

From the Queen...

At our General Meeting on October 5th our membership voted unanimously to accept the slate presented the previous month by the Nominating Committee. Barbara Jackson will be our new Queen. I know that you will give her the love and support that you have shown me! Wanda Hubicki will be our new Vice Chairman and will continue the excellent programs to which we are accustomed. Continuing to serve on the Executive Board are Valerie Jones, Treasurer; Carolyn Dilda, Hospitality; and Camille Smith, Newsletter Editor.

Our standing committees are in good hands. Please continue to take an active part because these are US! In the Committees and at the Historic Sites that we serve is where our work is done, and without either of them we would be just another social club.

Does it sound as if I am saying "Goodbye?" Not exactly! We will spend the last two months of this year turning over the reins to the new Board members. Our December Board meeting will be a joint one and we will be sure our replacements know what is expected of them and how much fun they are going to have in their new jobs.

Be sure to do two things on November 2nd: vote and come to Rosedale for our General Meeting. You can expect another outstanding program. And on December 7th we will have our Christmas Tea. I am hoping to see each of you!

Sincerely,
Rachel

Program Information

Lisa Tappy

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

November 2

Have you ever looked at a flag and wondered about the evolution of its design? Many European nations fly flags with long histories, flags which began with symbols of heraldry. But do you know the history of Old Glory, the flag of the United States of America? Did the idea for the stars and stripes come from the imagination of Betsy Ross or George Washington, or did it, like European flags, evolve from earlier flags that had symbols of saints or kings? We will enter the world of vexillology as Camille Smith talks to us about the history of flags in America.

December 7

We will meet for our traditional holiday tea at Historic Rosedale. There will be a short business meeting, but the real business will be a time of fellowship and enjoying the wonderful tea food that we have each year. You are encouraged to bring one finger food to share that represents a type of food that would be served with tea, but if that is too complicated or too daunting, just bring a bowl of nuts, candy, or a platter of cookies, (whatever suits you). You are also encouraged to wear holiday attire, jewelry, or just a red bow in your hair. This is always a festive event, so "glam" it up. If you would like to volunteer to help with the set up or in another area, please call Lisa Tappy or Carolyn Dilda. More details will be given at the November meeting. We will see you then!

January 4

At our January meeting we will be installing our new officers for the coming two years. Please make every effort to attend this important occasion in the life of our Committee. We need to assure our new board of our support by our presence at that meeting. Remember it is on January 4th, a Tuesday, as always, at Historic Rosedale.



Mariruth Leftwich

Vice President of Education and Programs, Charlotte Museum of History and Hezekiah Alexander Homesite

Editor's Note: In preparation for the upcoming exhibit, Solving the Rock House Mysteries, the Charlotte Museum of History staff discovered new information that changes or does not support facts that have been incorporated in tours of the Homesite for decades. The Hezekiah Alexander Docents are now receiving this new information and are discussing ways to interpret it for visitors. The following article addresses the predicament museums face with the discovery of such information.

I recently returned from my family's annual trip to England, which is always filled with wonderful museum-going experiences. This fall we spent time in "Shakespeare Country." Millions of visitors each year flock to this part of England to visit the many sites associated with the life of William Shakespeare; therefore virtually every site has found a connection, tenuous as it may be, to the great playwright.

After a day of navigating locks along the canal, we decided to spend the night in the small town of Wilmcote, and set off to find the town's most notable historic site, Mary Arden's House. Mary Arden was Shakespeare's mother and for that reason her home place was preserved in 1930 by the Shakespeare Birthplace trust.

My family set out to the first historic house on the map, which was a large Tudor style farm house with wonderful timber frame construction. Greeted by a docent, we were taken on a tour of the 1569 home which was referred to as the Palmer farm. The interior of the home was decorated with original Tudor furniture and many intriguing objects that told the story of the farm and its owners. I was mortified when the docent offered to let us sit on a 450 year settle!

At the end of our tour, we were told to exit the back door and proceed down the garden path to Mary Arden's house. The exterior of the home was covered in brick, which disguised its true age. We were again greeted and told that we were about to enter the home of Mary Arden, Shakespeare's mother (the Shakespeare reminder is crucial at these sites.) We entered the house through a low door and as I stepped inside I was completely dumbfounded by what I saw. We had just walked into an Edwardian (early 20th century) living room! Mary Arden lived in this house as a young girl in the 1540's – how could they possibly have had a stove? Throughout the tour the docent talked about what it would have been like when Mary Arden lived there, even though the entire house is furnished with late 19th and early 20th century pieces. At the conclusion of the tour I had to ask why it was that Mary Arden's house was not interpreted as a Tudor home. I found the explanation fascinating.

There were two neighboring farms in Wilmcote, one belonging to the Palmer family and one belonging to the Ardens. An 18th century print and oral tradition identified the timber frame home as the Arden farm, and so when Shakespeare Birthplace trust decided to purchase the home in 1930, they did so believing it was the Arden's. To avoid having a residential development built next to them in the 1960s they also purchased the brick covered farmhouse on the adjoining property, which was commonly called the Glebe Farm. In 2000 new evidence was discovered which proved that the Arden home was actually the Glebe Farm, as dating of wood samples from both buildings indicated that the timber frame was constructed after Mary married John Shakespeare and moved to Stratford-on-Avon. So, for thirty years they had interpreted the real Mary Arden house as an Edwardian farm house, thinking it was an ancillary structure and a convenient place to house a collection that was donated.

So, the obvious question – why after almost five years is this still an Edwardian home when they know it is the true Arden residence? The answer I received was that they had always done it that way and it was too hard to change. This comment resonated with me, prompting me to write this article, because it reminded me of the new information we have uncovered during *Solving the Rock House Mysteries* exhibit preparation. I have struggled with how we should change the interpretation of our site based on this new information. The easy answer would be not to change the way we give tours or how we portray the property, but this is a true disservice to our public. I would hate to see this wonderful site go the way of the Mary Arden House, whose true history remains covered by Edwardian household items.



Rev. Jeff Lowrance

Rev. Jeff Lowrance of Hopewell Presbyterian Church has been diagnosed with colon cancer that has spread to his liver and lungs. The initial diagnosis is that it is treatable. He is not yet scheduled for surgery. Please keep Rev. Lowrance in your thoughts and prayers. Cards can be sent to: Rev. Jeff Lowrance, Hopewell Presbyterian Church, 10500 Beatties Ford Road, Huntersville, North Carolina 28078.

Salute to Veterans at the Mint Hill Country Doctor's Museum

Saturday, November 12, 2004, 10am - 5pm and Sunday, November 13, 2004 from 2pm - 5pm

Suzanne McDonald, Administrative Director
Mint Hill Historical Society

The Mint Hill Historical Society invites you to visit this annual event which honors all United States Veterans. Re-enactors from different units will be on site portraying the soldier's home and camp life. Military memorabilia will be on display along with displays by the DAR. Outdoor cooking, war bandage rolling, a special flag dedication ceremony and other activities will take place throughout the weekend. On Sunday at 2:30 pm, Margaret Bigger, editor of the book, *World War II - Hometown and Home Front Heroes*, will visit the museum and speak about her collection of stories from Carolinas' Veterans. Among the many stories in her book are those from our own hometown heroes, Ralph Ross, Earl Williams and Fred Agner who will be present.

This event is sponsored by the Mint Hill Historical Society.
PO Box 23203, 7601 Matthews-Mint Hill Rd,
Mint Hill, NC 28227
704-573-0726
historical@bellsouth.net
www.minthillhistory.com

In addition to the "Heroes of the Past," the Museum will celebrate its annual "Old Fashioned Country Christmas" in December. Also, the Ashcraft school restoration project is underway and it is expected to open sometime in the spring.

Colonial Dancers

Nancy Follette

The Colonial Dancers will be meeting the 1st and 2nd Mondays in November (a change from our normal routine) at the Charlotte Museum of History. We will meet on Monday, November 1 from 7:00pm-9:00pm and on Monday, November 8 from 7:00pm-9:00pm. We have had several new members join us...we would love for you to be one of them! Now is a great time to "fall into line." In December, the current plan is to meet on our regular schedule...the 1st and 3rd Mondays of the month. Please call Nancy Follette @ 704-845-1252 if you would like more details.

MHA Docents Book Club Review

Brave Enemies, A Novel of the American Revolution

by Robert Morgan

Discussed September 7, 2004

Rachel Abernathy

If it is required that an author provoke emotions in his reader, Mr. Morgan's novel is a success. His heroine, Josie/Joseph, evokes sympathy, anxiety, and tenderness. From a situation of abuse (on the family farm in North Mecklenburg) she murders her step-father, steals his clothes, and runs away in the guise of a boy. One can almost feel the coldness of the winter weather as she travels west of the Catawba River. Her adventures (a few of many) include meeting her husband-to-be, surviving the elements, and enlisting in the rebel militia. The climax of the story is the Battle of Cowpens in South Carolina. Mr. Morgan makes Josie's participation in the battle very real and her fear is palpable. This is an action novel and you will not be bored. There is almost too much adventure! As Docents you should enjoy the well-researched "lifestyles" of the people of this area and get a glimpse of the chaotic times during our war for freedom. There are some things that I (and the Book Club) questioned. An example is the use of a Christmas tree and decorations at that time. Nevertheless, I gained a new appreciation of what our ancestors endured and a respect for their survival in these turbulent times. General Daniel Morgan is my newest hero! I recommend this novel – remember it is a novel – and I believe that if you read this novel, you will gain a new perspective of Revolutionary times.

We had an interesting discussion of Cokie Roberts' *Founding Mothers* at our regular Book Club meeting (following the General Meeting). We decided that one session was not enough time to devote to this interesting book. Everyone should read this one!

Here's the schedule: In November we will continue with *Founding Mothers*; we will not meet in December. In January, 2005, we will begin a discussion of the "Seven Sisters," that is, we will read and discuss church history books of the first seven churches in Mecklenburg County which were published by the churches. From our own Docent library we have copies of several histories and others are available from the Public Library. Check with me if you have questions. The development of the Presbyterian Church in Mecklenburg County has been one of the items on our list of "things-we-want-to-know-more-about" for a while now and I think it will be a good study to start us off in '05.

Join us even if you haven't read the material!

More from Abigail Adams

From *Founding Mothers* by Cokie Roberts:

"On February 9, 1797, the electoral tally was announced, and it was a 'narrow squeak,' but for [Adams being elected as] president, not vice president. . . . That day the new president-elect wrote his wife: 'The die is cast and you must prepare yourself for honorable trials.' Among her trials – trying to keep her mouth shut. Of course, Abigail Adams would be unsuccessful in that effort."

"She [Abigail] was worried that she wouldn't be able to keep her mouth shut: 'I have been so used to a freedom of sentiment that I know not how to . . . look at every word before I utter it, and to impose a silence upon myself, when I long to talk.' His [John's] reply: 'A woman *can* be silent when she will.'"

*A Chronology of African-American Historical Events
in North Carolina, Mecklenburg County, and the City of Charlotte*

Juan Williams

©Queen City Tourssm

- 1526 – First slaves brought to North Carolina
- 1739 – First plantations started in Wilmington, N.C.
- 1764 – Slavery introduced in Mecklenburg County (Charlotte)
- 1787 – Three-fifths rule abandoned
- 1790 – North Carolina slave population reaches 25.5% (100,572)
- 1835 – Free Blacks and Indians excluded from voting
- 1860 – North Carolina Slave population reaches 33% (331,059)
- 1864 – Lincoln wins re-election, appoints Andrew Johnson (liberal politician from Raleigh, NC) as Vice-President. Johnson appoints William Holden (liberal politician) as Governor of North Carolina.
- 1865 – Lincoln assassinated after 13th amendment passed. 350,000 (54% of total population) slaves freed in North Carolina.
- 1866 – All southern states adopt Black Code (defined rights of freedom for Blacks)
- 1867 – Charlotte Black registered voters outnumber white voters 726 to 566 (73%).
- 1868 – Blacks voted for the first time in Charlotte. KKK arrives in North Carolina from Tennessee.
- 1868 - 1899 – 127 N.C. Black legislators elected.
- 1869 – Voting districts set up by Wards. Public Schools Law set up to separate public schools based on race. Republicans win 98% of N.C. government offices.
- 1870 – U.S. Congress passes 15th amendment giving Blacks the right to vote. Whites want Governor William Holden out of office.
- 1870-1920 – Golden years for Black businesses in Charlotte.
- 1875 1901 – Four Blacks elected to U.S. House of Representatives.
- 1877 – Fayetteville Colored Normal School (Fayetteville State University) established.
- 1880 – Black population in Charlotte reaches 57%.
- 1893 – 93.4% of Charlotte Blacks employed in domestic and personal service jobs.
- 1895 – Fusionists (Republicans and Populists/farmers) gain control of N.C. General Assembly. Some 300 Black magistrates appointed.
- 1897 – First Black elected as Governor of North Carolina. Daniel L. Russell, Republican from Brunswick County, N.C. State General Assembly amends state constitution to require every voter to be able to read and/or write any part of the constitution. 47.6% of North Carolina Blacks and 33% of whites were illiterate. Illiterate Whites allowed to vote because their Grandfather voted.

(Continued on page 6)



*A Chronology of African-American Historical Events
in North Carolina, Mecklenburg County, and the City of Charlotte*

(Continued from page 5)

- 1898 – Red Shirt campaign begins in Wilmington, N.C. Blacks intimidated from voting.
- 1900 – Jim Crow laws introduced in North Carolina.
- 1900-1918 – Black politicians eliminated from local, state, and federal offices.
- 1915 – Colored Charlotte published. First local Black business directory.
- Early 1920s – KKK active again after President Warren G. Hardin starts “Return to Normalcy” campaign.
- 1938 – First Black lawyer in Charlotte. J.T. Sanders.
- 1941 – First Black Police Officers hired in Charlotte.
- 1954 – North Carolina disagrees with Brown vs. Topeka decision.
- 1957 – Dorothy Counts-Scoggins integrates Hardin High School.
- Late 1950s – Federal Judge James McMillan orders Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education to desegregate public schools. Receives death threats.
- 1960 – Charlie Sifford (Mecklenburg County native) becomes first Black to play on the PGA (Professional Golf Association) Tour.
- 1960-1964 – Civil Rights Acts enacted. Greensboro lunch counter sit-in (at Woolwort’s) gets national attention.
- 1965 – Harvey Boyd, a Black man, designs official county seal.
- Mid 1960s – Hyde Park becomes first suburb designed by Blacks, for Blacks.
- 1968 – Dr. Reginald Hawkins becomes first Black to run for Governor of North Carolina in the 20th century. Henry Fry (Greensboro) is first Black elected to N.C. Genreal Assembly in the 20th century.
- 1983 – Harvey Gantt becomes first Black Mayor of Charlotte.
- 1992 – Eva Clayton and Melvin Watt become first Blacks elected to U.S. House of Representatives, from North Carolina, in the 20th century.
- 1998 – Mel Watt becomes first Black elected, to any political office, in a predominantly white district.
- 1999 – Federal Judge Robert Potter ends race-based pupil assignments in Mecklenburg County.
- 2000 – The Circuit Court of Appeals for North Carolina over turned Judge Potter’s ruling to end race-based pupil assignments in Mecklenburg County, citing that the system was not adequately integrated.

Guides Needed for Black Heritage Tour

Queen City Tours will be giving its annual Charlotte Black Heritagesm and Pilgrimage in February 2005 and is in need of additional guides. If you are available and interested in participating in this event, please contact Juan Williams at 704-566-0104 or e-mail juan@queencitytours.com.



Saturday, November 20 – Williamsburg Style Decorating Workshop

9:30 am to 12:00 noon – You can decorate your house with Williamsburg style decorations. The custom of fastening fruits and dried flowers to wreaths, swags, and garlands traces its roots to the Colonial revival, in the restoration village of Williamsburg. In the 1930's, simple greenery, which may have been used in early years, was enhanced with fruit, borrowed from interior decoration, to brighten the colonial village for the touring public. Williamsburg Style decorating had begun. The use of natural materials, which would have been available to our ancestors, appeals to many historic sites searching for a way to decorate and maintain some historic credibility during the holiday season.

If you'd like to learn the basic skills necessary for decorating your own home in the Williamsburg style, join us at Rosedale for a decorating workshop. You will assemble an "S" shaped table arrangement to take home, plus receive instructions and view demonstrations for making several other types of garland, wreaths and arrangements. The cost is \$45 for members; \$55 for non-members. Reservations are required!

December 11-12 – Candlelight Christmas Tours

5:30 pm to 8:00 pm – Want a break from the hustle and bustle of the Christmas Season? Step back to a time when Christmas was a peaceful time of the year. Tour Historic Rosedale Plantation and view wonderfully decorated rooms in the glow of candlelight, enjoy delightful refreshments, and listen to period music. See how an American Christmas began.

Tickets are \$6 for adults, \$4 for seniors/students, 8 and under free when accompanied by a paid adult. A special family ticket of \$15 is available. Reduced tickets for members of Historic Rosedale are available. Call for more information 704-335-0325.

The Snobbery of Chronology

Excerpt from *The Year 1000*

Robert Lacey and Danny Danziger

What C.S. Lewis called the "snobbery of chronology" encourages us to presume that just because we happen to have lived after our ancestors and can read books which give us some account of what happened to them, we must also know better than them. We certainly have more facts at our disposal. We have more wealth, both personal and national, better technology, and infinitely more skilful ways of preserving and extending our lives. But whether we today display more wisdom or common humanity is an open question, and when we look back to discover how people coped with the daily difficulties of existence a thousand years ago [or 100 years ago or 250 years ago], we might also consider whether, in all our sophistication, we could meet the challenges of their world with the same fortitude, good humour, and philosophy.

Scots-Irish Tour in 2005

At the request of some of you interested in the history tour to the Scottish Lowlands and Northern Ireland, the trip has been rescheduled to October 2005. Therefore, more detailed information will be provided beginning in the January/February issue of *The Dandelion*. There will also be a PowerPoint presentation available. Dates and locations for this presentation will be published. If you have any questions or suggestions, call Camille Smith at 704-334-7620.

*President James Polk's Birthday Celebration
Held at Family Home Site near Charlotte!*

Carolyn Dilda

Two hundred nine candles will be on the cake at the James K. Polk Memorial State Historic Site in Pineville, Saturday, November 6, 2004, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at a living history program entitled *President Polk Birthday Celebration!* The nation's 11th president, James Knox Polk was born on a small farm near modern Pineville in Mecklenburg County Nov. 2, 1795. The living history program and featured costumed interpreters will time-travel visitors back to that date and show what life was like in Mecklenburg County over 200 years ago! The program is free but donations will be accepted.

Visitors will see living history vignettes featuring daily life as the traveling "peddler" comes to the farm to sell his wares, exchange local gossip and talk with visitors. They will also be able to purchase trinkets from the peddler and hear about how slaves lived in North Carolina in the early 19th century. Visitors will be able to see farm animals, historic cooking demonstrations and participate in hands-on activities including children's games and more!

Come celebrate the 11th president's birthday at Mecklenburg County's only presidential birthplace. The James K. Polk Memorial is located approximately 1½ miles south of Pineville off exit 65 B, I-485, at 308 South Polk Street in Pineville, North Carolina. This program is part of the Archives & History Centennial Celebration. For further information, please contact Carolyn Dilda at 704-889-7145, e-mail at polkmemorial@dasia.net or check out the website at www.polk.nchistoricsites.org.

Christmas at Reed Gold Mine

Reed Gold Mine will host its annual Christmas event on Saturday, December 4th from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.. We invite all MHA Docents to come and enjoy some cider, punch and cookies, plus musical entertainment with us. Anyone wanting to do a demonstration, please contact Susan Smith at 704-721-4653.

Reed Gold Mine has had several staff changes over the past few months. Bob Remsburg has returned to the site after being gone for five years. He now serves as the site manager. Jennifer Furr, Reed's assistant manager since 1999, has left to be in charge of Historic Wilkes, Inc. Rebecca Lewis is now the Office Assistant and comes to Reed after being the editor of the *Tar Heel Junior Historian* at the NC Museum of History. Norman Long, Susan Smith, Daniel Blakemore and Lee Garner round out the remaining staff. We look forward to our continued positive relationship with the MHA Docents and thank you for all your efforts to bring history alive for students and visitors throughout the region.

MHA Dues

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

Rachel Eldridge

We're Still Here, Native Americans in the South

Photographs by Carolyn DeMeritt; Text by Frye Gaillard

September 10, 2004 – February 13, 2005

The exhibit will consist of approximately 50 large black and white images of Southern Native Americans taken by Carolyn DeMeritt, award-winning Charlotte photographer. DeMeritt's photos first appeared in the book she and Frye Gaillard created, *As Long As the Waters Flow*. The show includes Cherokees, Creeks, Choctaws, Chickasaws, Seminoles, Catawbas, Lumbees and others. The exhibit will focus on contemporary issues which Native Americans face. Artifacts include Gilbert Blue's Headdress, pots, baskets, dolls and commercial tourist objects.

Living Traditions: Folk Arts of the American South

September 10, 2004 – January 10, 2005.

The exhibit showcases traditional folk arts and folk life from the Mississippi Delta to the low country of South Carolina, from the black belt of Alabama to the Appalachian Mountains. Nine award-winning master artists are featured along with examples of their work. Artifacts include walking sticks, white oak baskets, decorative ironwork, etc.

Solving the Rock House Mysteries

Candice Moffitt

Exhibit Opening: Saturday, November 20, 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

The new "Rock House" exhibit will open Saturday, November 20th. This new exhibit invites you to assume the role of "history detective" to learn how to solve the mysteries of the past. Solving the Rock House Mysteries illustrates the many different ways to understand what happened in the past, how people lived, and what structures looked like. In this exhibit, you discover what some of those sources are and how the clues they produce have been used to solve some of the Rock House mysteries. No reservations required, regular Museum admission.

(See related article on page 2)

Other Events at the Museum in 2004:

November

Saturday, November 13, 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm – American Indian Traditions

December

Saturday, December 11, 11:00 am – 4:00 pm

Celebrate the rich Celtic heritage of this region at this annual festival! Enjoy traditional Irish and Scottish dance, bagpipes, contemporary Celtic music, and more. Young people will enjoy Celtic craft making in the Hands-on-History Room. Local vendors will be on hand selling traditional jewelry, clothing, food, and more! No reservations required. Free with regular Museum admission.