

**Mecklenburg Historical Association Docents**

*Promoting Local History through Education and Research*



March/April, 2011  
Volume 17, Number 2

Look Inside This Issue

- Robin Davidson, the original Catawba riverkeeper
- Davidson's Fort, a new site to see
- An Interesting Inquiry – From Wichita?
- SCAR Corps of Discovery goes to Ninety-Six, SC.
- Guilford Court House – a major Revolutionary Reenactment
- Docent news, a book review, the History Calendar, and more.

*Robert Davidson of Holly Bend*

The Original Catawba Riverkeeper.



Holly Bend

Through most of his life Robert (Robin) Davidson was one of the commissioners for the Catawba River. All men in the county were required to participate in maintenance of the roads, but those who lived along the Catawba were required to keep the river clear of obstructions so that fish could freely swim upstream. There were several fisheries on the river (one was part-owned by James Latta of Latta Plantation) and it is probable that they caught large quantities of Shad during the spring run. They might have used nets, but more likely used fish traps woven of river reed. These fish were probably sold fresh in Charlotte, perhaps in the open market space below the court house. They were most certainly salted down and sold by the barrel. Of course Shad Roe is a great delicacy, so it may have been sold separately. Apparently the river fishing industry was wide-spread in North Carolina for in 1787 the NC Assembly passed a law allowing County Courts to “Appoint Commissioners to Keep Open Rivers and Creeks...for the Passage of fish Up the Same,”

In 1797 Robin Davidson was 28 and living with his parents, Major John and Violet Davidson at Rural Hill. It would be three years before he built Holly Bend and married Peggy Osborne. In July of that year, the county court appointed him an “Overseer and Commissioner” for that part of the Catawba River from Dutchman’s Creek to Tools Ford. Along with two other commissioners for this section he organized the men living near the river in “removing Obstruction in the navigation” of the river. He was appointed again in 1799, 1803, 1812 and 1816. Robin served in this function continuously from at least 1797 until 1816 and perhaps until he died in 1853.

A curious sidelight to Robin Davidson’s connection to the Catawba River is the disappearance of Tools Ford and the roads leading to it. Tools Ford may not have been as important to history as Beattie’s, Cowan’s, Tuckaseegee, or Nation’s Fords, but it was certainly well known and used as a dividing point on the Catawba River. Few of these fords appear on 18<sup>th</sup> century maps. The first appearance of Tools Ford was on the Strother Map of 1808. That map also showed a road starting at the Statesville Road, just north of John McKnitt Alexander’s Alexandriana, and running due west to Tools Ford. The road extended across the Catawba to Lincoln County where it ended at a road connecting Beattie’s and Tuckaseegee Fords.

Tools Ford and its road continue to be shown on maps up to 1882. Then it disappears. On a county map of 1911 neither the ford nor the road leading to it are shown. This is curious. A ford may be used less and less as bridges are built, but it is still always there. And a well-used road usually continues in existence to some extent since it provides access to properties along it.

Also curious is the name change of what we call today McDowell's Creek. This was originally, at least by 1808, known as Davidson's Creek. In 1882 it was shown as Davidson's Mill Creek. However, by 1911 Davidson's Creek was gone forever and the stream was called McDowell's Creek. That same map shows a Davidson's Creek joining the Catawba near the village of Davidson, so that may explain the name change. Jim Williams

*From the Chairman*

A Great Beginning of a New Year

I have been in awe of the knowledge and skill our Docents and local historians have. That was apparent in our first two, exceptional, programs. The Historical Cooking Guild of the Catawba Valley, a Committee of the MHA Docents, gave a spirited and educational program on backcountry hearth cooking in January. This was very informative and fun! (so, what is Candlemas?) In February, Dr. Tony Zeiss presented Thomas Young, a boy-soldier in the Revolutionary War. With his enthusiasm, Dr. Zeiss captivated us with Young's exploits of that war. We didn't want the time to end.

And, we have more ....master book binder Jim Williams, another of our Docents, will share his knowledge and expertise in the art and craft of early book binding in March. In April, Jeff Fissel, the director of Rural Hill, will talk with us about Rural Hill's Scottish Festival and Loch Norman Highland Games, coming in April 15,16, and 17. We will be well informed and eager to go to the Scottish Festival—on our own.

Then.....FIELD TRIP! Come with Docents to the Museum of the Waxhaws in May. In June, we will have our annual, covered dish picnic at Rural Hill, going to Holly Bend first and then to the Davidson cemetery after the picnic. Docents are definitely sharing their skills and knowledge "to keep history alive in our community!" We are going places....Ladies and Gentlemen! All are welcomed to join us.

Audrey Mellichamp, Docent Chair

*MHA Docent Programs*

Both meetings will be held in the Fellowship Hall of Sugaw Creek Presbyterian Church. Refreshments at 9:30 am, business meeting at 10, program at 11. Visitors are always welcome.

**Tuesday, March 1, 2011  
Properly Bound**



Books today differ in construction from the way that books have been made for hundreds of years. Jim Williams will tell us all about bookbinding and how it was performed in early Mecklenburg County. This will include a brief sketch of the history of paper making, of printing, and of bookbinding itself; He will demonstrate several of the basic techniques employed in the process.

Jim has demonstrated 18th and 19th century bookbinding at many historic sites and events. Using original and reproduction tools and equipment and authentic materials he will demonstrate and describes the various techniques involved in binding new books and rebinding old ones.

**Tuesday, April 5, 2011  
Happenings at Rural Hill**

Rural Hill was the plantation home of Major John Davidson, an early leader in Mecklenburg County. It and its predecessor, Rural Retreat, unfortunately burned in the late 1800s. Some ruins of Rural Hill and the family burying ground remain along with several historic buildings and a rich family history.

Jeff Fissel, our guest speaker, will talk about events at Rural Hill, especially the Rural Hill Scottish Festival and Loch Norman Highland Games (April 15-17). He will also touch on programming and other events at the historic site, and plans for the future. Jeff is the new Executive Director of Rural Hill. He brings to the site an education in business, and a great love of American and North Carolina history.

*Newsletter Deadline*

The deadline for the May/June issue of the dandelion is April 14<sup>th</sup>. We appreciate knowing about history events in the area, and we are especially interested in having more general articles concerning history. Send your contributions to Ann and Jim Williams at 1601 S Wendover Road, Charlotte, NC 28211, or email [mhadandelion@mindspring.com](mailto:mhadandelion@mindspring.com).

*MHA Docent Dues*

If you have not already paid your MHA Docent dues, now is the time to do so. Since we docents are a committee of MHA, our dues go to that parent organization. However to facilitate our record keeping, please send your check to docent treasurer Valerie Jones. Valerie will record your membership info, then pay our collective dues to MHA as a group.

Make your check payable to **MHA Docents** and mail it to Valerie Jones at 4700 Coronado Drive, Charlotte, NC 28212. If you have questions, or are not sure if you've already paid, contact her at [vvjones@carolina.rr.com](mailto:vvjones@carolina.rr.com) or call her at 704-567-0599

MHA Membership levels:

	<u>Single</u>	<u>Couple</u>
General	\$30.00	\$50.00
Senior (60+)	\$15.00	\$25.00
Patron	\$60.00	\$100.00
Life (single Payment)	\$300.00	\$500.00

*Docent Book Club*

The Docent Book Club will meet after our regular meetings in March and April.

Janet Dyer has provided us with some pages of the book *Dance and it Music in America* concerning North Carolina during the colonial period. We will discuss it in March. We will also begin a study of two other books. Lisa Tappy will have two copies of *Woman of Color, Daughter of Privilege: Amanda America Dickson, 1849-1893*. This is the story of a mulatto girl raised and pampered by her white father. He was wealthy and respected, and had acquired Amanda by raping a slave child.

Ann Williams will bring two copies of *Oil in Our Lamps: The Journals of Mary Davis Brown*. Mary Brown kept journals from 1854-1901. She was the wife of a yeoman farmer in York County, SC. She recorded the Civil War and reconstruction from the point of view of an ordinary farmwife; most journals were kept by the privileged.

We will share these books among us, and continue discussing them in April. Anyone is welcome to join in the discussion of some very interesting books.

### *MHA Dinner Meeting*

Monday, March 28, at Trinity Presbyterian Church. Dinner is at 6:30 followed by the program at 7:15. Those not having dinner are welcome to enjoy the program at no charge. To make a reservation for dinner use the order form in your MHA Newsletter or contact Jane Johnson at 704 544 0698 or [JJCNC@aol.com](mailto:JJCNC@aol.com)

Nora Brooks, a Union County honors and advanced placement history teacher, is our March speaker. She will portray Julia Grant. Ms. Brooks has previously performed for our organization. This characterization is particularly important, as we approach the 150th anniversary of the beginning of the Civil War in April.

Julia Boggs Dent Grant (1826 – 1902) was the wife of Ulysses S. Grant, the 18th President of the US, and the mother of four children. She became acquainted with her future husband through his friendship with her brother, as they were both West Point graduates. She married Grant at age 22 in 1848, at her parent's home in Missouri.

There will be a silent auction of Civil War Books before and during the dinner and program, to benefit the Robinson-Spangler Carolina Room of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library. A few of them are over 100 years old.

### *Docent Board Retreat*

Snow prevented the board from holding the retreat in January as scheduled. It was held instead on February 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> at the home of Valerie Jones. The board discussed the events of the previous year, and plans for the coming year. These are the highlights.

Docent Chairman Audrey Mellichamp stated that Wanda Hubicki has done a wonderful job with publicity, and we will continue to provide her with information for press releases. It was agreed that education is our primary goal which we are meeting through programs, day trips, the newsletter, and special events. We will plan for a day trip to Asheville in the fall to visit the Zebulon Vance Birthplace and the Thomas Wolfe Home; both are State Historic Sites. The trip will probably be between October 18<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. Other possible day trips were discussed.

Memorial gifts for the docent library were selected. *Coast to Coast: Vintage Travel in North America* by Antony Shugaar et. al. will be purchased in memory of Jo Anne Dickens, and *They Dared To Roar* by Kathy Herran in memory of Jama Mooney. Several titles on slave history were discussed for a book to honor Carol Trippe. A decision will be made after examining our library holdings to avoid duplication. The board also decided to buy a copy of *Oil in Our Lamps: The Journals of Mary Davis Brown* for the docent library. Mary Davis Brown of York County, SC kept a journal from 1854 – 1901. It was transcribed and published by her descendants.

Reports were accepted from the following committees: Hospitality, Journal, Newsletter, Library, Cooking Guild, Fashion, Book Club, Passports, and Education. Alice Bostic and Rachel Abernathy reported on last winter's community education program "From Wagon Roads to New South City". They agreed to continue the program in 2012 and suggested seeking more help from The Charlotte Museum of History and the Levine Museum of the New South. The board agreed to budget \$500 toward the project.

Valerie Jones presented a budget proposal for 2011. The line items were discussed and augmented as needed. The budget was passed. Appreciation was expressed by all to Valerie for hosting both days of the retreat.

Excerpted from the minutes of Secretary, Lisa Tappy



## *Decent Scholarships*

Scholarships are available for docents to attend conferences, seminars, or other appropriate educational venues. Scholarships of up to \$150 can be applied to the conference fees; they cannot be applied to transportation, housing, meals, etc. This scholarship program has been underused in recent years, and the board would like to encourage more of us to apply. Anyone receiving a scholarship will provide copies of notes and handouts from the conference to our library, present a written report to the board and the newsletter, and perhaps present a program for a docent meeting.

## *Davidson's Fort, A New Site to See*



Davidson's Fort Historic Park recreates the frontier fort for which the town of Old Fort, NC, was named. The original Davidson's Fort was built in 1776 by North Carolina militia soldiers on land owned by the Davidson family and was first captained by Samuel Davidson. It was one of dozens of forts built for defense on the edge of European settlement in the Carolinas, Virginia, Georgia, and Tennessee. Davidson's Fort was both a place of refuge for settlers when Indian attacks threatened and a garrison from which militia soldiers went out as scouts or rangers and on campaigns directed

against the Cherokee. During the Southern Campaign of the American Revolution (from 1780) Davidson's Fort played an important role in the local Tory-Whig conflicts and supplied soldiers who fought in the battles of Cowpens, Ramseur's Mill, Musgrove Mill, Cane Creek, Kings Mountain, and others. Davidson's Fort Historic Park seeks to remember this part of the history and people who were a part of it, and to communicate that history to the public through living history programs and events.

Patriot flags flew on Saturday, November 27, 2010, to welcome visitors to the Fall Muster at Davidson's Fort Historic Park. After a cold night, the sun shone at this new Colonial-period living history site at the foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

The focus of activities was life on the western frontier of North Carolina at the time of the Revolution. Visitors enjoyed watching local "settlers" as they went about daily tasks. The local potter, no doubt fearful of an attack on his isolated home, had moved his wheel into the Fort and remained hard at work throughout the day. One woman could not resist the presence of so many visitors and so put off her day's work to play with the children, using toys and games well-known in the eighteenth century. A couple of trappers, just in from the nearby Cherokee lands, showed guests Native American weapons and demonstrated turkey-hunting calls. Meanwhile, the fort's doctor talked with visitors about the treatment of wounds and illnesses typical of frontier life at the time of the Revolution. At one point during the day, a local citizen was accused of stealing a neighbor's horse. He was tried and found guilty, but somehow managed to escape before his sentence could be carried out. Inside the blockhouse a small exhibit told the history of Davidson's Fort, and a display of artifacts found in and around Old Fort attested to Native Americans' use of the area both before and after the arrival of Europeans.

Twice during the day, the autumn calm was broken by the sound of shouts and gunfire as a group of Tories attempted to attack the Fort. In both instances the attackers were but a small group of locals too cowardly or too misguided to attach themselves to the cause of liberty. The small company of Whig militia garrisoned at Davidson's Fort easily fought them off with a minimum of casualties. Given the haste of the enemy's retreat, it is

unclear whether they were aided by any Cherokees (those fierce allies of the crown), though indications are that they were not.

Between attacks, visitors and re-enactors were encouraged by a speech from Capt. Daniel Smith (alias Randy Knapp of Asheville, NC), captain of Davidson's Fort for much of the late 1770's and 1780's. His words were followed by those of Maj. Joseph McDowell (alias Albert Dale of Old Fort, NC), an eighteenth-century resident of the Old Fort area and a noted militia officer. One of the Overmountain Men (alias Mike Dahl of Knoxville, TN), who fought so bravely at the Battle of Kings Mountain, gave a rousing speech on the price of liberty. Huzzahs were heard all around as those assembled were reminded of the contributions to independence made by the local militias of the Carolinas in the battles and skirmishes of the war's Southern Campaign.

Following the Fall Muster on November 27, Davidson's Fort closed for the winter. The site will reopen on April 2 and will be open to the public every Saturday. The Fort will present living history programming on the third Saturday of each month, including a Spring Muster on Saturday, May 21, 2011.

Davidson's Fort Historic Park is located just off I-40 about halfway between Marion and Black Mountain. For more information on Davidson's Fort Historic Park, its mission and activities, go to [www.davidsonfort.org](http://www.davidsonfort.org).  
Submitted by Janet Pyatt, Program Director, Davidson's Fort Historic Park

### *Decent Training for Hugh Torance House and Store*

A training session for new docents will be on Saturday, March 12<sup>th</sup> at 1 pm at the Hugh Torance House and Store. In 1779 Hugh Torance, farmer and merchant, bought land in Mecklenburg County. Hugh served in the Revolutionary War, married a widow with eight children, farmed, and worked as an itinerant merchant. When his only son James reached adulthood Hugh added to his log house and opened the store, which stayed in business until 1825. It supported him, his wives, and children in grand style. In 1831 he build an impressive plantation home, Cedar Grove (privately owned) adjacent to the site.

The Torrance family were good stewards of history preserving numerous records concerning every aspect of their lives. It is from this record that we are able to interpret the site with great detail and accuracy. The site is currently open one Sunday a month during the Summer. The site has no staff and depends entirely on volunteers. The House and Store is on Gilead Road near Huntersville, 2 miles west of I 77 exit 23. If you would like to attend the training session contact Ann Williams at 704-365-2402 or [ann.williams@mindapring.com](mailto:ann.williams@mindapring.com).

### *Changes at The Hezekiah Alexander Homesite*



If you haven't visited the Hezekiah Alexander House at the Charlotte Museum of History recently, maybe it's time to stop by for a visit. In January, when the museum closed for a few days of maintenance, staff and volunteers cleaned the Alexander house from top to bottom. The process included rearranging several rooms and choosing eight blankets and coverlets from the museum's collection to display on the Alexanders' beds.

More changes are in the works for next summer. The museum announced that new options for touring the Hezekiah Alexander Homesite will take effect on June 1, 2011, giving visitors an opportunity to see the site on a schedule that suits their needs and schedules. An

11:15 A.M. public tour will be offered daily, Tuesday-Saturday, in addition to the 1:15 and 3:15 tours available Tuesday-Sunday. Visitors who prefer a self-guided experience of the property will be able to view the outbuildings, including the kitchen, barn, and springhouse, anytime between 10 A.M. and 4 P.M. Tuesday-Saturday and 1 P.M. to 4 P.M. on Sunday.

The new schedule will also offer an increased variety of docent opportunities, including options for volunteers who prefer not to wear historic costume or who cannot walk or stand for long periods. The museum is actively seeking new volunteers for these and other opportunities. Contact Brandie Macdonald at (704) 568-1774, ext 132 or [bmacdonald@charlottemuseum.org](mailto:bmacdonald@charlottemuseum.org) for more information.

### *An Interesting Inquiry - From Wichita?*

Last November the MHA received an email, through the web site, asking about the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence of May 20, 1775. We get a lot of these inquiries, but this one was unusual. It was from the students of Wilbur Middle School in Wichita, Kansas. They are competing in the National History Day Competition and had chosen the Meck Dec as their topic to research and report on. The theme of the NHD this year is "Debate & Diplomacy; Successes, Failures, and Consequences" so they thought that the Meck Dec would be a most appropriate topic. During the fall they researched the topic, wrote papers, and prepared their presentation. The Competition itself begins this spring with local, state and national judging and culminates in June at the University of Maryland. The idea is to teach elementary and secondary school students to perform historical research and to appreciate the history of their country. Over half a million students participate in this competition each year.

As we always do, no matter the inquiry, your board, along with local historians and librarians, jumped at the chance to assist these students. We provided web sites, publications and papers for them to study to understand the Mecklenburg Declaration and why it is important to the history of the United States. We even provided some "props" for their presentation – a quill pen, ink pot and ink. And we promised to put a copy of their presentation in the MHA Archives, located in the J. Murrey Atkins Library Special Collections at UNCC.

The local competition in Wichita is being held February 25<sup>th</sup> and we will let you know whether they place high enough to advance to the State competition.

Jim Williams

### *Southern Campaign of the American Revolution*

<http://www.southerncampaign.org/cod.php>

#### **Off the Beaten Path at Ninety Six, Corps of Discovery, Saturday, March 19, at 10 am, Ninety Six, SC**

Meet at the parking lot of the Ninety Six National Historical Site at 10:00 am. Morning tour – we will carpool to look at the traces of the colonial road network that converged on the trading and military center of Ninety Six. We will walk along the old Charleston Road, see the old Cherokee Trading Path and cover the early backcountry settlement, Goudy's Fort and French & Indian War actions at Ninety Six. We will visit Ninety Six's Revolutionary War sites starting with the first Whig v. Tory political and military actions in South Carolina in 1775. After lunch - we will cover Ninety Six's role in the 1776 Cherokee campaign and its role in 1780 - 1781 as a British backcountry base to suppress the Patriots in western South Carolina and to open communications with the British Cherokee allies. We will see where Lt. Col. Henry "Light Horse Harry" Lee paraded his British prisoners from Augusta. We will tour the British Star Fort, site of Gen. Nathanael Greene's 1781 siege, and visit Greene's camps; and end up our tour with Lord Rawdon's successful relief effort and the British withdrawal from western South Carolina. Acclaimed novelist Charles Price will read from *Nor the Battle to the Strong* describing the scene in 1781. Program coordinators are Mike Burgess and Dan Tortora. Rain date - March 26, 2011. Lunch on your own - bring your picnic or jaunt into town for a quick burger. Free event, public is invited.

*Guilford Courthouse National Military Park*  
Greensboro, NC. <http://www.nps.gov/guco/index.htm>

**Revolutionary War Lecture Series, Evenings, Wednesday, March 9 through Friday, March 11, at 7 pm**  
Reservations Required

Wednesday, March 9: Washington, Lessons in Leadership  
presented by Gerald Carbone, Historian, Author.

Thursday, March 10: Before They Were Heroes at Kings Mountain,  
Presented by Randell Jones, Historian, Author.

Friday, March 11: Old Ninety-Six, Crossroads and Revolution, presented by Eric Williams, Author, Retired  
Historian Ninety-Six National Historic Site.

**The Battle of Guilford Courthouse Reenactment. Saturday and Sunday, March 12 and 13. See times below.**

Encampment and battles at Country Park, 3905 Nathanael Green Dr.

Demonstrations and other ceremonies at Guilford Courthouse National Military Park.

Demonstrations at Guilford Heritage Center.

Living History, Suttlers, and Military Encampment, both days from 8:30 am to 5 pm. At Country Park  
Battle Reenactments at 2 pm both days at Country Park.

Observance program Saturday, March 12 at 10 am at the Greene Monument in the Military Park.

Demonstrations throughout both days at the Heritage Center and both Military Parks.

For details see web site above.

*Book Review*

***What The Slaves Ate: Recollections Of African American Foods And Foodways From The Slave Narratives.***  
**Herbert C. Covey and Dwight Eisanach, Greenwood Press, Santa Barbara, CA. 2009**

Authors Covey and Eisanach have extensively examined the roots of African American Foods and Foodways such as diet, nutrition, and rationing as they were influenced and changed by the complex social relationships of slave lives during the Antebellum years. The authors' premise is that "Food is an essential human need that shapes relationships among people." The institution of slavery changed not only the foods available to African Americans; it changed the social, cultural and economic institutions of our developing colonies and shaped the future of the New World.

Reviewing the Slave narratives gathered during the 1930's under the WPA in which the government used unemployed writers to interview 2200 ex-slaves, Covey and Eisanach have found valuable new insights into the numerous ways food and foodways were shaped and changed by the social, cultural, economic and power relationships between African American Slaves and their white masters.

The authors found that the narratives were not sufficient alone to provide valid conclusions about exactly what slaves ate and how they prepared, stored and cooked the foods that were given to them. Drawing upon an additional 300 literary sources, Covey and Eisanach have made an impressive corroboration of the impact slavery had upon African American food and foodways during the early development of colonial America.

Extensive research has led to the discovery of the historic roots of important African American foods, cooking techniques and even how the agricultural methods of pre-colonial West Africa have impacted the American foods and foodways that have become known today as Southern cooking.

This book's greatest contribution to historic cook interpreters lies in the wealth of documented research into all aspects of slavery as it impacted foods and foodways. Although the authors admit that the Slave Narratives contain racial biases, there is still great insight to be gained from reading and understanding food memories,



cooking methods, and African crops. Through the slave trade, their food and foodways traveled to the colonies and have relevance today because they influenced the evolution of the cooking genre we know today as our “good ole” American Southern Cooking, complete with its distinctive regional variations and African spices.

Patricia Veale

### *The History Calendar*

Admission charged at all events unless otherwise noted.

Check the Charlotte Regional History Consortium website for other events.

<http://www.charlotteregionalhistory.org>

### *The Charlotte History Alliance*

**“History On My Mind” Discussion, Thursday, March 3 at 7 pm. Dana Auditorium at Queens University**  
Presented in conjunction with the Learning Society of Queens, the guest speaker will be Doris Kearns Goodwin, author of *Team of Rivals; Lyndon Johnson and the American Dream;* and *No Ordinary Time: Franklin & Eleanor Roosevelt, The Home Front of WWII.* Purchase tickets at [www.queens.edu/learning-society](http://www.queens.edu/learning-society).

### *CPCG and the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library*

#### **Southern Secession, Tuesday April 12. Pease Auditorium at CPCC Central Campus**

Dr. John Smith of UNC Charlotte will present two lectures.

9:30 – 10:45 am: “Why Southerners Seceded from the Union in 1860-1861

6:30 – 7:15 pm: Reception followed by

7:30 – 8:30 pm: “Secession in 1860-1861: Why it Matters Today”

### *64<sup>th</sup> Annual Georgetown Plantation Tours*

#### **Georgetown, SC, Friday and Saturday, March 25 & 26 from 9:30 am to 5 pm.**

The Prince George Winyah Episcopal Parish will sponsor a tour of pre-revolutionary and antebellum plantations and town houses in and around Georgetown. A different group of homes is on tour each day. Visitors are invited to tea each afternoon at the Winyah Indigo Society Hall, and baked goods, art, and books can be purchased in the Parish Hall.

Allow a full day for each day’s tour, and wear low heeled shoes for comfort and the protection of old floors.

Visitors are to provide their own transportation; due to low hanging branches, buses are not permitted.

Very few tickets are available on tour days. One-day tickets are \$35, and two-day tickets are \$60. Bag lunches can be ordered for \$5. Ticket orders must be postmarked by March 11, 2011. Make checks payable to “Plantation Tours”. Address ticket and lunch requests to: Mrs. Lee B. Jones, P.O. Box 1307, Georgetown, SC 29442. For more information email [per4y@aol.com](mailto:per4y@aol.com).

### *Matthews Historical Foundation*

#### **Six Mecklenburg Women of the 1800s. Tuesday, March 29, Reception at 6 pm, Program at 7. Matthews Women’s Club. 208 South Trade St.**

Not all 19<sup>th</sup> century women lived lives devoted solely to husbands, children, and homes. Local Historian Ann Williams will discuss six who were different; two were spinsters, only three had children, and one was a doctor. Violet Davidson and her daughter-in-law Peggy lived on rural plantations, Harriett Caldwell and her sister Sarah

Frew Davidson lived more urban lives, Annie Lowrie Alexander was the first female doctor in the South, and Isabella Torrance Reid was a spunky adventurous poor little rich girl.

Isabella is the subject of Ann's book *Your Affectionate Daughter, Isabella* based on an enormous collection of family papers. Ann is also co-editor of Sarah Davidson's Journal, *A Life in Antebellum Charlotte*, which presents a perfect snapshot of Charlotte in 1837. She will have books available for sale.

**Trains Running Through Charlotte. Tuesday, April 26, Reception at 6 pm, Program at 7. Matthews Train Depot. 210 Matthews Station Street.**

Walter Turner, historian at the North Carolina Transportation Museum, will present a PowerPoint program on the impact the rail system had in Charlotte; past, present, and future. He begins with the determination of Charlotte's civic leaders in the 1840s to connect the town to Charleston. The viewer will see the continuum of railroad development, including milestones and setbacks, that helped Charlotte become a major textile center. The first train rolled into Matthew in 1874. By the 1920s thirteen trains, passenger and freight, passed through Matthews daily. Business men from the community went to the depot at noon to get daily market news over the telegraph wires. Mr. Turner has recorded the states transportation history in articles and books.

*Historic Rosedale*

3427 N. Tryon Street, Charlotte, NC, 704 335 0325, <http://www.historicrosedale.org>

**Gleaned From Their Own Words. Saturday, March 26 at 11 am**

Ann Williams will present a program on learning and interpreting history from journals, letters, and other documents left by our ancestors. She will talk about Rosedale's Dr. David Caldwell whose business ledgers tell us much about the site's history, and his sister-in-law Sarah Davidson whose journal illuminates the village of Charlotte in 1837. Her presentation will feature the Torrance family of Hopewell who left extensive family records. These were the basis for her book, *Your Affectionate Daughter, Isabella*. She will read selections from the book illustrating her research.

Ann co-edited *A Life in Antebellum Charlotte, The Private Journal of Sarah F. Davidson, 1837*, and worked on the committee that transcribed and analyzed Dr. Caldwell's ledger books. She will have copies of her books available for sale.

**Easter Egg Hunt, Saturday, April 9 at 11 am**

Children of all ages will have lots of springtime fun as they search the garden and boxwood maze for the elusive Rosedale Easter Eggs and maybe even the Easter Bunny.

*Latta Plantation*

5225 Sample Road, Huntersville, NC, 704 875 2312, <http://www.lattaplantation.org>

**Art of the Blacksmith. Saturday, March 5 from 10 am to 5 pm, & Sunday March 6 from 1 to 4 pm**  
19<sup>th</sup> Century blacksmiths will be on the grounds demonstrating their craft.

**Backcountry Circuit Court. Saturday, March 19<sup>th</sup> from 10 am to 4 pm**

Relive our legal past! Throughout the day visitors can serve on the jury in the reenactment of three historic Mecklenburg County cases, and can observe an historic duel. Children can participate in a Kid's Court headed by the debate team from West Mecklenburg High School. Plantation tours and food vendors will also be available.

*President James K. Polk State Historic Site*

12031 Lancaster Hwy., Pineville, NC, 704 889 7145

[www.polk.nchistoricsites.org](http://www.polk.nchistoricsites.org)

**Henry Clay and James K. Polk: Political Rival, Saturday, March 12 at 10 am, free**

In the summer of 2010 the President James K. Polk State Historic Site saw the installation of a major exhibition featuring the relationship between Henry Clay and President James K. Polk. This lecture, presented by Dr. Dan Dupre, Associate Professor of History at UNCC, will expand on these men's lives and their relationship with one another.

*Rural Hill*

4431 Neck Road, Huntersville, NC, 704 875 3113, <http://www.ruralhill.net>

**Loch Norman Highland Games. Friday evening and all day Saturday and Sunday, April 16 and 17.**

Check [www.ruralhill.net](http://www.ruralhill.net) for schedule.

This annual event includes traditional Scottish competitions such as tossing the stone, heaving the sheaf and the Caber Toss (throwing a telephone pole for accuracy), plus children's games, meeting of the clans, piping and drumming, highland dancing, and so much more.

*Schiele Museum*

1500 E. Garrison Blvd., Gastonia, N.C. 704 866 6900 <https://www.schielemuseum.org>

**From Sheep to Shortgown, Sunday March 27 from 1 to 5 pm**

Each spring the sheep are sheared (given a haircut) at the Backcountry Farm; this keeps the sheep cool in the summer and the wool is made into cloth to keep the Pioneer family warm in the winter. Join us for this annual event as historical interpreters in 18th-century dress card and spin the freshly shorn wool into thread. Try your hand at shearing or the simple craft of weaving on a tapeloom. Discover the difference between a shortgown and a waist coat as youngsters "dress the part" of a backcountry child.

**Easter in the Carolina Backcountry, Sunday, April 17 from 1 to 5 pm.**

Celebrate Easter in the tradition of backcountry settlers! Try your hand at "egg picking!" with naturally dyed eggs or decorate your own egg with 18th century designs scratched with a pin. Search for the hidden nest of the "Ostr Hase" (Easter Hare) to learn if the children have been good or bad this year. Discover the significance of making waffles in the spring, and find out why the first spring greens were considered "tonics."

*Gaston County Museum*

131 West Main Street Dallas, NC. (704)922-7681, #2 [www.gastoncountymuseum.org](http://www.gastoncountymuseum.org)

**George Mifflin Dallas: American Statesman, Saturday, March 12 from 1 to 2 pm, Free**

Dallas served a long, illustrious career in service to the United States. The roles he played in American politics include Pennsylvania Senator, Special Envoy to Russia, and Vice President of the United States under President James K. Polk. His term of service was during a period in America's history when larger, louder personalities are better remembered.

**Tales Through Time: Storytelling. Saturday, April 2 from Noon to 3 pm, free**

This event features three distinguished storytellers:

**Orville Hicks** comes from a long line of Watauga County storytellers, and keeps the tradition of Jack Tales alive. These Appalachian stories with English and German roots feature Jack, the underdog, who always outwits his brothers.

**Chetter Galloway** began telling stories of African lore at Colonial Williamsburg. He honed his craft at East Tennessee State University's Master storytelling program. He has released several recordings of African stories.

**Chief Donald Rogers** tells traditional Catawba Indian stories and tales. He is Chief of the Catawba Nation who have been in South Carolina for several thousand years.

*Lower Providence Community House*

9734 Community House Road, across from Community House Middle School.

**Indentured Servitude. Sunday, March 27 at 3 pm.**

This is the first in a series of monthly lectures. Joe Griffin, a local historian, will deliver the talk. Admission is \$10, and refreshments will be served.

*Genealogical Seminar*

**Saturday, April 16 from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm.**

The seminar is sponsored by the Gaston Lincoln Genealogical Society, and the Lincoln County Historical Association. It will take place at the Lincoln Cultural Center, 403 East Main Street, Lincolnton, NC, and the cost is \$25 per person. Dr. Bruce Pruitt will present a program on "Confiscation and Sale of Loyalist Property. Brent Holcomb will present "An Overview of South Carolina Records" and "The Border Problem Between the Carolinas in the Colonial Period."

*Historic Brattensville*

1444 Brattonsville Rd., McConnells, SC, 803 684 2327

<http://www.chmuseums.org/ourmuseums/myco/index.htm>

**On the Lawn at Hightower Hall – Fundraiser, Saturday, April 2 from 11:30 am to 1 pm**

Enjoy an afternoon of food, drinks and music, plus a 9-hole disc golf course set up on the lawn at this family-friendly event. Advance tickets before March 20<sup>th</sup>: \$25 for CHM members; \$30 for non-members; \$5 for children ages 5-12 . Tickets after March 20th - \$35 for adults; \$5 for children ages 5-12

**Through the Looking Glass: The Brattons in Black and White, every Sunday in March at 1:30 and 2:4 pm.**

Step through the looking glass during this 45-minute tour and discover what the Brattons valued: freedom, work and home. Ponder what the world was like on the other side of a mirror's reflection as you learn how the Bratton slaves defined the same values.

**Living History Saturday: Funeral Customs, March 12 from 10 am to 4 pm.**

Death has always been a part of life, but the attitudes and customs surrounding it change throughout history. Come and find out about funeral biscuits, wakes, the significance of black fabric and more as we explore Victorian funeral customs through both the Bratton family and their slaves.



*Charlotte Folk Society*  
[www.folksociety.org](http://www.folksociety.org)

**March 11, 2011, Charlotte Folk Society Gathering Concert & Jams featuring Jonesalee & Friends performing songs in tribute to "Mother Maybelle" Carter, Great Aunt Stella Center, 926 Elizabeth Ave., 7:30 PM, free;** donations appreciated. Refreshments, song circle, slow & fast jams follow concert. Doors open 7 PM. Free parking. 704-563-7080; [www.folksociety.org](http://www.folksociety.org)

**April 8, 2011, Charlotte Folk Society Gathering Concert & Jams featuring "Celtic guitar god" Robin Bullock, Great Aunt Stella Center, 926 Elizabeth Ave., 7:30 PM, free;** donations appreciated. Refreshments, song circle, slow & fast jams follow concert. Doors open 7 PM. Free parking. 704-563-7080; [www.folksociety.org](http://www.folksociety.org)

*Andrew Jackson State Park*

196 Andrew Jackson Park Road, Lancaster, SC 803 285 3344  
[www.southcarolinaparks.com/park-finder/state-park/1797.aspx](http://www.southcarolinaparks.com/park-finder/state-park/1797.aspx)

**Andrew Jackson Birthday Celebration, Saturday, March 19 from 10 am to 4 pm**

Come out to celebrate the birthday of the Seventh President of the United States at his boyhood homeplace. Join us for a day of living history demonstrations to see what the Carolina Backcountry was like in Jackson's time. See traditional crafters at work. Listen to historians discuss the legacy of Andrew Jackson. Enjoy the beauty of the park as history comes to life before your eyes.

*Fort Dobbs State Historic Site*

438 Fort Dobbs Road, Statesville, NC 704 873 5882  
<http://www.fortdobbs.org>

**War for Empire: 1761, Saturday and Sunday, April 9 and 10 from 10 am to 4 pm, Free**

By 1761, all-out war had raged between the English and their former allies the Cherokee for more than a year. As blood continued to be shed along the colonial frontier, two massive British armies of regulars and provincials moved against the Cherokee's homeland from both South Carolina and Virginia, causing destruction and starvation that would finally lead to a renewed peace. Join hundreds of soldiers, American Indians, and civilians from the 18th Century as we look at this crucial time in our colony's history.

*Kings Mountain National Military Park*

SC Hwy 216. I-85, Exit 2 in North Carolina. Follow the signs. 864-936-7921  
<http://www.nps.gov/kimo>

**18th Century Trade and Craft Fair, Saturday, April 30 and Sunday, May 1 from 9 am to 5 pm**

Artisans and crafter's will demonstrate a variety of trades and crafts such as blacksmithing, woodworking, joinery and carpentry, weaving, spinning and more. Learn about 18th century herbs and medicine and play 18th century games.

*Cowpens National Battlefield*

I-85 South Carolina Exit 83, follow signs, 864-461-2828  
[www.nps.gov/cowp](http://www.nps.gov/cowp)

**Artillery Firing Demonstration, Saturday, April 23 from 10 am to 3:30 pm**

Grasshopper cannon firing demonstration.

**Family Activities at the Scruggs House, Sundays, March 27 and April 24**

MHA Docents  
Jim and Ann Williams  
1601 South Wendover Road  
Charlotte, NC 28211