

Dinner Meeting

Monday, March 25, 2013

Dinner at 6:30pm followed by our program at 7:15pm

Fellowship Hall,
Trinity Presbyterian Church
3115 Providence Road
Charlotte, NC 28211



Upcoming Dinner Program

Dr. Dan Patterson, Authority on Early Mecklenburg



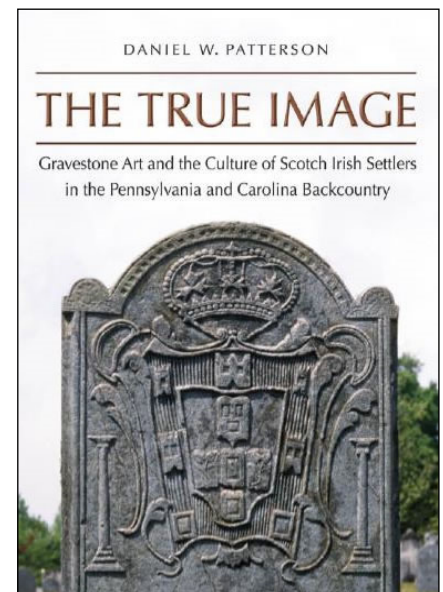
Dan Patterson, Professor Emeritus at UNC, will speak in Charlotte on Monday, March 25 and again on Sunday April 7th. Dr. Patterson is an expert on early folkways of the North Carolina backcountry with a specialty in the early tombstone carvers of Mecklenburg and surrounding Counties. His two presentations

will be quite different, with one concentrating on life in early Mecklenburg and the other on the tombstones carved by the Bigham families of the Steele Creek Community in Mecklenburg County. Both are free and well worth attending.

On Monday evening, March 25, Dr. Patterson will address the dinner meeting of the Mecklenburg Historical Association. His presentation will focus on life in old Mecklenburg as lived by the early Scotch Irish settlers such as the Bigham family who came down from Pennsylvania in the 1760s. The public is invited and you can enjoy dinner with the MHA or attend only Dr. Patterson's presentation. 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. There is a charge for dinner. To make dinner reservations, use the order form on page 3 of this newsletter.

Further information on Dr. Patterson can be found on page 2.

Dr. Patterson's photo is courtesy of Beverly B. Patterson.

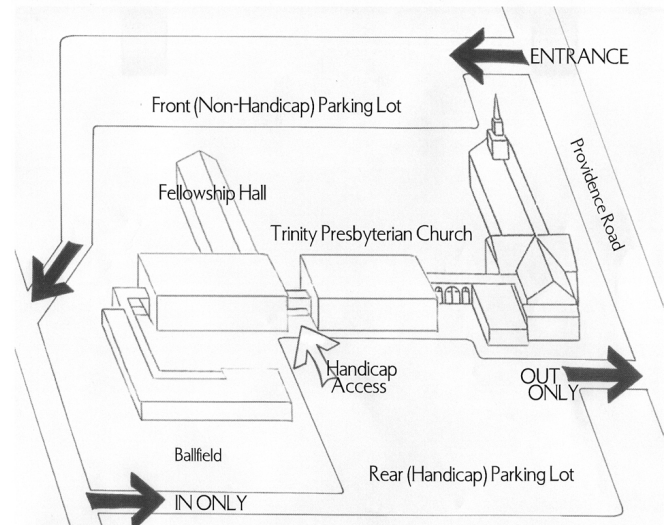


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**The MHA meets in Trinity Presbyterian Church's Fellowship Hall.
3115 Providence Road**



Remarks from the President

Having worked for more time than I ever dreamed possible in Settlers' Cemetery up-town, Hopewell Presbyterian's cemetery and the three Sugaw Creek Presbyterian cemeteries, I am personally very excited to welcome Dr. Dan Patterson to our March 25th dinner meeting. Can't wait to have him share the amazing stories taken from those tombstones.

I recently had a call from Mike Sullivan who has served on the Landmarks' Commission and has done research on those funny little square symbols we see everywhere now called QR Codes. You simply download an app to your smart phone so you can scan the code and a wealth of information appears. I don't believe the signage has been installed yet at Captain Jack's statue, but the plan is to have a QR Code symbol at the site for visitors to scan and read information about Captain Jack and his journey with the Meck Dec. Mike and I discussed the possibility of placing QR Codes at some of the Settlers' Cemetery graves as a way to inform the public about the prominent people buried there. Mike is gathering more information for us and we hope to come up with a plan to make this a reality for Settlers'. He produced and brought me a QR

Code for the MHA website, so I thought I would share it with you. Amazing technology!

For the last few months, I have been privileged (along with Jim Williams and Jane Estep from MHA) to work with the remaining staff at the Charlotte Museum of History to assist in placement of the thousands of artifacts that needed new homes. While we are all so very sad about this necessity, I want to reassure you that Leslie Kesler and the staff at the museum have orchestrated this placement with complete care, sensitivity and professionalism. They have done a superb job of matching appropriate artifacts to sites and museums throughout North and South Carolina.

Because of CMH's extensive collection of early quilts, Leslie even organized a quilt viewing day attended by the sites interested in the quilts including the North Carolina Museum of History, Rosedale and several others. We had the rare opportunity to actually spread out some of these quilts and view them. Mecklenburg County has a particular genre of chintz appliqué quilts that the MHA Catawba River Valley Decorative Arts Survey has documented. The group worked well together and we learned a great deal from the state Curator of Textiles and the Textile Conservator. I'm

comfortable with how "our" quilts are now shared among several sites.

On behalf of Rosedale and Torance (and Latta and Rural Hill), I have lobbied for both artifacts and museum support items like display cases and archival materials. Many of the sites that have shared in the generosity of the Charlotte Museum of History could never have afforded to purchase these artifacts or the other materials. While the sadness of the loss of this amazing collection in one place remains, the dozens of sites that benefited are now able to share their stories so much more effectively with the artifacts and other items they acquired. And remember, the Hezekiah Alexander Homesite is open for grounds tours and one Saturday a month for house tours with docents. I look forward to an enduring future for this wonderful site.

Linda Dalton
MHA President
leaseace@aol.com
704.661.8470



Dr. Daniel W. Patterson March 25 MHA Dinner Speaker

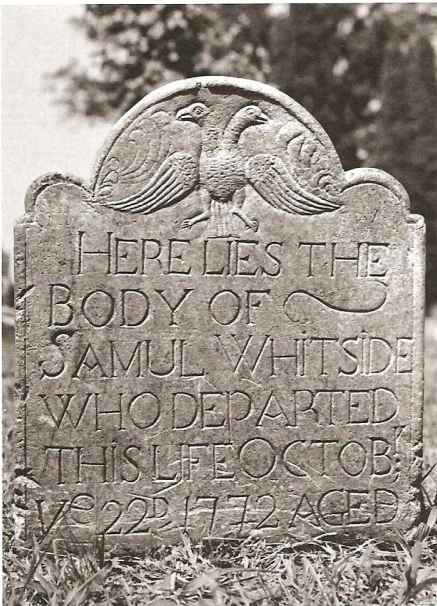


FIGURE 3.6. Samu(e)l Whiteside (1772) headstone, Steele Creek Presbyterian Church, Charlotte, N.C. Maker: William Bigham Sr.

Daniel W. Patterson is Kenan Professor Emeritus of English and Folklore at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. A lifelong student of early North Carolina life and folklore, he is the author or editor of nine books. His most recent book, *The True Image: Grave-stone Art and the Culture of Scotch Irish Settlers in the Pennsylvania and Carolina Back-country*, tells the story of the Bigham family of stonecutters in Pennsylvania and North Carolina from 1730 well into the 19th century. In it he gives a comprehensive history of the stone carvers and their work, illustrated with photographs of over 200 stones that were taken by Dr. Patterson over many years – it sometimes took hours to photograph one stone, getting the light just right to be able to read the inscription and see the intricate carvings. Many of the stones he studied can be seen today in various Mecklenburg County cemeteries.

Dr. Patterson was aided in his research by the vigorous efforts and encyclopedic knowledge of our own Linda Blackwelder, an expert on the history of that portion of Mecklenburg County known as the Steele Creek Community. He received help too from many other people in Mecklenburg and neighboring coun-

ties, from libraries here, and also from descendants of the Bighams and other Scotch Irish stone carvers in the piedmont of the two Carolinas.

Professor Patterson will return to Mecklenburg County on Sunday April 7 for a 2 pm presentation sponsored by the Steele Creek Historical and Genealogical Society. This presentation will focus on the craft of gravestone carvings as practiced by the extended Bigham family and especially on those stones that still exist in the graveyard of the Old Steele Creek Presbyterian Church. After his talk, Dr. Patterson will lead a walk through the graveyard to view the Bigham stones there. The meeting will be held at Old Steele Creek Presbyterian Church, 7407 Steele Creek Road, in southwest Charlotte.

The MHA will be selling Dr. Patterson's book at both events at a special event price of \$40, signed by the author. The regular retail price is \$49.95. All profit goes to the MHA. Please bring your checkbook or cash as we have no way to accept credit cards. If you plan to buy a book, you could send us an email (james.h.williams@mindspring.com) saying so, with no obligation to buy. That way we will have enough books on hand.

MHA Docent Programs

The March and April meetings of the MHA Docents will be held in the Fellowship Hall of Sugaw Creek Presbyterian Church, 101 Sugar Creek Road West. Refreshments at 9:30 am, business meeting at 10, program at 11. Visitors are always welcome.

Tuesday, March 5, 2013 Keeping Historic Sites Accessible – In Good times and Bad

In May 2012 the Charlotte Museum of History, confronted by financial challenges, was forced to suspend public access to the museum building and limit access to the Hezekiah Alexander Homesite. Presently, visitors are welcome to take self-guided tours of the Museum and Homesite grounds and they may take advantage of docent-led tours of the Homesite one Saturday each month.

In the past several years, North Carolina State Historic Sites have been impacted both by the general economic climate and budget cuts dictated by the General Assembly.

Please join us as we explore the challenges facing both private not-for-profit and publicly supported historic sites. Our speakers will be Kathy Ridge, Interim Director of the Charlotte Museum of History, and Bob Remsburg, Western Region Supervisor, Division of State Historic Sites and Properties for the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources.

Tuesday, April 2, 2013 Welcome Back, LATIBAH Collard Green Museum!



LATIBAH (Life and Times in Black American History) Collard Green Museum is the brainchild of its director T'Afo Feimster who will speak to us about the

rebirth of this wonderful museum. The logo of LATIBAH is a combination of an African Ashanti ceremonial symbol and a collard leaf to represent survival and strength of charac-

ter. The museum's exhibits include a powerful representation of the middle passage, a sharecropper's cabin with many of its accoutrements, and items from the civil rights struggle. The museum was once located in NoDa, however the building was inundated by flooding in September 2011. Fortunately nearly all of the exhibits were rescued. The building was declared uninhabitable, and the search was on for a new location. The docents had planned to visit LATIBAH that fall; we welcome this opportunity to hear about their progress.

After retiring from IBM T'Afo Feimster, a NC native and graduate of NC Central University, reinvented himself as a painter, wood-turner, sculptor, actor, and cultural educator. He is an excellent speaker with an unbounded passion for his project. He has secured space at 720 Tuckaseegee Road and hopes to open soon.

Membership Renewals

Have you renewed your membership for 2013? If you have not, or are joining for the first time, please fill in the form, make your check payable to Mecklenburg Historical Association, and mail to MHA, P.O. Box 35032, Charlotte, NC 28235. If your employer has a matching grant program or if you retired from such an organization, include the matching grant form with your check.

Membership form:

Name _____

Address _____

City, State and Zip _____

E-Mail Address _____

category	single	couple
senior citizen (over 60)	\$15.00	\$25.00
general	30.00	50.00
patron	60.00	100.00
life (single payment)	300.00	500.00
student	free	n/a

Please send my MHA Newsletter by:

☐ Email ☐ U.S. Mail ☐ Both

March 25, 2013 Dinner Meeting Reservation Form

Mail to: Mecklenburg Historical Association
c/o Jane Johnson, 210 Pineville Forest Drive, Pineville, NC 28134
or email: JJCNC@aol.com

Please make checks payable to Mecklenburg Historical Association.

Questions? Please email Jane Johnson (JJCNC@aol.com) or call her at 704-544-0695

Please mail your check one week before the dinner so we know how many meals we need.

Enclosed: \$_____ (total) for _____ seats (\$12 for Seniors)

\$_____ (total) for _____ seats (\$14 for all others)

Mecklenburg Sestercentennial

2013 is the 250th anniversary of the creation of Mecklenburg County – its Sestercentennial – and is being celebrated in the County all year long. Mecklenburg County was formed out of Anson County by a law passed in 1762 that was effective “from and after the first day of February” 1763. On April 19th the first session of the Mecklenburg Court was held. At that session the 16 men the Royal Governor had appointed to be Justices of the Peace took the oath of office and proceeded to elect the county Sheriff, Register of Deeds and other county officials. Thus began Mecklenburg County.

There is some confusion regarding the date we should celebrate as the anniversary of the county. In 1903 D. A. Tompkins, owner of The Charlotte Observer, wrote a history of Mecklenburg County in which he stated that the first county court session was held on February 26, 1763, that the Sheriff was Moses Alexander and the Register of Deeds was Robert Harris. Documentary evidence has been discovered recently that the Sheriff was actually Alexander Lewis and the Register of Deeds was George Alexander. And a long and diligent search of books and records has failed to find any mention of the date of February 26 until Tompkins put it in his book. My personal

preference is to celebrate April 19th – the date when the county government began to function – but we can each make up our own mind which date to celebrate.

Mecklenburg County plans to celebrate and commemorate the founding of the county all year long. The first such celebration was a rededication of the 1928 County Courthouse on West Trade Street on Tuesday, February 26, with cannon and musket fire, great shouts of Huzzah!, speeches, cake and punch. Other events will follow. A PBS special program on Mecklenburg throughout its 250 years is also being filmed at the CPCC studio in Charlotte.



"Preserving Mecklenburg's Heritage"

Post Office Box 35032
Charlotte, North Carolina 28235
Phone: 704-333-6422

VISIT US ONLINE
WWW.MECKDEC.ORG

The History Calendar & Site News

Historic Rosedale Cookbook

Historic Rosedale is planning to publish a cookbook to sell to visitors featuring recipes and the history of the site. They are beginning to collect recipes, and are especially interested in foods from the time period they interpret, the 1830s to the 1860s. This was a time when Victorian opulence was reflected in food and table décor, as well as architecture, furniture, and clothing. The book will be a real departure from the simpler fare that represents colonial and early American historic sites.

Rosedale is soliciting recipes for the book. They need not be for period dishes, modern food is fine. However if you send a heritage recipe add a note telling where the recipe came from and when it was popular. Send recipes to Sherry Griffin at groupstours@historicrosedale.org.

Hugh Torance House and Store Volunteer Training

Volunteers are needed to give tours of the Hugh Torance House and Store. A training session will be held at the site on March 30 at 1 pm for those who would like to help. The site has a long and impressive history, beginning with the 1779 settlement of Hugh Torance, an itinerant merchant and farmer. From 1805-25 Hugh and his son James had a mercantile store, and by the 1840s James owned the largest cotton plantation in Mecklenburg County. The family were good stewards of history and kept numerous records concerning nearly every aspect of their lives. The basic facts needed to give a tour are quite manageable, yet there are many interesting tales that can be worked into a tour for those who wish to. Docents will be provided with a training manual containing all of the information.

The Hugh Torance House and Store is located on Gilead Road near Huntersville, 2 miles west of I 77, exit 23. Tours are given from April through October on the first and third Sunday of each month. If you are interested in attending the March 30th training session contact Ann Williams at 704-365-2402 or ann.williams@mindspring.com.

James K. Polk's New Support Group Website

The President James K. Polk State Historic Site is pleased to announce the launch of our new support group website, www.presjkpolk.com. This website will

enable our on line visitors to access more information about the site, register for any of our upcoming programs and, best of all, become members of the museum simply by visiting this new portal. We are also pleased to announce that we have installed "QR" codes throughout the museum. You can scan these codes with your smart phone and it will link you to more information on a variety of topics. We hope to see you at the museum soon.
Scott Warren, Site Manager

University of SC, Lancaster Native American Studies Week Key-note Address—Bundy Auditorium

Andrew Jackson and Native American Removal, Thursday, March 28 at 7 pm. Professor Harry Watson, Distinguished Professor, UNC- Chapel Hill will deliver the keynote address. His research interests lie in United States history between the American Revolution and the Civil War with special attention to the antebellum South and Jacksonian America. His work explores the period's social, economic, and political changes, market development, and race and class relationships under slavery. He directed the UNC Center for the Study of the American South from 1999 until 2012.

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>

Historic Rosedale

3427 N. Tryon Street, Charlotte, NC, 704 335 0325, www.historicrosedale.org

Easter Egg Hunt, Saturday, March 23 at 11 am and 12 noon.

Explore our enchanting gardens and wander through our ancient boxwood maze as you and your child hunt for hand painted Easter eggs left by the Easter Bunny himself. \$6.00 per child. Each child is allowed one free adult admission. Additional adult admission is \$5.00 per person. Advance registration required. There will be two separate sessions for hunting. One will be at 11:00am and one at 12 noon.

American Girl Mini Camp, Thursday, April 4 – from 11 am to 1 pm

Spend Spring break living as your favorite American Girl and learn how children lived at Rosedale from colonial to mod-

ern times. Ages 6-13, \$25.00 per child, reservations required.

Latta Plantation

5225 Sample Road, Huntersville, NC, 704 875 2312, www.lattaplantation.org

Quilting Workshop, Saturday, March 9 from 10 am to 3 pm

Complete a simple quilted potholder. No prior sewing knowledge required. Supplies provided but please pack a brown bag lunch. Fee \$25 per person and limited to 10 participants.

Latta Celtic Festival, Saturday and Sunday, March 16 and 17 from 10am to 4 pm

Celebrate St. Patrick's Day and learn about Celtic people throughout history. Enjoy live music, Dancing and Celtic reenactors spanning from the Medieval Celts to WWII. Shop with Celtic Vendors, enjoy food from Appalachian Smoke, and grab a cold beer from The Olde Mecklenburg Brewery. On Saturday night from 6 to 9 there will be a Celtic Music Fundraiser with live music, food and beer, a raffle, and activities for children and adults. \$10 per person.

Easter Egg Hunt, Saturday, March 30.

Children ages 1-10 can hunt for toy and candy filled eggs, visit the farm animals, meet the Easter Bunny, and more. Registration opens March 1st.

Embroidery Workshop, Saturday. April 6 from 10am to 3pm

Complete a monogrammed handkerchief. NO prior sewing knowledge required. Supplies provided but please pack a brown bag lunch. Fee \$25 per person and limited to 10 participants. Pre-registration is required.

Civil War Reenactment, Saturday and Sunday, April 13 & 14 from 10am to 4pm

Watch the North and South battle it out across plantation grounds. Visitors can tour the circa 1800 Latta home, visit the soldier camps, shop with period sutlers, and see demonstrations. A battle will be at 2 pm each day.

Cooking With Sukey Workshop, Saturday April 20 from 10 am to 4 pm

Enjoy a delicious meal while you learn how to cook over the open-hearth from a true Master. Clarissa Clifton, author of One Hearth, One Pot will teach participants various cooking techniques and recipes. Pre-registration is required (limited availability). \$60 per person cost includes instruction and all workshops supplies.

The History Calendar—page 6

Family Farm Day, Saturday, April 27 from 10am to 4pm

Families with children of all ages can learn about 19th century farm life! Activities include animal presentations, farming demonstrations, crafts, and a kids' hands-on chore area where kids can milk the cow, churn butter, gather eggs and try the water bucket relay.

Hugh Torance House and Store
8231 Gilead Road, Huntersville, NC
www.torancehouseandstore.org

Grand Opening of the 2013 Season, Sunday, April 14 from 3 to 5 pm

The Board of the Hugh Torance House and Store invites you to attend our Opening Reception and Celebration. We will treat you to great munchies and wine, and you'll be able to learn a little about the Torance family and walk through the house. If you're not familiar with this small site with a huge history, (see below for a taste if it) or simply want to visit again, please join us. Bring guests if you like; we love to make new friends. The event is free, but donations are gratefully accepted. The site is on Gilead Road, two miles west of I 77, exit 23.

House Tours Resume Sunday, April 21 from 2 to 5 pm

The Hugh Torance House and Store is truly a Mecklenburg treasure. The log house section of the building was built as a residence about 1780. In 1805 the building was expanded to include a store which operated until 1825. As the Torance family obtained land and wealth it became a cotton plantation of 3,000 acres worked by over a hundred slaves. Extensive family history kept through the generations allows us to interpret nearly a century of Mecklenburg's rich mercantile and plantation history.

This season's tours begin on April 21st, and will continue on the 1st and 3rd Sundays through October. The site is located on Gilead Road, two miles west of I 77 exit 23.

Mint Hill Historical Society

The Carl J. McEwen Historical Village,
7601 Matthews-Mint Hill Rd.
704-573-0726 www.minthillhistory.com

Discover Mint Hill, Saturday, April 20 from 9 am to 3 pm

Get acquainted with the civic, culture, and history groups in the town of Mint Hill. Pan for gold and step into history at the Historic Village, take a tour of the town on a double-decker bus.

The Charlotte Museum of History
3500 Shamrock Drive, Charlotte, NC,

704 568 1774 www.charlottesmuseum.org

Historic House Tours, Saturday, April 6, from 1 to 5 pm

Costumed docents will give tours of the Hezekiah Alexander House, the springhouse, and the kitchen. There will be living history demonstrations and a hands-on table.

President James K. Polk State Historic Site

12031 Lancaster Hwy., Pineville, NC,
704 889 7145 polk.nchistoricsites.org

Photography and the White House, Exhibit Opening, April 27

This spring the President James K. Polk State Historic Site will focus on the history of White House photography during Polk's presidency. This fascinating exhibit will examine the role that this new technology played in the White House and in America during Polk's presidency and in the administrations of future Presidents. This exhibit will run through December 31. Admission: **FREE**

Rural Hill

4431 Neck Road, Huntersville, NC, 704 875 3113, www.ruralhill.net

Rural Hill Scottish Festival and Loch Norman Highland Games, Saturday and Sunday, April 21-22

Scottish heavy athletic competition, piping and drumming, highland dancing, Scottish country dancing, children's activities and an historic encampment. Festivities will begin with the Friday evening traditional "Call of the Clans." Friday and Saturday evenings will once again host Scottish country dancing at Hopewell Church. Saturday will offer the Professional Scottish Heavy Events plus the Saturday evening concert. For details and schedules, go to <http://ruralhillscottishfestivals.net>

Charlotte Folk Society

Great Aunt Stella Center,
926 Elizabeth Ave., Charlotte
www.folksociety.org

Gathering Concerts and Jams, 7:30 (doors open at 7); Free, Donations appreciated

March 8: Memorial Concert for Fiddler Joe Thompson, Mentor to the Carolina Chocolate Drops

April 12: Bluegrass meets Bolero

Duke Mansion

400 Hermitage Road, Charlotte,
704 714 4448 www.dukemansion.com

The Amazing Life of Doris Duke, Sunday April 7 at 3 pm. Free. Reservations required: email kellis@2tlwf.org or 704-714-4445

The only child of fantastically wealthy industrialist James B. Duke, little Doris Duke spent part of her early years in Charlotte's Duke Mansion. She grew up to be one of America's most influential cultural philanthropists, helping create the new field of historic preservation, document the decorative arts of the Muslim world, and much more. Sponsored by Levine Museum and the Duke Mansion.

Matthews Historical Foundation Speakers Series

Matthews History/NEW Matthews Heritage, Tuesday, March 26; Reception at 6:30pm, Program at 7 pm at the Matthews Chamber/Depot – 210 Matthews Station Street in Historic downtown Matthews.

Paula Lester and Leslie Kesler will speak about Matthews History and the new museum.

Book Talk and Signing, Tuesday, April 30; Reception at 6:30, Program at 7 pm. Matthews Library, Matthews Station Street in Historic downtown Matthews.

Michael Hardy will talk about his book, *Civil War – Charlotte the Last Capital of the Confederacy*.

Schiele Museum

1500 E. Garrison Blvd., Gastonia, N.C.
704 866 6900 www.schielemuseum.org

Easter in the Carolina Backcountry, Sunday, March 24 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). Discover why spring greens were considered "tonics."

Eastertide Traditions, Friday, March 29 at 10 am.

Learn about the legends and lore of Eastertide on the Carolina frontier. See eggs dyed with natural dyes; take home the recipes to try your hand at coloring eggs in 18th century fashion

Pioneers of the Piedmont, Tuesday, April 9 at 5 pm, Free

Discover life in the Carolina Backcountry in the late 1700's. Who were the Pioneers? Learn how these early settlers carved a life out of the wilderness – securing food, making clothing and creating shelter.