

MHA NEWS



Dinner Meeting

Monday, March 6, 2005

6:30 pm. Dinner; program following at 7:15 pm

Fellowship Hall

At Trinity Presbyterian Church

3115 Providence Road

Dinner Program Topic will be:

“Preservation of Elizabeth Lawrence’s House and Garden”

As Chairman of the Steering Committee of the Friends of Elizabeth Lawrence, Mary Davis Smart will speak about Elizabeth Lawrence and the Steering Committee’s efforts to preserve her house and garden. Elizabeth Lawrence was a well-known author of gardening books as well as articles for garden magazines, and journals. She was also our local newspaper columnist on gardening. Her garden on Ridgewood Avenue has been open to the public several times in recent years courtesy of its present owner.

Mary Davis McLendon Smart is a native of Greensboro, NC. After graduating from Chapel Hill with a degree in education, she taught for over a decade be-

fore moving to Charlotte to marry her husband, Skipper Smart. They have three children. Her interest in teaching local history began in Greensboro where she began writing interpretive educational programs for Greensboro Preservation Society. After her move to Charlotte, she worked for Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools in partnership with the Landmarks Commission. As a volunteer she has helped to write programs for the Hugh Torance House and Store, Rosedale and Wing Haven. She is a former board member of the Levine Museum of the New South, Wing Haven, Youth Homes, Child Care Resources, and the Elizabeth Community Association. She is a former Senior Warden of Christ Episcopal Church. Mary Davis presently serves on Foundation

Board of Preservation NC in Raleigh. It was in that role that she was approached by Lindie Wilson, the present owner, The Garden Conservancy and Wing Haven regarding the preservation of the Elizabeth Lawrence House and Garden on Ridgewood Ave.

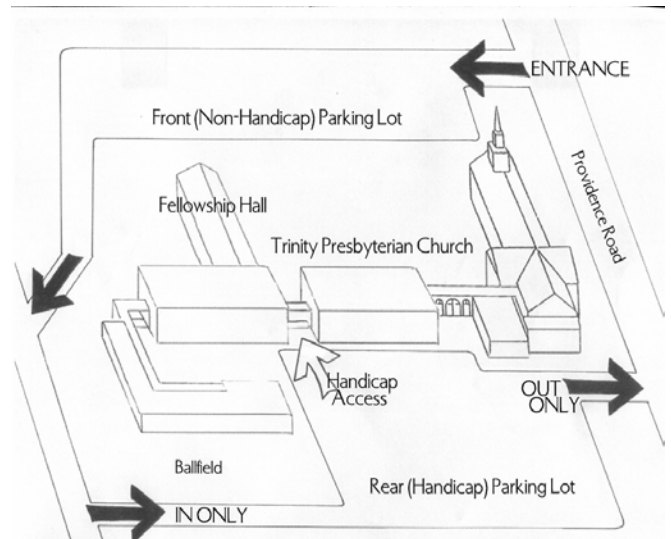
Reservation Form to be returned by Wednesday, March 1, 2006.

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**The MHA meets in Trinity Presbyterian Church’s Fellowship Hall.
3115 Providence Road**



Remarks from the President...



Spring is almost here after a very mild winter! We are so very fortunate. And with the Spring we have another one of Kay Majeski's great programs. It will feature

Mary Davis Smart speaking on the preservation of Elizabeth Lawrence's house and garden.

May 20th will be on a Saturday this year. You will receive notice of when we will celebrate the event in the next Newsletter! The Captain James Jack bronze project is moving forward with site design and marketing materials underway. The statue would be located at the intersection of Kings Drive and Fourth Street across the street from the new Central Piedmont Performing Arts Center and across

from the Thompson Orphanage Chapel (i.e. the old Norris Auto location). The billboard will be removed from the Greenway so that a view of Charlotte will appear as a backdrop. More on this in the next newsletter.

The Docents are in the process of lining up a unique program for May 21 at Hopewell Presbyterian Church. It will feature an interpretative presentation by D'oyle G. Moore of portions of the sermons of noted Revolutionary War era ministers including George Whitefield, Samuel Davies, and David Caldwell. From their pulpits, these men set fire and fanned the embers of freedom into a great holocaust of revolution. This should be a memorable event to which you are all invited! He will also be presenting for the May 20th Society.

Vignette, the quarterly newsletter from the Carolina Room of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Public Library is now available for on-line viewing. At the same site you can browse back copies and sign up for e-mail notification of Robinson-Spangler Carolina Room events, program offerings and news. To view the February 2006 Vignette, go to <http://www.cmstory.org/vignette/vignette.htm> . To browse back copies and sign up for e-mail notification, go to <http://www.cmstory.org/vignette/default.asp>

Membership. Membership. Membership. Please consider bringing your friends to our next meeting. We have great programs, incredible food, and stimulating fellowship among people who love history. And we are affordable! So make an effort to bring a friend.

From the Docent Committee

Goals set by the Docent Committee for 2006 are to inform the Charlotte-Mecklenburg community about the remarkable history of the region; to expand our training program into a broader educational program which will extend into the 21st century; to strengthen our ties with the historic sites and museums.

Through the media contacts established by Wanda Hubicki, the history community and the public have become more aware of docent functions. Attendance at our functions has increased. We hope that members of all age groups will become interested in serving as MHA Docents at the various historic sites in the region. Let us know the names of any of your friends and neighbors who wish to join us in telling the C-M story.

I am extremely proud to report that in 2005 the MHA Docents gave 3,782 1/2 hours of service to the public. The average number of hours per month was 315. The number of members of the public served was 14,486 with an average of 1,207 persons per month. Nell Coward records the hours each month for the docents.

The journal project of the MHA Docents, " A Life in Antebellum Charlotte: The Private Journal of Sarah F. Davidson, 1837," has been presented several times by Janet Dyer, Karen McConnell, and Ann Williams at book signings. The journal has sold well. Proceeds will be given quarterly to Historic Rosedale Plantation. A check for \$1000 was presented in December.

A field trip to the Great Wagon Road is planned for mid-March. There is a joint program planned with Hopewell Presbyterian Church featuring the Reverend D'oyle Moore who will perform morning worship service followed by lunch. At our monthly meetings during the spring we will have presentations by personnel from the Afro American Cultural Center and the Catawba Cultural Center. As you can see, we are striving to increase our knowledge and to share our knowledge.

Barbara McCray Jackson
Chairman

VISIT US
ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB AT
WWW.MECKDEC.ORG

Rural Hill Farm – Center of Scottish Heritage

By Tina Brown, Historical Consultant

For years many of us have looked for items that might have belonged to John Davidson and his descendants for display in our Davidson family history room. Only a few things have made their way back to Rural Hill Farm by way of descendants. Frances Joseph was gracious enough to return two of the chairs that had been saved from the 1886 fire in the mansion house.

We have borrowed several items of Davidson property for display that have been purchased from auctions along the way. And, of course we cherish the few items that were left on the farm when CVSS came to Rural Hill.

Now in the last few months two items of great interest have come to light. A local doctor has purchased a secretary which he has asked for my help verifying the provenance, which he hopes comes from

John Davidson. Okay, exciting but we won't be acquiring the secretary here at Rural Hill.

But the item that has made me tingle with anticipation as I have reviewed its history is a ca. 1800 Aaron Willard tall case clock. This clock is reported to have been purchased by Alexander Caldwell, grandson of John Davidson, when Major John's estate was settled. The clock has been in the hands of John and Violet Davidson's descendants ever since. Alexander Caldwell left the clock to his daughter Sallie Caldwell White who in turn left it to her cousin, Joseph MacLean.

Joseph MacLean married another Davidson cousin, Bessie Graham.

In October of 1919, Joseph MacLean wrote a letter to William A. Graham, his brother-in-law, telling him the history of the clock and asking that it remain in the family as long as was possible.

Until present time the clock has done just that. Now, the clock needs to find a new home. One of John and Violet's direct descendants has offered the clock for sale. She would like to see the clock returned to Mecklenburg County and obviously, one day, we would like an opportunity to see it here at Rural Hill.

However, funds will be needed to purchase it from the current owner and a secure place located to display the clock should it return to Mecklenburg County.

The CVSS will need to build a Cultural Center before we could hope to house such a valuable display but call the Rural Hill Farm office if you have ideas or suggestions about keeping this important family artifact in our area.

Gift Membership to MHA...

Consider giving a gift membership to family, friends and clients. It's a marvelous way to enjoy outstanding programs on Charlotte Mecklenburg history, dinner and fellowship. The proceeds benefit M.H.A. Checks may be made payable to "M.H.A." per the following table [right]. You may mail your check to:

M.H.A. Membership Chairman
P.O. Box 35032
Charlotte, NC 28235

You may also bring your check with you to the dinner program.

category	single	couple
senior citizen (over 65)	\$12.50	\$20.00
general	25.00	45.00
patron	50.00	90.00
life (single payment)	300.00	500.00
student	free	n/a

March 6 Dinner Meeting Reservation Form

**Mail to: Mecklenburg Historical Association
2401 Sharon Road
Charlotte, NC 28211**

Please make checks payable to Mecklenburg Historical Association
Questions? Please call Linda Dalton, 704.364.1618.

Enclosed: \$ _____ (total) for _____ seats (\$11 for Seniors)
\$ _____ (total) for _____ seats (\$13 for all others)

(Name Tag)

(Name Tag)

Reservations must be made by Wednesday, March 1, 2006.

Mark your calendars now for future meetings of the Mecklenburg Historical Association. The next meeting is scheduled for **May 22, 2006.**



"Preserving Mecklenburg's Heritage"

Post Office Box 35032
Charlotte, North Carolina 28235

ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB AT
WWW.MECKDEC.ORG
