

Spring Letter from the Chairman

Dear Docents,

I am so pleased to see more sites present during our monthly meetings. Several community visitors have come to hear our speakers. Continue to invite interested friends, neighbors, and site staff to our meetings.

We are enjoying a magnificent blooming season. Fragrant and colorful flowers and trees give beauty to our lives. Your untiring service gives substance to and embellishes the visits made by guests at our numerous sites. Thank you for all you do to help visitors and staff throughout the county.

May will be an extremely busy month. On May 2, 2006, during our regular monthly meeting held at Sugaw Creek Presbyterian Church, Jane Estep will present highlights of the Catawba River Valley Decorative Arts Survey which she, Linda Dalton, and others have researched for a period of ten years. Under discussion will be how this research will be presented to the public. Other MHA Docents projects during May include the Historic Rosedale Plantation Art of Craft 1830 Fundraiser on May 13, 2006, Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence Day on May 19th at noon at Trade and Tryon, Rev. D'oye Moore preaching at the eleven o'clock service at Hopewell Presbyterian Church in Huntersville, followed by lunch on the lawn, and the quarterly MHA dinner meeting on May 22nd. Your participation is needed at each one of these events. You are invited to dress in your 18th century clothing on the 19th and 21st. Questions regarding our participation at all events will be answered during our May meeting, or you may contact any member of the board.

Our June meeting will be held at the Charlotte Museum of History. Our own Camille Smith will conduct the tour after which we will eat the picnic lunch each one shall bring.

The MHA has paid for the additional 150 copies of *A Life in Antebellum Charlotte*, the Sarah Frew Davidson Journal. Ann, Karen, and Janet continue to have book-signings and sales. The docents appreciate the support of MHA for this docent project.

Committee meetings are in progress for Nominations, Education, and the Library. Your ideas regarding program and policy are welcome. Please pass them on to your board members or committee chairmen.

We send greetings to our recuperating members, Alice, Virginia, Betty, and Lynn. If your name has been omitted inadvertently, please let us know so that we may send you our best regards. Let us know when you need a remembrance from the docents.

There are still a few of us who missed the dues deadline. However, Valerie will accept your check now. Let's reach the goal of 100% by our June meeting.

I wish you all a restful summer vacation when it is time. I look forward to seeing you at the May events, at our June meeting, and then on September 5, 2006, when our fall schedule of meetings resumes.

Sincerely,

Barbara Jackson

Great Wagon Road Trip



The trip to Forsythe County to see the Great Wagon Road was a huge success. In spite of the fact that we were in a “barge,” Rod Meyer was able to show us many sections of the road along which our Mecklenburg County forefathers may have traveled. He passed on to us his knowledge and passion for this historic migration path. At the last stop on the route, we walked on a part of our history, a part that we knew previously only from books. Many thanks to Rod for a wonderful adventure, and to Wanda Hubicki for her excellent planning and organization of the trip. We missed you, Wanda!

Program Schedule

Wanda Hubicki

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

May 2, 2006

Catawba River Valley Decorative Arts Survey

The next meeting and program of the Mecklenburg Historical Association Docents will take place on Tuesday, May 2, 2006, in the Fellowship Hall of Sugar Creek Presbyterian Church, 101 West Sugar Creek Road, in Charlotte. Jane Estep, will make a PowerPoint presentation at 11:00 a.m. on the Catawba River Valley Decorative Arts Survey.

MHA Docents Jane Estep and Linda Dalton have worked as volunteers for more than ten years on this important project to document any object that existed in a ten-county region of the Catawba River Valley prior to the Civil War. In the course of their work, Jane and Linda have accumulated more than 700 slides and photos of the furniture and other decorative objects they have painstakingly documented. Please join us as Jane updates us on the survey.

Please join us for refreshments at 9:30 a.m. The business meeting will begin at 10:00 a.m.

June 6, 2006

Tour of the Hezekiah Alexander Homesite and Picnic

Our business meeting on Tuesday, June 6, was originally planned to take place at the Charlotte Museum of History. It has developed that the museum will be closed that week as staff take down the *American Visions of Liberty and Freedom* exhibit. Instead, Candice Moffitt has graciously arranged for us to meet in the Fellowship Hall of the Ray Hall Community Center at Aldersgate.



Refreshments will be served at 9:30 a.m and our business meeting will take place at 10:00 a.m. Following the meeting, we'll take a short walk and Camille Smith will lead us on a tour of the Hezekiah Alexander Home. She is excited about recent changes and additions to the home's furnishings and we are looking forward to her sharing them with us.

After the Homesite tour, we will enjoy a picnic lunch, either at the tables behind the Charlotte Museum of History or, depending upon the weather, in the Aldersgate Fellowship Hall. Please pack your favorite lunch and plan to celebrate the conclusion of another year of volunteering and socializing together!

Directions: Aldersgate is located at 3800 Shamrock Drive. The entrance is past the Liberty Nursing & Rehabilitation Center and is at a traffic light. After entering the grounds, please stop at the Welcome Center and ask Security to direct you to the Ray Hall Community Center. Cathy Haupt, Aldersgate Marketing Assistant, says that there's plenty of parking, but it's scattered. There is parking available in front of the buildings and also at the rear. However, only the front doors of the Ray Hall Community Center are unlocked. Cathy Haupt will direct us to the Fellowship Hall.

Revolution in the Backcountry Pulpit: An 18th Century Preaching
Wanda Hubicki

On Sunday, May 21, 2006, The Rev. D'oyle Moore will preach the sermon at the 11:00 a.m. service at historic Hopewell Presbyterian Church, 10500 Beatties Ford Road, Huntersville, NC. The Rev. Moore, an ordained minister and historical interpreter, will take as his context the 225th Anniversary of the Southern Campaign of the American Revolution. He will include selections from the preachings of George Whitefield, Samuel Davies, and David Caldwell, three men whose lives and ministries profoundly influenced the Presbyterian Church of the Backcountry. Indeed, their influence reached far beyond the church. In the words of Rev. Moore, "preachers of the period were teachers, interpreters of events, spokesmen for social and political matters and definers of political philosophy and liberty."

The Rev. Moore will deliver his sermon in the manner of an 18th century preacher and in period dress. We are invited to attend this service in period dress, as well. Dinner on the grounds will follow the service. Please bring a dish to share.

This event is sponsored by the Mecklenburg Historical Association, the MHA Docents Committee, and Hopewell Presbyterian Church.



The Rev. D'oyle Moore as David Caldwell

George Whitefield: In *Five Great Evangelists* John Armstrong writes, "One of the most remarkable evangelists that ever lived, George Whitefield (pronounced Whitfield), impacted the eighteenth century religious scene with such effect that the mark he left still profoundly influences evangelical Christianity. . . This thorough going Calvinist, of whom no school or theology or church bears his name, sparked America's Great Awakening."

Samuel Davies: In Anglican Virginia, where dissenters were subjected to constant vexations, he built up a strong Presbyterian membership and became the advocate and defender of their civil rights and religious liberties. He conducted services in seven houses of worship dispersed through five counties, riding horseback through fields and forests to minister to his scattered congregations. A sufferer from tuberculosis, "he preached in the day and had his hectic fever by night," but was nevertheless "resolved that while life and sufficient strength remained, he would devote himself earnestly to the work of preaching the gospel." (From http://etcweb1.princeton.edu/CampusWWW/Companion/davies_samuel.html)

David Caldwell: He was a Presbyterian minister, a self-trained physician, and an early educator in colonial North Carolina. He said his supreme desire was to become useful in bringing others to a knowledge of the truth. In 1789 the University of North Carolina was chartered as the first state university in the nation and David Caldwell was offered the presidency of that institution, because "beyond a doubt he was recognized as the leading educator in the state." (He declined because of his age - 64.)

Mecklenburg Declaration Day

Friday, May 19, 2006

Jim Williams

Fifer, Cobbler and Bookbinder, North Carolina Historical Reenactment Society

This year is the 231st anniversary of the auspicious day, and the traditional celebration of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence continues to evolve. The May 20th Society continues to grow in size and influence, and again this year will take on the total organization of the commemoration. They are holding the public celebration on Friday the 19th, recognizing that downtown Charlotte is a ghost town on weekends.

Plans are still evolving, but the event promises to be larger than ever. The Governor is tentatively slated to speak at noon on the square. Regardless of your politics, this makes the event one you should not miss.

Also, Rev. D'Oyle Moore will be on the street all day doing first person interpretation of one of his many colonial characters. Those that have seen him perform say that he is truly outstanding. On Sunday, the 21st, Rev. Moore will preach an 18th Century sermon at Hopewell Presbyterian Church on Beatties Ford Road near Charlotte. We are all invited to attend in 18th century dress. You don't want to miss this one!

I encourage everyone to participate on Friday, not only at noon at the square, but also throughout the day and into the evening.

From 11:00 am to 1:00 pm we will put on the usual celebration at the square in Charlotte (corners of Trade and Tryon). In previous years we held the event in Thomas Polk Park. This year we are moving it across Tryon Street. Several replica buildings are being built to give us some backdrop. The centerpiece will be the facade of the Mecklenburg County Courthouse, where the Meck Dec was first read to the public. This is what they tried to do last year, but it was rained out, so it was held in Founders Hall in the Bank of America building. Hopefully we will have better weather this year.

As in past years, this part of the festivities involves fife and drum musick, political speeches, musket firing, and Huzzahs. And Captain Jack will ride up on his horse, take the Declaration, and ride off for Philadelphia. For this we need as much musick and as many muskets and distaff as possible. On-street parking is available (8 quarters for 2 hours) near the square. Be on the square, dressed and ready to go at 11:30am.

In the late morning and early afternoon the MHA Docents and 6th NC members, along with D'Oyle Moore, will people the square interpreting colonial crafts and interacting with the public, explaining how things were in Colonial times and what the Meck Dec was all about. **Let Jim Williams know if you are going to be able to attend and he will keep you posted as the plans develop.**

Friday evening will be a replay of the party at RiRa's Irish Pub from two years ago. All docents are welcome in 18th Century dress. The 6th NC will stand on the street and fire muskets at the "low riders" driving by, parade to fife and drum through the pub, perhaps put on a short play, and fire the muskets again from the upstairs patio. Captain Jack will again make an appearance and ride off with the Declaration.

For those of you unfamiliar with the Meck Dec, here is a brief history.

In May of 1775 there was a ferment of revolution in all of the American Colonies which extended even into the back country of Mecklenburg County. Rumors were flying and the people felt that they needed to prepare for whatever was going to happen. Col. Thomas Polk, commander of the Mecklenburg Militia, called a meeting for May 19 to discuss the issues and determine a plan of action. Two members from each militia district were to attend.

During that meeting an express rider arrived in Charlotte with a circular letter telling of the bloody conflict at Lexington and Concord, exactly one month before. This news raised the discussion to a higher pitch and the convention felt that they needed to make some sort of a statement. They agreed on a Declaration (which may have been prepared in advance by Dr. Ephraim Brevard) and adjourned until noon the next day when the Declaration would be announced and read to the public.

(Continued on page 5)



Mecklenburg Declaration Day

(Continued from page 4)

At noon on May 20, Col. Polk stood on the courthouse steps and read the Mecklenburg Declaration to the citizens of the county, to great acclaim, loud huzzahs and the throwing of hats in the air.

Eleven days later a smaller committee wrote a set of resolves to implement the Declaration and hired Capt. James Jack to ride express to Philadelphia, carrying both documents, and lay them before Congress. At that time Congress was attempting to reconcile with King George and so ignored the documents.

There has been much controversy over the years surrounding the Meck Dec. No authenticated copy of the original has surfaced, although the content and wording of the Resolves is well established. The minutes of the meetings and other important papers were burned up in a house fire in 1810. However, most of the controversy was caused by John Adams, late in life, seeing an account of the Meck Dec in a newspaper and sending a letter to Thomas Jefferson, accusing him of copying the Meck Dec to write the Declaration of Independence. Jefferson, in turn, denied this accusation and also denied that the Meck Dec ever existed.

The bottom line, however, is that the Mecklenburg Declaration and the Mecklenburg Resolves are the earliest expression in the Colonies of the intent to separate from the mother country. There are too many eye witnesses to the May 20 event to deny that something happened on that day. The Resolves of May 31 are well authenticated as is the trip of Captain Jack to Philadelphia and back in June, 1775. The only possible question is over the exact wording of the Mecklenburg Declaration.

Come to the square on May 19 and let's educate the citizens of North Carolina about their heritage.

Historic versus Historical

My conversations with friends frequently drift into discussions of history. At times I use the adjective "historical" to describe a building, event, etc. Recently a non-history-group friend asked me what the difference is between "historic" and "historical." She thought I should be using "historic." I had no idea which was correct - or more correct. But I found this very question answered on Dictionary.com. While it isn't "wrong" to use the words interchangeably, we can narrow it down to specific usage.

"Historic and historical have different usages, though their senses overlap. Historic refers to what is important in history: the historic first voyage to the moon. It is also used of what is famous or interesting because of its association with persons or events in history: an historic house [such as Mt Vernon]. Historical refers to whatever existed in the past, whether regarded as important or not: a minor historical character. Historical also refers to anything concerned with history or the study of the past: an historical novel; historical discoveries. While these distinctions are useful, these words are often used interchangeably, as in historic times or historical times."

This is a very minor point, but I would be interested in your opinions. Is Hezekiah Alexander's house "historic" because he signed the Meck Dec? Is Rosedale or Latta "historical" because there's no such association? Based on this definition, let me know what you think is "historic" and what is "historical" in Mecklenburg County. I've compiled a list on page 15. Please add any sites I've left out. Rate them and send your choices to mhadandelion@yahoo.com. Your opinions will be listed in the next issue.

Historic Brattonsville

Living History Saturdays

Saturdays, May 6, 13, 20 and 27
10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Historic Brattonsville, 803-684-3948

Saturdays, June 3, 10 and 24
10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Historic Brattonsville, 803-684-3948

From March through November, programming will be available for visitors to Historic Brattonsville every Saturday! Costumed interpreters will present various aspects of life in the 18th and 19th centuries, with themes changing each week. Programming will take place from 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Call ahead to verify scheduled activities.

Regular Admission.
Call 803-684-3948 for details.

The Doctor's In: Health and Healing in the Old South

Saturday, June 17, 2006
Historic Brattonsville, 803-684-2327

This unique event explores how the healing arts evolved from the early days of the Carolina colonies to the Civil War. Throughout the day, visitors will meet and interact with a variety of practitioners from the past including a back country herb lady, Revolutionary War era surgeon, Phrenologist, African America slave healer and an antebellum doctor.

Tickets for the event are \$6 adults, \$5 seniors, \$3 students.
CHM Member Pricing is \$4 adults, \$4 seniors and \$2 students; children ages 4 and under are not charged an admission fee.
For more information, please call 803-684-2327.

Latta Plantation

Spring is always nice, as the plantation scenery comes back to life and everything turns green again! This spring has been filled with school children and new events. We started offering birthday parties a year ago, and had five in April. The Farm Kids Party is the most popular, and the children get to meet and feed the farm animals, play 19th century games in the yard, and make an old-fashioned toy to take home. We also offer a Tea Time Party, where little girls play dress-up and have a tea party on the plantation lawn. Spring is the perfect season for these, but they are offered and held year-round. On April 8th-9th, we held our first Civil War Medical Weekend. The event went very well, as visitors witnessed some of the realities of a camp hospital, nurses, and more! On April 15th, we held our first Easter Egg Hunt and were overwhelmed with the response. Over 260 children came to hunt for toy and candy-filled eggs, and 400 more adults came to take pictures of their little ones on the grounds. After the hunt, children took hayrides and families enjoyed the plantation. We were happy with the huge response, but also learned a lot and will make some changes to the hunt for next year! We hope that you will join us this spring and summer for some of our upcoming events and workshops! Most of the summer camps are full, but there are a few slots left in the following weeks:

(Continued on page 7)



Latta Plantation

(Continued from page 6)

Summer Camps

Children's Civil War Soldiers Camp

August 7-10 (Union and Confederate) – 9:00 am-3:00 pm

Cost: \$165.00

Ages: 8-12 years – Boys and Girls Welcome!

Campers will be recruited into the army and learn military tactics, drill skills, the life of a Civil War soldier, participate in battles, and much more!

Mrs. Jane's Academy: Civil War Camp for Girls

July 10-13 (Limited to 12 girls) – 9:00 am-3:00pm

Cost: \$150.00

Ages: 10-13

Experience the life of a woman during the Civil War. Learn open-hearth cooking, plain sewing, Victorian Etiquette, make old-fashioned toys, take a horse-drawn covered wagon ride, and have a tea party for your family on the last day!

Historic Encounters Summer Camp

July 17-21 (20 campers)

Cost: \$175.00 (\$150 each for siblings)

Ages: 8-12

Boys and Girls welcome! Campers will learn about history, go on field trips, canoe the Catawba, visit the Carolina Raptor Center, hike the trails, ride horses, work with the farm animals, and more!

Upcoming Events

May 24, 2006: Spring Homeschool Day, Life on the Farm – (Rescheduled from April 19th, which was rained out.) A living history day set aside for homeschoolers of all ages. There will be animal presentations and demonstrations every hour, carding, spinning, and weaving to try at the cabin, natural egg dyeing in the kitchen, laundry impressions, woodworking, crafts, homeschool vendors, and much more! The cost is \$4.00 per person (4 and under free), and craft tickets will be available for \$1.00 each.

May 27, 2006 (10:00 am-4:00 pm): Living History Day – See the plantation come to life as living historians demonstrate skills of the 19th century, including cooking, woodworking, animals, fiber arts, and more!

June 3, 2006: Latta Plantation Golf Open – (Skybrook Country Club) Shotgun start at 9:00 am- Captain's Choice Format! Register by May 26th, 2006 as a single or foursome, by calling 704-875-2312. Player fee: \$110 (includes all fees, lunch, and a gift bag).

June 10, 2006 (10:00 am-4:00 pm): Chair Caning Workshop For Beginners – For ages 18 and up. Learn to cane a small stool that you can keep! Register by June 3rd, 2006, limited to 10 participants- Cost \$35.00 per person (includes materials and workshop fee).

June 24, 2006 (1:00 pm-4:00 pm): Carolina Snowflakes Workshop – For ages 10 and up: learn how to weave a Carolina Snowflake- an early American tradition! Register by June 22nd, 2006. Limited to 10 participants. Cost \$15.00 per person (includes materials and workshop fee).

For more information or to register for a workshop, please contact Historic Latta Plantation at 704-875-2312 or visit www.lattaplantation.org.



Historic Rosedale Calendar of Events 2006

Karen McConnell

<http://historicrosedale.org>

May 6, 1 until 4 pm: Town Ball at Rosedale — Learn about the beginnings of our own American pastime, baseball. Join us for a game of town ball. America's Pastime, baseball began in the fields and streets of early America. The game was played by ordinary men and boys and became known as town ball. During the early 1800's the game of town ball was played throughout America. It began as a schoolyard amusement for children and eventually grew into a sport for adults as well. The rules of town ball varied widely from town to town. Something about this sport appealed to the everyday man and interest blossomed until in 1845 the first organized professional teams began to play under more structured rules. A picture of prisoners in the 1860's at the Salisbury Confederate Prison shows Federal detainees playing town ball within the prison walls. Join costumed interpreters as they teach us the delightful game of town ball. All children who arrive wearing a baseball uniform get in free and will be invited to join the team. \$5/ adults; \$4/ seniors and students.

May 13: Art of Craft 1830, Fundraiser — An arts festival and crafts fair for the entire family. Activities include a craft and pottery sale featuring well-known North Carolina artists, refreshments, period costumes and games for children of all ages. A special patron breakfast will be served from 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. Doors will open at 10:00 for patrons to preview the show and make purchases. Cost for patron ticket and breakfast is \$75.00. General admission cost for adults is \$10 (18 years and up). Children and students (3-18 years) are \$5. Children under 2 are free. Special rate of \$25 for families with children. Early 19th century crafts for children are planned with items they can make and take home. There will be pony rides for the children as well. (You can attend for free by volunteering to help MHA Docents with children's activities)

May 14, 1 until 4 pm: Annual Mother's Day Tea — Bring Mom for a special treat: a tour of one of Charlotte's finest antebellum plantation homes, followed by tea in the gardens. Mom's are free when accompanied by loving family members. \$5/ adults; \$4/ seniors and students.

Wednesdays of June and July, 9:00 - 12:00: Children's Day Camp — Experience children's life on a backcountry NC plantation. Hands on activities and role-playing allow today's children to explore medicine, education and daily chores of ante-bellum Mecklenburg County. Picking herbs from the herb garden, carrying water from the well, washing clothes on a washboard, drilling just like the militia and taking lessons from the plantation tutor are all activities children will enjoy. Designed for children 8 and up. \$10/child, groups of 8 or more \$6/child. Call for schedule.

August 13, 1:00-4:00 pm: Rosedale Family Reunion — Historic Rosedale Plantation will host some very special people at their annual Family Reunion. The Rosedale family includes descendants of the Frew, Caldwell, Hutchison, and Davidson family and the slaves and laborers who worked on this farm throughout the last 188 years. The guest list also includes friends and neighbors, former volunteers, board members and donors who worked to establish Rosedale as an historic site. The gathering will give Rosedale families and friends an opportunity to renew ties, meet 'long lost cousins' and find answers to history and heritage questions. Of course, we look forward to sharing research and genealogical information the site has collected with everyone; and we have a special program planned for you. We will have free tours of the house, demonstrations and a watermelon cutting just like the Davidson family did in the past. So if you are part of the family, join us on August 14th. This event is free and open to the public.

October 14: Oyster Roast Fundraiser

December 9 & 10, 5:30 until 8:00 pm: Christmas Candlelight Tours — Set aside one evening this holiday season for something a little different. Spend an evening experiencing the stillness, peace and inspiration of an age when Christmas was more simple. Enjoy a traditional candlelight tour and view stunning natural decorations in the glow of candlelight as you listen to period music. Explore the birth of an American Christmas at Historic Rosedale. Tickets at the door: \$6 per adult; \$4 per senior/student; 8 and under free when accompanied by parent; \$15 per family.

*Charlotte Museum of History and
Hezekiah Alexander Homesite*

Rites of Spring

Saturday, May 6, 1:00–4:00 p.m.

Celebrate the arrival spring at the Alexander Homesite, with crafts and an opportunity to join in springtime chores on the farm! Demonstrations and hands-on activities for visitors of all ages. Families are encouraged to bring a blanket, picnic lunch and spend the afternoon.

No reservations required.

Regular Museum admission.

Independence Day in Olde Mecklenburg

Saturday, May 20, 2:00–4:00 p.m.

Join the Museum in celebrating the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence and Mecklenburg Resolves with a visit to the oldest house in Charlotte, owned by Backcountry Patriot Hezekiah Alexander. Visitors will be delighted by a performance entitled “A Time to Decide” which examines the cultural and political environment in Mecklenburg County leading up to these documents. Tour the American Visions of Liberty and Freedom exhibit and examine the origin and meaning of the words “Freedom” and “Liberty.”

Regular Museum admission.

No reservations required.

Museum by Moonlight

Thursday, May 25, 5:00–9:00 p.m.

No time to visit the Museum during the day? Enjoy the Museum’s extended hours under the stars as our guest at Museum by Moonlight. This drop-in event will include a lecture and book signing with distinguished professor of history and author, Mark M. Smith. In *How Race is Made*, Smith examines the history of southern race relations and the construction of racial difference on that which history is built. This will also be one of the last chances to visit the American Visions of Liberty and Freedom exhibit which closes May 28. Program includes light refreshments and a cash bar. R.S.V.P. by May 23 and receive a free drink ticket!

Free for Museum members. Regular admission is \$6 for adults, \$5 for students and senior citizens, \$3 for children over 6; children under 6 are free.

World War II Encampment

Saturday, June 3, 10:00 am–5:00 p.m.

Step back in time and learn about life during World War II! Experience an Allied Encampment of soldiers, where you can visit their tents, command posts, and vehicles. Help on the homefront as we plant a victory garden and plan a meal on wartime rations. Listen to oral histories and examine documents and objects from the time period in the Briefing Room. Try on a uniform and unpack a soldiers’ backpack in our Hands-on-History room!

Sports!

Saturday, June 17, 2:00–4:00 p.m.

The public is invited to meet Ron Green, Sr., guest curator for the Focus on Sports exhibit. Kids are invited to play a variety of games on the Museum lawn and hands-on history room. Light refreshments will be served. No reservations required. Regular Museum admission.



The Dandelion Press — Relevance of the Name

Submitted by Valerie Jones

Editor's Note: There was some discussion about changing the name of this newsletter. The MHA Docents Board has decided to retain the name *The Dandelion*. The following explains the reason for the original choice of the name.

(In 1994, the docents had a contest seeking submissions for a new name for the docent newsletter, which until that time had the catchy name, "Docent News." After reviewing many entries, Betty Hutchinson's nomination was chosen. The following article taken from the first issue of the newly named Dandelion Press is Betty's explanation of the genesis of the name.)

From "The Dandelion Press," Vol. 1, No. 1

Stars of the earth,
These golden flowers;
Emblems of our own great resurrection;
Emblems of the bright and better land.

From "Flowers" by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Newsletter Named "Dandelion Press"

The first colonists brought dandelions to America where they have flourished and scattered everywhere. In considering an appropriate name for our newsletter, it seems a fitting symbol for the MHA Education Committee* and the docents themselves.

The dandelion is a hardy plant with deeply notched leaves that reminded the ancient French of lions' teeth; hence dent de lion became Anglicized to "dandelion."

Cutting it off at the surface only encourages the long root to regenerate the plant more vigorously. The root may be dried and used for medicinal purposes.

Longfellow's "stars of the earth" brighten our world and act as harbingers of spring. Perhaps they overdo it a bit when it comes to tidy lawns, but who would eliminate their beauty and cheer from the countryside.

Dandelion greens are best picked and eaten before the blooms appear. Wine can be made from the blossoms. The golden-yellow head is really a cluster of flowers that are self-pollinating.

Beauty continues as the seeds form a perfect sphere on a tall pedestal and later are blown by nature or a child to a random destination.

The docents, too, serve as a catalyst for disseminating authentic seeds of knowledge to young and old alike."

*(*our formal designation with parent MHA)*

REMINDER: Camille will be retiring as editor of *The Dandelion* after the November/December 2006 issue. If you are interested in this position or if you know someone who may be interested, please contact Rachel Abernathy.

Charlotte Folk Society Concerts

On the second Friday of each month, the Charlotte Folk Society presents an hour-long concert, and afterwards folks gather for jam sessions or a song circle. We invite you to join us. The concerts are free, although donations are appreciated. Our events are family-friendly and our concerts take place in the Bryant Recital Hall in the Sloan-Morgan Building at 1220 Elizabeth Avenue on the Central CPCC Campus. Free parking is available in the CPCC Staff Deck accessed off Fourth Street between Independence Blvd. and Kings Drive. The deck is directly behind the Sloan-Morgan Building and a sidewalk leads from the deck to the front of the building.

Elizabeth Laprelle in Concert

May 12, 2006, 7:30 pm

Elizabeth LaPrelle is a traditional ballad singer from Rural Retreat, Virginia. A freshman at the College of William and Mary, she has already appeared on *Prairie Home Companion*, recorded a CD, *Rain and Snow*, and taken first place in the Folk Song Competition and received the "Most Promising Talent Award" at the 2005 Mt. Airy Fiddler's Convention.



Men Standing in Christ

June 9, 2006, 7:30 pm

The Mt. Carmel Baptist Church gospel singers, "Men Standing in Christ," sing both traditional acappella gospel and more modern style with instrumental accompaniment. This promises to be a very special evening.

Visit the Charlotte Folk Society website at www.folksociety.org.

Docent Dues - 2006

Dues are payable January 1 each year. Our "dues" year runs from January 1 -December 31. Please make checks payable to "MHA Docents." Give checks to Valerie Jones, docent treasurer, at the monthly meeting or mail to her at 4700 Coronado Drive, Charlotte, NC 28212

Questions? Call Valerie at 704-567-0599 or email her at jvkjones@bellsouth.net

Levels of 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

NOTE: All docents should pay through the committee and NOT directly to MHA facilitating our record keeping. Thank you.



Andre Michaux

French Botanist – His Work in Mecklenburg County

On Sunday, April 24, Historic Rosedale hosted famous French botanist Andre Michaux, as portrayed by Charlotte librarian Charlie Williams. Michaux identified hundreds of the Carolina's native species and introduced the crape myrtle and camellia to the United States, both of which are in Historic Rosedale's gardens.

The following is an excerpt from the web site www.michaux.org.

(<http://www.michaux.org/michaux.htm>, compiled by Charlie Williams, © 2000-2002 AMIS Consortium: Daniel Stowe Botanical Gardens + Belmont Abbey College + Gaston Day School)



“André Michaux obtained a typical eighteenth century education; it was brief and grounded in the classics. Learning Latin and some Greek, he first displayed the remarkable aptitude for languages that would help him throughout his life. Reading Latin classics aroused in him a desire to travel to exotic foreign lands. It is said that his schooling ended at age fourteen when his father took both André and his younger brother from school. The elder Michaux chose to instruct his sons in agriculture, and to inure them to the hardships that were an everyday part of farm life in the eighteenth century.

André Michaux learned his father's lessons well. He developed a marvelous ability to make plants grow and he would endure severe hardships without complaint. In a time when agricultural skills were held in the highest regard, he gained a reputation as a grower of difficult plants. This brought him to the attention of influential officials in the government of King Louis XVI. Nonetheless, André Michaux's life would have been like that of countless other men of his generation had tragedy not struck in the first year of his marriage to Cecile Claye. His young wife died within days after giving birth to their only child. Michaux never considered remarriage; Cecile was the love of his life. Losing her after only eleven months of marriage left him devastated. So strong were the painful memories of his beloved Cecile, that the beautiful forests and fields of home became unbearable. With their young son François André safely in his family's care, a despondent André Michaux sought new horizons. . .

Michaux was chosen to lead a scientific mission to the United States. Relations between the two countries were especially warm. French support had been crucial in the American Revolution which had ended only two years earlier. The young United States dispatched its brightest stars to represent America in France. . .

Michaux ultimately recorded seven journeys through the Carolina Piedmont crossing the Catawba River in the vicinity of what was then the village of Charlotte. Landsford Canal State Park, SC. preserves the scene of one of his Catawba River crossings just as it would have appeared to the botanist on horseback in 1795. The Tuckaseegee Ford in NC is another of his crossing points that we can locate today. On one of these journeys he chose a route that led him north along the west bank of the river past the future site of the Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden. Michaux often noted an interesting new species of magnolia tree he found nearby. He observed this new species several times in the Carolina Piedmont, then found it in bloom in the wilderness of Tennessee further west. He named his new species *Magnolia macrophylla*, but in the early years after its introduction into France many botanists and horticulturists wanted to call it *Magnolia michauxii* in his honor.”

Photo from <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/stateforests/michauxhistory.aspx>



Excerpts from "Children's Manners and Morals: How to Behave"

George A. Rice ©) 2005 Homestead Toys

Submitted by Karen McConnell

How to Please in Conversation

- * Use clear, distinct words to express your ideas, although the tone of your voice should be subdued.
- * Always defend the absent person who is being spoken of, as far as truth and justice will permit.
- * Allow people that your are with to do their full share of the talking if they evince a willingness to converse.
- * Beware of talking much about yourself. Your merits will be discovered in due time with the necessity of sounding your own praises.
- * Show the courtesy, when another person joins the group where you are relating an incident, of recapitulating what has been said, for the advantage of the new-comer.
- * Recollect that the object of conversation is to entertain and amuse; the social gathering, therefore, should not be made the arena of dispute. Even slight mistakes and inaccuracies it is well to overlook rather than to allow inharmony to present itself.
- * Aim to adapt your conversation to the comprehension to those with whom your are conversing. Be careful that you do not undervalue them. It is possible that they are as intelligent as yourself, and their conversation can, perhaps, take as wide a range as your own.

Toilet Tips of the 1800s

- * Early rising, and the habit of washing frequently in pure cold water, are fine things for the health and complexion.
- * The best remedy for foul breath is powdered charcoal, half a teaspoon spread on a piece of bread, and eaten once a day for two or three days.
- * To remedy greasy skin, mix one half pint of distilled water, 18 grains of bicarbonate of soda, and 6 drops of essence of Portugal, and bathe the face with it.
- * Feet should be washed often, lest they become offensive to others. Prepare a warm foot-bath daily and wipe the feet completely dry. Afterwards put on clean stockings.
- * Keep the hair cut until the child is nine or ten years old. An abundance of hair at an early age is apt to produce weak eyes, paleness and head-ache.
- * To remove dandruff, mix glycerine with a little rosewater.

Maxims for Health and Gracefulness - from "The Girl's Own Book"

"Walking and other out-of-door exercises cannot be too much recommended to young people. Even skating, driving hoop, and other boyish sports, may be practised to great advantage by little girls, provided they can be pursued within the enclosure of a garden, or court; in the street they would be of course highly improper . . . Such games tend to form a vigorous constitution; and girls who are habitually lady-like, will never allow themselves to be rude and vulgar, even in play."



Children's Games of Times Past

"Children's Historical Travel Games and Pastimes," Theodore Newport - Editor/Collector

Submitted by Karen McConnell

(Answers at bottom of page.)

What Do You Think?

There was once a race horse that won great fame.
What-do-you-think was the horse's name.

Riddles

1. What word becomes shorter if you add two letters to it?
 2. What can you hold without touching it?
 3. What did the ram say to his sweetheart?
 4. What works better when it has something in its eye?
 5. What had four legs, but only one foot?
 6. How do you spell mousetrap with only three letters?
 7. What is taller sitting down than standing up?
 8. What weighs the same, no matter what size it is?
 9. If your uncle's sister isn't your aunt, what is she to you?
 10. What's the difference between a cow and a flea?
-

Old Mother Hubbard

Old Mother Hubbard
Went to the cupboard
To get her poor dog a bone.
When she got there,
The cupboard was bare.
Than poor Mother Hubbard cried out, "OICURMT!"

What was she trying to say?

Answers

What Do You Think? - The poem does not ask a question. The horse's name was "What-do-you-think."

Riddles -

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| 1. Shorter - short + er | 6. Cat |
| 2. Your tongue | 7. A dog |
| 3. "I love ewe" | 8. A hole |
| 4. A needle | 9. Your mother |
| 5. A bed | 10. A cow can have fleas, but a flea can't have cows |

Old Mother Hubbard - When you read aloud each letter of what Mother Hubbard said, you will hear, "Oh, I see you are empty!"



Are They Historic or Historical?

This list is not all inclusive. Please add any other sites that come to mind. Rate them – historic or historical based on the definition on page 5 – and send your rating to mhadandelion@yahoo.com. If you rate a site as “Historic,” please include your reason for doing so. The votes will be tallied and listed in the next issue.

- Hezekiah Alexander Homesite
- Rosedale Plantation
- Latta Plantation
- Torance House and Store
- Dowd House
- Reed Gold Mine (was once in Mecklenburg!)
- Rural Hill
- Dowd House
- James K. Polk site
- McIntyre Farm (Beatties Ford Road – where the bees chased the Red Coats)
- Afro-American Cultural Center building
- The Seven Presbyterian Churches (Rocky River, Sugaw Creek, Steele Creek, Hopewell, Poplar Tent, Center, Providence).
- First Presbyterian Church
- St. Peters Episcopal Church
- St. Peters Catholic Church
- First United Presbyterian Church
- Settlers Cemetery
- Elmwood and Oakwood Cemeteries
- Mint Museum
- North Charlotte
- Atherton Mills
- Dilworth
- Myers Park
- Plaza Midwood
- Mecklenburg Investment Co. Building on Brevard
- The old Sears Building on N. Tryon St. (now county services building)
- Davidson College
- Queens College
- Johnson C. Smith College
- The Dr. George E. Davis House (near Johnson C. Smith)
- Mint Hill Doctors Museum