians and dancers originally based in Ghana in West Africa. Activities include storytelling, crafts to make, hands-on activities, and planetarium programs.

Free with museum admission, for details, call 803-329-2121.



Historic Rosedale Plantation
Calendar of Events

Karen McConnell

Unheard Voices Tour

February, 12, 13, 2:00 pm.

View plantation life from a different perspective. White plantation owners and their families left many documents and papers to tell us of their lives, while the unheard voices of the enslaved Africans who spent their lives toiling the red clay of the piedmont Carolina are seldom heard. This tour is designed to examine the personal and work life of the 20 slaves that inhabited the Caldwell Plantation of the early 1800's. The 1½ hour tour by costumed docent tells the story of Ben, the carriage driver, Jenny, the cook; Cherry, the children's nurse and Nat, the blacksmith of the plantation, and provides insight into the lives of those whose voices are seldom heard.

Designed for age 12 and over.

\$5/adults; \$4/students & seniors; under 8 free when accompanied by parent or guardian; \$4/adult with groups of 12 or more.

Group reservations required.

Turning the House Upside Down; Spring Cleaning

April 17, 1:00 pm until 4:00 pm.

Each spring and fall in ante-bellum American the house was turned upside down in the name of cleanliness. Visit the plantation during this time of renewal when chimneys were swept, windows washed, wallpaper dusted, paint cleaned, walls whitewashed, closets organized, carpets removed, draperies beat and floors scoured.

\$5/adults; \$4/students & seniors; under 8 free when accompanied by parent or guardian; \$4/adult with groups of 12 or more.

Group reservations required.

Mother's Day Tea

May 8, 1:00 pm until 4:00 pm.

Bring Mom for a tour and an afternoon of gentile indulgence as tea is served at Historic Rosedale in honor of Mother.

Mothers free; \$5/adults; \$4/students & seniors; under 8 free when accompanied by parent or guardian; \$4/adult with groups of 12 or more.

Group reservations required.

Children's Workshops

Wednesdays and Thursdays, June and July

Hands on activities and role playing allow today's children to explore medicine, education and daily chores of Ante-bellum Mecklenburg County. Dr. David Caldwell and his wife, Harriett Davidson Caldwell, raised and educated eight children on this 911-acre plantation during the early 1800s. Children are invited to join in the lessons being taught by the Caldwell's tutor, and receive instruction in mental math, exploration of the western territory, Presidents of the United States, plus manners and deportment. Chores of the plantation provide hands on experience of a life far different from today. Workshop last approximately 2 ½ hours.

Reservations required.

Designed for groups of children 8 and up, limit 45 per group. \$4/child.

Rosedale Family Reunion

August 14, 1:00 pm until 4:00 pm.

Join us for our annual reunion of descendants of the families of Rosedale.

For more information call 704-335-0325



You might be a Reenactor if...



Submitted by Wanda Hubicki

from Harry Needham

Harry Needham Consulting Services, Solutions for Heritage Institutions (Canada)

You might be a re-enactor if:

- Your \$20,000 car sits out in the weather so your \$200 tent can stay in the garage.
- Most of the clothes you own went out of style over 250 years ago.
- Sleeping in a leaky tent in the rain and mud is your idea of a fun Saturday night.
- You've ever worn wool when the temperature tops 100 repeatedly.
- You've ever made a career decision based on its impact on your re-enacting weekends.
- Your friends refuse to attend any historic movie dramas with you.
- You can spot 100% wool or linen at 30 yards
- Your kids can correct their history teachers.
- Your mailman is confused as to what rank you hold in the reserves.
- Your birthday and Christmas list reads like a quartermaster's request for supplies or Sir William Johnson's trade lists.
- You believe that your center seams are the most comfortable shoes that you own.
- You hang your event clothes in the living room just for the fireplace smell.
- High waisted knee britches or breechcloth and leggings are something you wish you could wear to the office every day.
- In a conversation with your friends about camping, they ALL think you are ready for the loony bin when you tell them what type of gear you use.
- You TOTALLY empty your house, every time you go to an event.
- You think \$40 is too expensive for a new silk dress shirt, but a period linen shirt at \$80 is a real bargain.
- Some of the most common phrases of your vocabulary are: "No, I'm not in a play"—"Yes, I'm really going to eat that."—"Yes, I really slept here all weekend"—"Yes, it's a real fire, gun, etc..."
- The six musical cassettes in your car/van/truck consist of 3 fife and drum corps, 1 Scottish bagpipe tunes, 1 native flute music and the sound track from "Last of the Mohicans".
- You find things like turkey wings and deer hides under the tree Christmas morning.
- One of the questions you hear is, "Are you wearing underwear under there?" from the kids
- Your schedule runs "Sunday, unload; Monday, unpack; Tuesday, laundry; Wednesday, food shopping; Thursday, pack; Friday, leave for an event".
- You eat 5 meals out of a bowl and clean it twice.
- You look into the bottom of the mug to make sure that there isn't anything too nasty in the bottom, but you ask for a clean knife at a restaurant because this one has water spots.
- You eat soooooo much dried food on the trail, that on the way home you stop at Pizza Hut and order an x-large pizza with extra grease and a pitcher of Coke and then whatever the rest of the family wants.
- You are a guy and you wear more paint/makeup than the women you are with.

