

Carolina Comments



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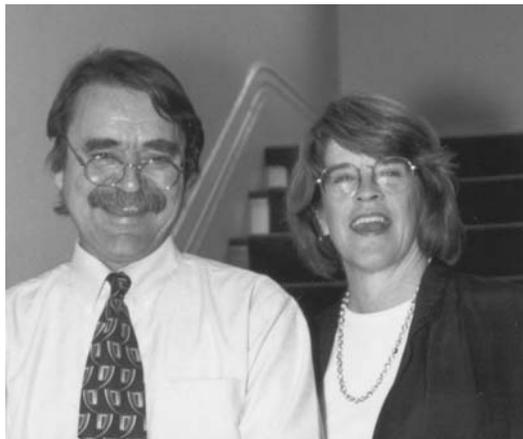
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Piedmont Architecture Guidebook Completes Statewide Series

The North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and the University of North Carolina (UNC) Press announced in May the publication of *A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina*, by Catherine W. Bishir and Michael T. Southern. The book is the third and final volume of a sweeping historical portrait that celebrates generations of human experience as mirrored in the historic architecture of one of the nation's oldest and most complex states. A brief ceremony, followed by a reception and book signing, was held at the State Capitol on May 29, with remarks by Dr. Jeffrey J. Crow, David Perry, assistant director and editor-in-chief of UNC Press, the authors, and others.

Together, the books present over 5,000 places, with 1,200 photographs, location maps of sites in all 100 counties and 51 towns and cities, and original regional maps showing historic patterns of transportation, settlement, and development. The full range of the state's architectural heritage is represented, from the simplest early houses to skyscrapers of the late twentieth century. Concise introductions to each region provide context to individual buildings and places. Thorough indexes facilitate quick reference to major historical themes, key examples of building types and styles, and the known works of architects and builders.



Michael T. Southern and Catherine W. Bisher, authors of the series of architectural guidebooks, were honored at a reception at the State Capitol on May 29.

The guides distill over three decades of the collective work of staff and associates of the SHPO. Catherine W. Bishir worked in several capacities for the SHPO between 1971 and 2001. She is currently adjunct professor in the

A Message from the Deputy Secretary

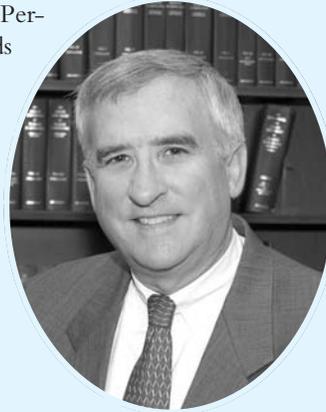
Consider the following scenario: A crisis erupts in the Persian Gulf. President Bush mobilizes hundreds of thousands of troops and conducts a successful war. Meanwhile, the United States economy struggles through a recession and seems unable to rebound quickly. State revenues decline, and the governor and General Assembly, faced with many difficult choices, are forced to eliminate services and cut budgets deeply.

One might assume that the scenario describes 2003. Actually, it applies also to 1991. Quite simply, the budget of the Office of Archives and History has been reduced every year since 1991 when the first Gulf War occurred. The heaviest cuts came last year when the program sustained 8 percent reductions and lost twenty-three vacant positions. At this writing the General Assembly has not resolved the differences between the House and Senate versions of the budget for the 2003–2005 biennium. Likely reductions will include sixteen vacant positions and further losses in operating funds. Since 1991 the Office of Archives and History has lost nearly one hundred positions and millions of dollars with which to preserve the state's documentary heritage in the state archives, state records management, and historical publications programs, to operate state historic sites and state history museums, and to carry on mandated services in historic preservation and archaeology.

If that sounds grim, it is. But it could be worse and is in many other states. The South Carolina Department of Archives and History has lost 27 percent of its state funding in the past two years. During that same period the Library of Virginia absorbed a 39 percent decrease in its funding. The states of New Jersey and Connecticut may abolish their historical commissions, close museums, and generally eliminate all public historical programs. Florida appears poised to dismantle its state library and disperse the state museum and the state archives and records management programs to other departments with no history of managing such activities. A proposed 15 percent reduction in the budget of the Minnesota Historical Society would force it to lay off one-third of its staff and close some of its historic sites.

The supreme irony of those state budget cuts may be the outcry that followed the destruction of the Iraq Museum and national library when United States troops seized Baghdad. While the loss of irreplaceable ancient artifacts and manuscripts may not be as bad as initially feared, Americans could see firsthand the devastating consequences to a nation's history and culture when law and order crumble. The state budget crises could be just as harmful. Public history is as much about the future as the past. If this generation does not act as good stewards of the nation's patrimony, what will future generations know of this and past times?

Jeffrey J. Crow



Department of Architecture, College of Design at North Carolina State University, and senior architectural historian with the statewide nonprofit organization, Preservation North Carolina. Michael T. Southern is supervisor of the Survey and Planning Branch of the SHPO. Bishir and Southern were assisted on the volume on western North Carolina, published in 1999, by Jennifer F. Martin, formerly National Register coordinator for the SHPO

and now a preservation consultant. Their work draws upon years of personal experience, the fieldwork and research of many colleagues, and the contributions of scores of local historians and countless property owners.

Written to serve “as a friend might do when introducing a visitor to the state and its communities,” the books are excellent companions for anyone who loves or seeks to know North Carolina. Travelers, residents, historians, teachers, students, preservationists, planners, architects, and journalists alike will benefit from the sweep of information and insight contained in these guides. The books are available in many bookstores or may be ordered online from UNC Press at <http://uncpress.unc.edu>.

Volume 15 of *North Carolina Troops Published*

The Historical Publications Section of the Office of Archives and History has published a new volume in its acclaimed Civil War roster series. Volume 15 of *North Carolina Troops, 1861-1865: A Roster* contains detailed histories and rosters of the 62nd, 64th, 66th, 67th, and 68th North Carolina Infantry Regiments. The names and military service records of more than seven thousand North Carolina Confederate soldiers are included. There are also nine maps and twelve photographs of individual soldiers.

The 62nd and 64th regiments were raised in the North Carolina mountains. Both were captured at Cumberland Gap in September 1863 under circumstances that were still the subject of angry debate forty years later. Members of the 64th also perpetrated the Shelton Laurel massacre in Madison County, in which thirteen prisoners were shot along the roadside.

The 66th was organized in eastern North Carolina and the Piedmont. The regiment fought at Southwest Creek (near Wilson), Drewry’s Bluff, Cold Harbor, Fort Fisher, Bentonville, and other battles. The 67th and 68th were raised in coastal and other eastern counties and were engaged in numerous skirmishes, raids, and scouts in the eastern part of the state. Both fought at Southwest Creek and took part in the Fort Branch and Bentonville campaigns.

The service records of individual soldiers contain a number of remarkable tales. Musician Thomas J. Ballard was mistaken for a bear and shot dead while brushing his teeth in a moon-lit creek; Lt. Silas C. Beck died after eating a poisonous apple; Pvt. Henry Perkins was shot and killed in his yard by a neighbor; and Pvt. William Gentry was tied to a tree and, with his two sons, shot for desertion. Pvt. Henry Grooms, another deserter, was made to play a tune on his fiddle before he was shot; Cpl. Thomas J. Cabe went insane amid the deprivation and squalor of the Federal prison at Chicago; and Pvt. James A. Roberts lost an arm after shooting himself while leaning on his rifle.

Volume 15 of *North Carolina Troops, 1861-1865: A Roster* (637 pages, clothbound, illustrated, index) sells for \$42.80, which includes state sales tax. Add \$4.00 shipping for the first volume ordered and \$2.00 for each additional volume. Order from the Historical Publications Section, Office of Archives and History, 4622 Mail Service Center (CC), Raleigh 27699-4622. For credit card (VISA and MasterCard) orders call (919) 733-7442 and for more information about ordering send an e-mail message to trudy.rayfield@ncmail.net. The Historical Publications Section’s catalog and order form are also available online at www.ah.dcr.state.nc.us/sections/hp.



State Historic Preservation Office and Fort Bragg Develop National Model for Preservation of Historic Military Housing

When Congress passed the Military Housing Privatization Initiative in 1996, its intention was to have the Department of Defense focus more closely on training and maintaining a fighting force, and to turn over the business of housing soldiers and their families to the private sector. Termed the “Residential Communities Initiative” (RCI), the program seeks to “privatize” the maintenance and management of nearly one hundred thousand units of military housing at installations nationwide, as well as the construction of new residential units on bases.

One of the first installations slated for privatization, Fort Bragg contains nearly two hundred historic residences, built during the 1930s and located in the National Register-eligible Old Post Historic District. Laid out around the original parade ground, the Normandy Heights neighborhood for officers features two-story, Spanish eclectic-style stuccoed houses with garages. Non-commissioned officers and their families are assigned to one-story bungalows in Bastogne Gables.



The Normandy Heights neighborhood at Fort Bragg, post housing for officers.

To implement the housing initiative, Congress directed the military to create partnerships with private developers and property managers, which would hold title to the buildings, but lease the land beneath them. The transfer of Fort Bragg’s historic buildings and lease of land that includes Register-eligible properties triggered review of RCI by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, and set in motion

a consultation process that produced a model agreement that was approved by Congress in April of 2003.



These historic bungalows in Bastogne Gables provide housing for non-commissioned officers and their families at Fort Bragg.

Under the terms of the Programmatic Agreement (PA) for the RCI, Fort Bragg’s Cultural Resources Management Program will oversee all work that may affect the historic buildings and their settings, and consult with the SHPO whenever a historic property could be adversely affected by renovation or new construction. The agreement also provides for archaeological

survey and testing prior to any new construction. During the fifty-year lease, the partnership will rehabilitate newer units, demolish the Capehart-Wherry housing from the 1960s, develop entirely new residential communities with schools and shopping areas, and serve as the day-to-day property manager and leasing agent for soldiers and their families.

With the ratification of the PA by Fort Bragg, the SHPO, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the army satisfied its historic preservation responsibilities under Section 106 and was able to request congressional approval of the lease and management contract. Given the breadth of preservation issues covered by the Fort Bragg PA, the Council has posted this case on its website (www.achp.gov), noting that the agreement may serve as a model for other military installations. Jeff Irwin, Michael Larson, and Erin Curran represented Fort Bragg in the agreement negotiations. Renee Gledhill-Earley, environmental review coordinator, represented the SHPO.

Heritage Tourism and Trails on the Rise in North Carolina

The 2003 Governor's Conference on Tourism hosted by the Division of Tourism, Film, and Sports Development provided positive news on the state of tourism, especially heritage tourism, in North Carolina. This good news comes as the national travel industry is coping with a depressed economy and fears of terrorism. Speakers at the conference acknowledged those problems but also reported several developments that bode well for the state and its historic sites and museums.

Tourism in North Carolina has grown to a \$12 billion industry. While travel nationwide was flat in 2002, North Carolina's share grew 2.9 percent, or almost ten times the national average rate of growth. North Carolina remained the sixth most-visited state, following California, Florida, Texas, Pennsylvania, and New York. Visiting historic sites and museums remained popular in 2002. The activities most favored by travelers were shopping (26 percent), beaches (13 percent), outdoor activities (10 percent), and historical places/museums (10 percent). Heritage tourism continues to be a significant niche market.

North Carolina is developing a new statewide Civil War trails program modeled after that of Virginia. The North Carolina Department of Transportation has awarded a \$1.1 million grant to a nonprofit organization to develop the trails and link them with existing ones in Virginia and Maryland, with assistance from the Office of Archives and History. The estimated total project cost, including a trail through central and eastern North Carolina and another in the mountains, is \$1.375 million. Local officials and organizations are expected to provide small matching grants in exchange for recognition on the trail. Most markers and pull-offs on the first trail—Carolina's Campaign: End of the War—should be in place by April 2004. Phase II of the project—Raids, Railroads, and Runaways: War in the Mountains—will be finished by April 2005. Additional sites and trails may be added.

A grant from the Golden Leaf Foundation is enabling the North Carolina Arts Council, Handmade in America, and the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service to plan another trail system of agricultural/cultural tourism sites. Those trails will combine arts, history, and agricultural resources at sites with special appeal to tourists seeking authentic rural experiences. Tourism in the state's thirty-eight most rural counties has increased 72 percent since 1992. Possible trail themes include Markets and Mazes, Farms and Barns, Trail of the Long Leaf Pine (wood and lumber), and Lift Every Voice (African American music). Sites will be related to cultural, heritage, agricultural, and natural resources; have standard hours of operation; offer interpretation; and focus on authenticity and quality. Developers plan to have a website by 2004 and the trails will be marketed nationally. For further information contact Maryanne Friend of the North Carolina Arts Council at maryanne.friend@ncmail.net.

Southern Heritage Apple Orchard Blossoms at Horne Creek Farm

Three years ago Horne Creek Living Historical Farm planted the first trees in the Southern Heritage Apple Orchard. Today they are bursting forth with spring blossoms, an indication that the trees are thriving and that many old endangered varieties no longer face extinction. As the 650 trees grow to maturity, they will produce some of the best tasting apple varieties ever developed in the South.

Today only a handful of varieties of apples—all hybrids, chosen for their ability to last long and travel well when packed, and many without much taste—are available in supermarkets. Worse, the natural genetic pool of apples, as with other common hybrid crops, is rapidly shrinking. Realizing that the old varieties were rapidly disappearing, concerned individuals established a repository for preservation of the fruit.

The Southern Heritage Apple Orchard was created in 1997 by Horne Creek Farm staff, the site's support group, the North Carolina Living Historical Farm Committee



Logo of the Southern Heritage Apple Orchard at Horne Creek Living Historical Farm.

Calhoun, a volunteer orchardist at Horne Creek. Author of *Old Southern Apples* (Blacksburg, Va., 1995), Calhoun is the nation's leading expert on some 1,600 varieties of apples (1,000 of them now extinct) once grown in the South. He personally grafted all of the trees currently planted. When complete, the orchard will contain eight hundred trees—two of each variety of heritage apples. Two different types of rootstock produce either a semi-dwarf specimen tree, reaching 12 to 16 feet, or a space-efficient 6- to 8-foot espalier tree on a trellis. If a semi-dwarf tree dies, a replacement from the espalier tree can be grafted. Grafting (joining a cutting to a rootstock) is the only practical way to replicate the exact characteristics of a parent apple tree. Planting seeds can produce offspring of varying shapes, colors, and tastes.

Apples, while long a part of American heritage, are not native to America. Maryland settlers in 1634 were told to carry “kernalls of pears and apples” with them. A settlement on the Cape Fear River in 1666 reportedly grew “apples, pears and other English fruits” from seeds. Grafting, known since Roman times, was not widespread in the South until the mid-1700s. By 1806 Surry County, the location of Horne Creek Farm, had a nursery where grafting was practiced. For more on North Carolina's heirloom apples, see *Smithsonian* (November 2002) or *Our State* (April 2003).

NCLHFC has prepared a sponsorship program by which citizens may adopt a tree for a \$500 tax-deductible gift and ensure its proper care over its expected fifty-year lifespan.

(NCLHFC), and apple expert Lee Calhoun. A grant of \$50,000 from the Department of Cultural Resources and additional funds procured by NCLHFC allowed the project to progress rapidly. The eight-acre orchard is protected by a deer-proof fence crucial to the young trees' survival and has an efficient drip irrigation system.

The committee planted the trees in stages over three years, using grafted trees and rootstock donated by

Former state commissioner of agriculture James A. "Jim" Graham has endorsed the effort. Dozens of authentic heirloom varieties may be adopted, ranging from Alexander's Ice Cream and Hog Pen Cheese to Streaked June and Summer Rambo. For more information call (336) 325-2298.

The Southern Heritage Apple Orchard is the only state-supported orchard in the nation comprehensively preserving old varieties. It's an apple lover's dream; come view the blossoms and, as the orchard matures, taste the fruits.

New Highway Historical Markers Approved

At meetings on December 13, 2002, and May 16, 2003, the North Carolina Highway Historical Marker Advisory Committee approved the following new markers: LINDSAY C. WARREN, Beaufort County; BLACK WALL STREET, Durham County; SALEM ACADEMY AND COLLEGE, Forsyth County; JAMES GLASGOW, Greene County; GARDEN CREEK, Haywood County; THOMAS HARBISON, Macon County; GEORGE E. DAVIS, Mecklenburg County; BERNICE KELLY HARRIS, Northampton County; ELIZABETH KECKLY, Orange County; VOICE OF AMERICA, Pitt County; and SURRY MUSTER FIELD, Surry County.

Secretary of Cultural Resources Lisbeth C. Evans has appointed Lenwood G. Davis of Winston-Salem State University and Richard D. Starnes of Western Carolina University to five-year terms on the committee. Karl E. Campbell of Appalachian State University was elected committee chairman at the December 2002 meeting.

North Caroliniana Society Awards Fellowships

The North Caroliniana Society has awarded Archie K. Davis Fellowships to nine scholars for 2003-2004. The recipients, their institutions, and research subjects are:

Mark L. Bradley, doctoral candidate at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; transition from war to peace in North Carolina, 1865-1868.

Robert M. Calhoun, professor of history at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro; religion and political moderation in North Carolina.

Carole Emberton, doctoral candidate at Northwestern University; violence and political culture in North Carolina during Reconstruction.

Robert H. Ferguson, master's candidate at Western Carolina University; transfer of western North Carolina musical traditions to the Pacific Northwest.

Patrick Huber, assistant professor of history at the University of Missouri-Rolla; North Carolina origins of old-time southern musical sound.

Tammy L. Ingram, doctoral candidate at Yale University; race, labor, and migration in North Carolina, 1890-1930.

Benjamin R. Justesen, GED Educational Service; biographies of nineteenth-century black officeholders in North Carolina.

Timothy James Lockley, lecturer in history at Warwick University, England; debt and dependency in western North Carolina.

Henry L. Mintz, independent researcher; Thomas's Legion and the North Carolina Junior and Senior Reserves.

The North Caroliniana Society has awarded more than two hundred Archie K. Davis Fellowships since their inception in 1987. Designed to encourage research in North Carolina history and culture, the program grants stipends to cover a portion of travel and subsistence expenses while fellows conduct research. The annual deadline for proposals is March 1. For further information visit the society's website, www.nesociety.org, or contact Dr. H. G. Jones, secretary of the society, at hgjones@email.unc.edu.

Upcoming Events

- July 1-31 Roanoke Island Festival Park: **History Fun Programs**. Costumed interpreters engage visitors in activities and adventures in history in a variety of special summer programs aboard the *Elizabeth II*, in the Roanoke Adventure Museum, at the Settlement Site, and in the History Garden. For a specific calendar of events, call (252) 475-1500.
- July 7, 14, 21, 28 Museum of the Albemarle: **History Time**. This special story time program on the history of the Albemarle Region is designed for children ages 5 to 8. Topics will include the Lost Colony, the Wright brothers, Blackbeard, and lighthouses. The program will be held each Monday in July. 10:00 A.M.
- July 12-13 North Carolina Maritime Museum, Roanoke Island: **Workshop: Basic Boatbuilding Carpentry**. Traditional boatbuilding techniques are taught in this hands-on workshop. Participants work as a team to construct a scaled down flat-bottom skiff. Class size is limited to six participants, ages 16 and older. The cost of the class is \$150; Friends of the North Carolina Maritime Museum receive a \$25 discount. For registration information, contact Scott Whitesides at (252) 475-1750.
- July 13 Museum of the Cape Fear Historical Complex: **Summer Sunday Socials**. A discussion of “Blackbeard! The Man Behind the Legend,” kicks off the summer lecture series, which this year focuses on the theme, “History: A Series of Cultural Changes in Search of Progress.” The series is funded by the North Carolina Humanities Council Speakers’ Bureau. 2:00 P.M.
- July 14, 28 North Carolina Maritime Museum, Roanoke Island: **Junior Sailing Program**. A five-day program for children ages 8 to 15, the course teaches beginner-level students basic sailing skills through a combination of classroom and on-the-water activities. The Junior Sailing Program utilizes the fun of sailing and the competition of racing to teach young sailors about rigging, seamanship, navigational skills, water safety, and maritime history and traditions. The program is sponsored by the Friends of the North Carolina Maritime Museum. The cost of the course is \$125. For registration information, call (252) 475-1750.
- July 27 Mountain Gateway Museum: **Civil War in McDowell County**. Hear the story of Emma Rankin, a young schoolteacher in the county during the 1860s who wrote an account of her experiences in a short work of literary merit. 3:00 P.M.
- July 27 North Carolina Museum of History: **A Guide to the Historic Architecture of Piedmont North Carolina**. Author Michael T. Southern, research historian in the State Historic Preservation Office, discusses the third and final volume of the acclaimed series on the historic architecture of North Carolina. A book signing will follow the program. 3:00 to 4:00 P.M.
- July 29 North Carolina Museum of History: **Pioneers of Aviation**. Opening of exhibit celebrating the achievements of the Wright brothers and the important contributions of North Carolina inventors, daredevils, military aces, astronauts, and commercial aviators during the first century of flight. More than 150 artifacts, photographs, and videos bring to life the fascinating stories of aviation pioneers “Tiny” Broadwick, the first woman to parachute from an airplane; Belvin Maynard, winner of the first transcontinental air race in 1919; and Vernon Haywood, a Tuskegee airman during World War II. The exhibit will run through May 29, 2005.
- July 31 Museum of the Cape Fear Historical Complex: **Arsenal Park Roundtable**. This series of programs, including lectures, group discussions, and hands-on activities, focuses on the history of Fayetteville, the arsenal, and the surrounding area, from 1800 to 1865. 7:00 P.M.

Upcoming Events

- August 13 North Carolina Museum of History: **History à la Carte: North Carolina's Great State Fair**. Melton McLaurin, emeritus professor of history at UNC-Wilmington, recounts the history and traditions of the annual state fair, now celebrating its 150th year. 12:10 to 1:00 P.M.
- September 10 North Carolina Museum of History: **History à la Carte: The War on Terrorism**. Richard Kohn, professor of history and chairman, Curriculum in Peace, War, and Defense, at UNC-Chapel Hill, examines terrorism from a historical perspective, and appraises the American response to the attacks of September 11, 2001. 12:10 to 1:00 P.M.
- September 13 Horne Creek Living Historical Farm: **From Peel to Pie**. Living history demonstrations include cider making, apple peeling contests, and fruit drying techniques. Visitors may sample Southern heritage apples, apple butter, cider, and fried pies. Tours of the Southern Heritage Apple Orchard are also offered. 10:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.
- Roanoke Island Festival Park: **Freedman's Colony Celebration**. Organized by descendants of the colony, the festival honors the Roanoke Island freedman's settlement, located on the island from 1862 to 1867. Time TBA.
- September 20 Duke Homestead: **Harvest Festival and Mock Tobacco Auction**. Costumed interpreters demonstrate traditional tobacco harvesting, stringing, and curing. Visitors can hear the clamor of the only remaining tobacco auction in Durham. Music and refreshments are also offered. 10:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.
- Zebulon Vance Birthplace: **Fall Pioneer Living Day and Militia Encampment**. Demonstrations of daily domestic skills and a citizens' militia camp. 10:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.
- September 21 North Carolina Museum of History: **Golden Glory: The First 50 Years of the ACC**. Author Barry Jacobs, sportswriter for the *Daily Tar Heel*, discusses his book about the first half-century of the Atlantic Coast Conference. A book signing will follow the program. 3:00 to 4:00 P.M.
- October 4 Somerset Place: **Grand Opening: Reconstructed Plantation Buildings**. The reconstructed Old Suckey's House and the Plantation Hospital are opened to visitation. 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.
- October 6-11 Alamance Battleground: **Colonial Living Week**. Costumed interpreters demonstrate colonial life. Large groups should call (336) 227-4785 for reservations. 9:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M.
- October 10-11 Roanoke Island Festival Park: **Friends of Elizabeth II Antique Faire**. Dealers offer antiques and collectibles. The \$5 admission fee for the two days benefits the Friends of *Elizabeth II*; children 12 and under admitted free. 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.
- October 18 Horne Creek Living Historical Farm: **Annual Cornshucking Frolic**. Traditional rural frolic features the harvesting, shucking, shelling, and grinding of corn, as well as cider making, quilting, woodworking, wagon rides, traditional music, and craft demonstrations.
- October 24-27 USS *North Carolina* Battleship Memorial: **USS North Carolina Battleship Association Annual Reunion**. Crewmembers and their families gather to reminisce about their time aboard the ship. For information call Dr. Everette Beaver at (843) 272-7007.
- October 25 Duke Homestead: **An Evening at the Homestead**. The site's Junior Interpreters offer music, dancing, fall cuisine, and a few ghost stories. Bring a picnic basket and blanket for dinner on the grounds. 4:00 to 7:00 P.M.
- October 25-27 USS *North Carolina* Battleship Memorial: **Battleship Alive**. World War II living history demonstrators bring the ship to life with re-creations of daily duties and drills. 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

State Contest of National History Day Held at Museum of History

The state contest of National History Day was held at the Museum of History on April 26. More than 240 students from 25 schools presented their exhibits, documentaries, historical papers, and performances related to the theme “Rights and Responsibilities in History.” Historians, educators, and attorneys served as judges, providing comments and suggestions for the participants. Forty-eight students qualified to represent the state at the national competition at College Park, Maryland, in June. In addition to the winners in each category, a number of special topical prizes were awarded. Various organizations, corporations, and individuals sponsor these special awards. Among the new sponsors this year were the North Carolina Bar Association Foundation Endowment, which presented two cash prizes for outstanding projects relating to the American legal system, and the Siemens Corporation, which awarded cell phones to the best projects detailing innovations in history. National History Day in North Carolina also received a grant from the North Carolina Bar Association Foundation Endowment to support this year’s program, while a number of volunteers from the local Siemens office served as volunteers for the contest.



Two volunteer judges from the Raleigh office of the Siemens Corporation take a closer look at an exhibit in the National History Day competition.

Charlene Morris of A. C. Reynolds Middle School in Asheville was selected as the North Carolina History Day Teacher of the Year. She was the state’s nominee for the Richard Farrell Teacher Award presented at the national competition.



National History Day in North Carolina is a year-round history education program sponsored by the Office of Archives and History.

Jo Ann Williford, program coordinator, presents the North Carolina History Day Teacher of the Year Award to Charlene Morris of Asheville.

Southeast Forsyth Wins History Bowl Championship

Students from eight middle schools from across the state competed head-to-head in the North Carolina History Bowl State Championship on May 16 in the auditorium of the Archives and History/State Library Building in Raleigh. Southeast Forsyth Middle School of Kernersville defeated West Craven Middle School of New Bern in the finals. Dr. Jeffrey J. Crow, deputy secretary of the Department of Cultural Resources, and Sara Powell, representing the North Carolina Division of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, co-sponsors of the competition, presented awards to the winning team.

Throughout the school year, teams of eighth-graders have been competing in regional history bowls sponsored by various state historic sites. For the championship series, regional winners participated in paired matches, in which teams of four students and one alternate answered questions from a moderator. The members of the victorious Forsyth County school, coached by teacher Andrea McGuire and sponsored by the Charlotte Hawkins Brown Museum and Alamance Battleground, were Matthew Smith (captain), Jason Atkinson, Alexandra Kosman, Brandon Ramirez, and Gus Ramirez.

The other regional winners that participated in the state championship were Central Middle School of Gatesville (sponsored by Historic Edenton); Harnett Central Middle School (Bentonville Battleground); Harris Middle School (Duke Homestead and Bennett Place); Rugby Middle School (Fort Dobbs); Brawley Middle School (James K. Polk Memorial and Reed Gold Mine); and Aurora Middle School (Tryon Palace).

Obituaries

The Office of Archives and History lost a great leader and friend when former state archivist Thornton W. Mitchell died on May 14, 2003. The son of Thornton W. and Elizabeth Grinsell Mitchell, he was born on March 24, 1916. He was educated in the public schools of Lima, Ohio, and South Pasadena and Los Angeles, California. Mitchell attended Stanford University, where he completed bachelor's and master's degrees in history. His pursuit of a doctorate in history took him across the country to Columbia University, where he studied under historian Allan Nevins. When Mitchell completed the Ph.D. degree, the year was 1941 and, as he recalled, "Young able bodied men were not being hired as teachers."

That nudge away from the academic realm launched a truly remarkable career in archives and records management that commenced on July 1, 1941, with Mitchell's first job at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). Following service in the United States Air Corps as an administrative officer from 1942 to 1944, Mitchell returned to NARA as a records appraisal officer. He established the NARA Pacific Region office in San Bruno, California, and then worked briefly in Illinois and Ohio before, in 1961, accepting the position of assistant state archivist/records center supervisor for North Carolina. In 1973 Mitchell became state archivist, a position that he held until his retirement in 1981. He also served as acting director of the Division of Archives and History for seven months in 1974.



Dr. Thornton W. Mitchell, 1916-2003.

William S. Price, a former director of Archives and History, described Thornton Mitchell as a man who tended to “think big.” Recounting some of the organizations that he helped to establish certainly verifies that statement. Mitchell was instrumental in the formation of organizations such as the North Carolina Genealogical Society in 1974, the Association of Records Managers and Administrators (ARMA) in 1975, the Institute of Certified Records Managers (ICRM) in 1975, and the Friends of the Archives in 1978. Mitchell was also thinking big in 1974 when he pursued the recovery of valuable state records that had been offered for sale by manuscript dealers. The resulting landmark case, *North Carolina v. B. C. West Jr.*, established the modern precedent of utilizing the ancient common law form of replevin for the recovery of alienated public records.

The North Carolina Literary and Historical Association twice recognized Thornton Mitchell. Both the R. D. W. Connor Award in 1974, for a two-part article entitled “The Philanthropic Bequests of John Rex of Raleigh,” and the Christopher Crittenden Award in 1981, for lifetime achievements in the preservation of North Carolina history, were shared jointly with his wife, Fannie Memory Mitchell. Another monumental achievement by Thornton Mitchell was his *North Carolina Wills: A Testator Index, 1665-1900*. Archivists and genealogists whose research is streamlined by this now indispensable work constantly use the comprehensive index to wills, completed by Mitchell in retirement as a personal project. He also co-edited with Horace W. Raper *The Papers of William Woods Holden*, Volume I, 1841-1868. The second volume will be published posthumously by the Historical Publications Section.

Also in his retirement Mitchell volunteered at WCPE, a listener-supported classical radio station in Wake Forest. For many years Mitchell reported to the station every Wednesday, always exhibiting a “spark” according to staff.

Thornton Mitchell is survived by his wife Fannie Memory, their twin sons James and David, two granddaughters, a niece, and a nephew. The halls and offices at 109 East Jones Street have been abuzz with Thornton Mitchell stories in recent weeks—accompanied by twinkles in the eyes and good belly laughs and, ultimately, meaningful nods. Dr. Mitchell’s contributions to his profession and his community will be remembered and appreciated for generations to come.

* * *

Lucille Sermons Winslow, longtime supporter of historic activities and the travel industry in northeastern North Carolina, died on March 16. Among other accomplishments, she helped organize the Historic Albemarle Tour, and served on the North Carolina Arts Council, America’s 400th Anniversary Committee, as chairperson of the Roanoke Island Historical Association, and sixteen years on the Edenton Historical Commission. She received both the Halifax Resolves Award and East Carolina University’s Distinguished Alumni Award in 1981.



News from Historical Resources

Archives and Records Section

Section personnel continue to receive training on issues surrounding electronic records management and preservation. On March 10-11, 2003, staff members attended an encoded archival description (EAD) workshop sponsored by North Carolina State University. On April 8, staff attended a seminar entitled "From Promise to Reality: Surviving the Implementation of an Electronic Records Program," sponsored by the Triangle Area Chapter of the Association of Records Managers and Administrators. From May 12 to 16, archivists Debbi Blake, Kelly Eubank, and James Sorrell participated in an intensive, weeklong training session, "Digitization for Cultural Heritage Professionals." It was sponsored by the School of Information and Library Sciences at UNC-Chapel Hill, the Humanities Advanced Technology and Information Institute, the University of Glasgow, and Rice University's Fondren Library. On April 11, staff of the Government Records Branch hosted the annual state agency Chief Records Officers meeting, attended by approximately twenty-five records officers.

A program after the Friends of the Archives business meeting on June 9 featured two ongoing projects of the section. Sarah Downing, assistant curator at the Outer Banks History Center (OBHC), delivered a presentation entitled "Photographers of the Sea, Sand, and Sound: Imaging the Outer Banks," highlighting the center's iconographic collection and staff research concerning photographers of the coast. Druscie Simpson, head of the Information Technology Branch, demonstrated the new online finding aid system (MARS) and explained how to access the digitized images from the Archives' collections now available on the Web.



Lisa Noonan, recipient of the first T. Harry Gattton Internship, and Mrs. Mary Gattton at the Friends of the Archives business meeting on June 9.

The OBHC has produced a major exhibit for the First Flight Centennial Pavilion at the Wright Brothers Memorial. *The Outer Banks at the Turn of the Century* focuses on sand and wind, the austerities of camping, village life among the Kitty Hawk, the U.S. Lifesaving Service, and nearby communities such as Manteo, Nags Head Resort, Nags Head Woods, and Elizabeth City. Ribbon-cutting ceremonies for the First Flight Centennial Pavilion exhibits were held on May 21. *The Outer Banks at the Turn of the Century* is scheduled to be

on display for three to five years in the Pavilion, until a new permanent visitor center is finished. Partnerships and collaboration made this project possible for the OBHC. Julie Ketner Rigby of the First Flight Centennial Foundation obtained a donation of \$30,000 from American Airlines to hire a professional exhibits contractor to help design, fabricate, and install the First Flight Pavilion exhibit for the History Center. Many other organizations also contributed components or expertise to the exhibit. The Belfort Instrument Company donated a functional replica of the anemometer used by the Wright brothers. Chicamacomico Historical Association in Rodanthe provided images, information, and plans for artifacts to be fabricated. Warner Music and Communications of Rocky Mount contributed equipment at cost, along with plenty of advice on installing listening stations for the exhibit. Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio, also provided images from their collections, and the National Park Service–Outer Banks Group provided many period artifacts that are incorporated in the exhibit. The History Center welcomes the opportunity to substantively contribute to the year-long tribute to Orville and Wilbur Wright in the centennial year of flight. This exhibit pays tribute to both the people and the environment of the Outer Banks that played such crucial roles in the birth of aviation. Additionally, in conjunction with the First Flight Centennial, OBHC staff is making final preparations to host a display of artwork on loan from the National Air and Space Administration in the Center's gallery that is scheduled to arrive in August 2003.

The State Historical Records Advisory Board (SHRAB) of North Carolina has submitted an important new grant proposal to the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC). If approved, the grant would enable the board to sponsor a series of basic and intermediate workshops on archival practice across the state during the period 2004–2006. These workshops would include intensive training on archives and records fundamentals, and would offer programs on such topics as archival preservation and conservation, caring for and providing access to photographs and audio recordings, guidance in the development and writing of NHPRC grant proposals, and other sessions of interest to records keepers in North Carolina. The SHRAB anticipates a response from the NHPRC about potential funding for the grant proposal this fall.

Recent Accessions by the North Carolina State Archives

During the months of March, April, and May 2003, the Archives and Records Section made 156 accession entries. Original records were received from Chatham, Haywood, Henderson, Macon, Mecklenburg, Pitt, Sampson, Surry, and Wayne Counties. The section received security microfilm of records for Anson, Buncombe, Catawba, Dare, Davie, Durham, Granville, Greene, Halifax, Henderson, Lincoln, Mecklenburg, Moore, Nash, New Hanover, Northampton, Orange, Polk, Randolph, Transylvania, Tyrrell, Union, and Wayne Counties; and for the municipalities of Asheboro, Ayden, Boiling Springs Lake, Boone, Cape Carteret, Dallas, Drexel, Emerald Isle, Graham, Granite Quarry, High Point, Leland, Lewisville, Lincolnton, Manteo, Oak Island, Oriental, Reidsville, Rocky Mount, Sanford, Sunset Beach, Wilmington, and Wilson.

The section accessioned records from the following state agencies: Department of Community Colleges, 9 reels; Department of Transportation, 30 reels; Governor's Office, 8.7 cubic feet; North Carolina Art Society, 3 cubic feet; Secretary of State, 1 reel; and State Treasurer, 32 reels.

The Hardie Family Papers and the Joseph John Jackson Papers were accessioned as new private collections; additions were made to the Betty Wiser Collection and the George W. Swepson Papers; and the James Grey Jeffreys Account Book was added to the collection of account books. Other records accessioned included 1 Bible record; 1 compiled cemetery

record; 46 additions to the Military Collection (including 37 audio and 14 videotaped interviews); 4 glass plate negatives, 28 photographs and photographic prints, 5 videotapes, and 2 compact discs to the Nontextual Materials Collection; and 3 Organization Records.

Historical Publications Section

The *Forty-Ninth Biennial Report of the North Carolina Office of Archives and History* is now available in limited quantities. The report reflects the new organizational structure that became effective October 1, 2001. Contact the Historical Publications Section to order a copy for \$15, which includes shipping, handling, and sales tax.

During May, the section sold nearly \$200 worth of shelf-worn titles at two North Carolina ECHO (Exploring Cultural Heritage Online) workshops and during the North Carolina Division of Tourism, Film, and Sports Development's N.C. Tourism Day. In addition, twenty-two copies of *Addresses and Public Papers of James Baxter Hunt Jr., Governor of North Carolina, Volume III, 1993-1997*, and fifty-six copies of *Passport to North Carolina Historic Sites* were distributed free of charge. The passports were given out during this one-day event to promote visitation to state historic sites. This annual event showcases the positive impact of the tourism industry on local, state, and national economies. Over 3,000 people attended, including more than 100 legislators, 40 exhibitors, and several media representatives.



News from State Historic Sites

Capitol Section

Approximately eighty people attended Tryon Palace's distinguished thirty-fifth annual decorative arts symposium for 2003, "If the Walls Could Talk: Decorating the Walls of American Homes, 1750-1850," held in March. Curator of collections Nancy Richards and others organized the event. The symposium included lectures, a concert, receptions, fine meals, and special tours of the palace and gardens. This year's symposium examined different methods of adding interest to interior walls. From the mid-eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth centuries, wall treatment in American homes progressed from wainscoting to paneling to plaster covered by paint or paper hangings. Six speakers addressed such topics as the use of paint and wallpaper, window treatments, framed prints, paintings, illuminating the walls, and the glass and hot walls of orangeries and greenhouses. Among the lectures were "The Mechanics of Whimsy," by Matthew J. Mosca of Baltimore; "All Sorts of Window Curtains of the Latest Fashion," by Audrey Michie of Charlottesville; "Every Picture Tells a Story: Prints to Instruct, Delight, and Amuse," by Christopher Lane of Philadelphia; "Reflections: Mirrors and Lighting, 1750-1850," by H. Parrott Bacot of Baton Rouge; "The Sunny South," by Robert Hicklin of Charleston; and "Seen through

the Greenhouse Glass and behind the Garden Wall,” by Elizabeth P. McLean of Wynnewood, Pennsylvania. An optional bus tour to Tarboro, an architecturally distinguished small town, included a visit to Coolmore (1857–1860), an Italianate villa; a picnic lunch and tour of the Blount-Bridgers House (ca. 1808); a visit to the fine Gothic Revival Calvary Episcopal Church (1859–1868); and a stop at the Wilkinson-Dozier House (ca. 1820) and the adjacent Henry Braswell House (ca. 1825).

In early April Tryon Palace Historic Sites & Gardens held its annual salute to the start of the growing season: Gardeners’ Weekend. Thousands of bulbs, buds, and blossoms adorned the palace’s fourteen acres of gardens and grounds. The show featured more than thirty-five varieties of



The gardens at Tryon Palace were in full bloom for the annual Gardeners’ Weekend in April.

tulips and other spring bulbs, about thirty thousand bulbs in all. As is customary, the palace opened its grounds free of charge for the occasion. Held in conjunction with the annual New Bern Historic Homes, Gardens, and Arts Tour, the 2003 Gardeners’ Weekend also featured a special lecture by garden writer Pam Beck and a heritage plant sale.

The palace also presented a month-long special exhibition of its rare and valuable Oriental rugs, some of which have not been on public display for over twenty years. The display, *Under Foot: Oriental Carpets from the Tryon Palace Collection*, was planned with the Craven Arts Council and Gallery at the Arts Council’s gallery space in New Bern. Eighteen rugs were featured, with information on the history of rug making. Nancy Richards, curator of collections at the palace, organized the exhibition with assistance from Walter Denny of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, an authority on Oriental rugs. The exhibition began with the geographic background of the historic Oriental rug belt. The display examined the collecting and processing of materials and the dyeing and weaving of the basic rug types: hand-knotted pile rugs and flat-weave carpets. Shown were carpets from Anatolia (now Turkey), Persia (Iran), and Transcaucasia from the seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries. The exhibition also revealed the importance of design, structure, and color as guidelines for collecting rugs.

In European and other Western Hemisphere markets, Oriental rugs traditionally indicated good taste and wealth. At the time the reconstructed palace opened in 1959, important historical dwellings were generally furnished with such carpets. Since then historical evidence has been developed that demonstrates that, until the nineteenth century, floor coverings were relatively rare in even the wealthiest American households. This discovery resulted in the removal and storage of many of the palace rugs.

North Carolina Transportation Museum

The museum hosted its sixteenth annual Rail Days in late April with a variety of family activities including continuous on-site train rides, tours of the museum's private rail car Loretto, blacksmithing demonstrations, and a whistle-blowing contest. At the restored Julian Roundhouse visitors enjoyed a model train show, railroad crane demonstrations, and a sound program by Big Horn featuring more than a hundred whistles, twenty-five horns, and twenty bells. Authors Art Peterson, Tony Reeve, and William Dowdy signed copies of their *Directory of North Carolina Railroad Structures* (2d ed.) and presented a slide show. Guests ate meals in a railway dining car during the "Nothing is Finer than Dinner on the Diner" program. The silver diner was the sleek Moultrie, a former Atlantic Coast Line dining car. Diners chose breakfast, lunch, or dinner. Rail Days also included an all-day chili cook-off contest among nonprofit groups that included a public tasting.

Twenty-six mechanical train volunteers have updated their skills by taking the annual "rules test" on safe and correct operation of railway equipment. With warming weather, the train crew has been very busy.

In the Back Shop restoration project, brick repointing continued; demolition and mortar grinding progressed as well. More than eight thousand bricks were cleaned for reuse. Workers made progress on roof decking, skylight framing, and skylight openings.

The development committee is preparing grant proposals for Locomotive No. 604, turntable restoration, L-3 cosmetic restoration, placing a book on Spencer history in North Carolina schools, and an accessible railcar. Rally Rowan, the Back Shop capital campaign for Rowan County, is assembling an "off campus" steering committee.

Northeastern Historic Sites Section

Pvt. Jonathan Overton (1752-1853), an African American who served in the Continental army during the Revolutionary War, was honored in February at Providence Burial Ground in Edenton. A great-great-grandnephew traveled from New York to unveil a new grave marker indicating that Private Overton was a member of Capt. Samuel Jones's Company in North Carolina's 10th Regiment, Continental line. Overton, who received a pension from the government, lived in Edenton until his death at the age of 101. He was buried at Providence Burial Ground, a cemetery used by many African American citizens during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Approximately 175 people attended the ceremony, which included laying of wreaths by the Daughters of the American Revolution, Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the American Legion. Members of the American Legion from Maryland delivered a rifle salute. Local high school students in reproduction uniforms portrayed Revolutionary War soldiers. Historic Edenton and other local groups sponsored the ceremony.

In a time when perhaps fifty registrants at a humanities seminar is considered a good turnout, Historic Edenton's recent two-day Harriet Jacobs Symposium far exceeded expectations. Total registration was 326, and the greatest attendance at a single event was 258 participants.



This new headstone for African American soldier Jonathan Overton was unveiled at a ceremony in Edenton in February.

On April 12, Historic Halifax hosted Halifax Day to commemorate the 227th anniversary of the Halifax Resolves. At the county courthouse, the Historic Halifax Restoration Association presented its annual Halifax Resolves Awards for excellence in historic preservation. Recipients included Mr. and Mrs. Thomas McDowell, for restoration of Magnolia Plantation; Dr. Ralph Hardee Rives, for a lifetime of leadership in preservation initiatives; and the North Carolina Historical Commission, acknowledged in its centennial year “for one hundred years of public history and service to the people of North Carolina.” Dr. Jerry Cashion, chairman of the commission, accepted the award. The Archives and History centennial banner was on display for the event.

After the awards, a ceremony honoring the militia service of Col. Joseph Montfort (1724-1776) was held by the Marquis de Lafayette Chapter of the North Carolina Society of the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR). The 6th North Carolina Regiment of re-enactors led a festive parade from the courthouse to lay a wreath on Col. Montfort’s grave at the Royal White Hart Masonic Lodge. A proclamation from Gov. Michael F. Easley, naming April 12 as Sons of the American Revolution Day in North Carolina, was read. After the program, a new chapter of the SAR, the Halifax Resolves Chapter, was chartered.

Piedmont Historic Sites Section

Dr. Charlotte Hawkins Brown, Palmer Memorial Institute, and the museum continue to gain recognition, as evidenced by the March 2003 edition of *Southern Living*. The museum staff is currently writing several grant requests. Two are being submitted to Save America’s Treasures, for Galen Stone and Eliot Halls, requesting \$1 million for continued restoration of each building. These grants require a dollar-for-dollar match, and the foundation is seeking to raise that match. The Marion Stedman Covington Foundation of Greensboro has generously provided a grant to reprint Brown’s best-known book, *The Correct Thing: To Do, To Say, To Wear*, a manual on etiquette written in 1940. Copies of the book will be available in October and may be preordered on the museum’s website. Greensboro Day School fourth-graders donated more than \$700 from a bake sale to the museum.

Duke Homestead’s new video, *Legacy of the Golden Leaf*, has been named a national winner in the Vision Award competition for 2002-2003. The competition is designed to select the best local and regional video presentations and television commercials in the United States. *Legacy* is the national winner in the educational category. The nonprofit Duke Homestead Education and History Corporation funded the video. The Freeman Group of Durham, a media consulting and production company, made the video, which was produced by Rob Shoaf, directed by Sandy Freeman, and written by David Terrenoire. The Freeman Group has won seven Vision Awards over the years. The firm also produced *Grand Slam, 100 Years of the Durham Bulls*, a national finalist in 2002-2003.

Town Creek Indian Mound has completed the final phase of a Museum Assessment Program (MAP) study. The MAP is a cooperative venture between the federal Institute of Museum and Library Services and the American Association of Museums that helps museums assess strengths and weaknesses and plan improvements. The institute provides grants to museums to participate in MAP, which is administered by the association. Since 1981 MAP has provided nearly five thousand assessments. Town Creek completed its evaluation with a site visit by Dr. Rodger Stroup, South Carolina director of Archives and History. Dr. Stroup inspected the facilities and met with staff and supporters.

Roanoke Island Festival Park

In April, Roanoke Island Festival Park hosted the world premiere of the new musical *Jammin' with Pops*. The show wove the music of Louis Armstrong and Ella Fitzgerald into stories of their lives. More than thirty well-known songs were featured, among them "Hello Dolly," "When You're Smilin'," "On the Sunny Side of the Street," "I've Got Rhythm," "Basin Street Blues," and "When the Saints Go Marchin' In." *Jammin' with Pops* is fictional, but the people, background, and music are real. The play was written by Barry Harman, best known for *Romance/Romance*, which received five Tony nominations. Harman also wrote for numerous television shows, including *All in the Family*, *The Jeffersons*, and *The Carol Burnett Show*.

The North Carolina Symphony performed a free evening outdoor concert at the park on June 5, sponsored by the Outer Banks Visitors Bureau. The program included a new work composed to celebrate the centennial of the Wright brothers' historic flight. *Inventing Flight*, by American composer William Bolcom, was commissioned by the North Carolina Symphony and the Dayton Philharmonic Orchestra. The First Flight Centennial Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts endorsed the work. *Inventing Flight* depicts three milestones in flight. The first movement, "Daedelus and Icarus," portrays the Greek myth of the boy who flew too close to the sun and then crashed into the sea. The second movement, "Leonardo," represents Leonardo da Vinci's drawings and plans for flying machines. The symphony performed the last movement, "Wilbur and Orville," describing the Wrights' historic flight. The orchestra also performed additional works, among them Offenbach's overture to *La belle Helene*; Respighi's *Fountains of Rome*; Strauss's "Roses from the South" waltz; the overture to Richard Rogers's musical *State Fair*; and the music of John Williams from *Raiders of the Lost Ark*.



The North Carolina Symphony presented a free concert at Roanoke Island Festival Park on June 5.

Southeastern Historic Sites Section

Aycock Birthplace held Farm Heritage Days in April and invited more than two thousand fourth-graders from Wayne County. Although inclement weather intervened, only three schools were unable to attend. Students met a schoolmaster, wrote with quill pens, played town ball, learned to cut wood with a crosscut saw, and observed spinning and open-hearth cooking. Other demonstrations included quilting, broom and mop making, butter churning, rope making, candle dipping, basket weaving, plowing, and toys and games. One popular newcomer was Ronnie Bowen, who brought an antique plow, corn planter, and a small wagon, with his two mules. It was too wet to plow, so he talked about the tools and let the children meet the mules.

In March visitors contrasted the ordinary North Carolina soldier from the 1770s through the 1950s at Bentonville's Military Timeline Living History Program. Uniformed volunteers manned small camp areas and showed the transition of the common soldier through two centuries. Weapons demonstrations illustrated the vast difference between the firepower of Civil War muskets and semi-automatic weapons of World War II. Representatives from each period—Revolution, Mexican War, Civil War, Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, and Korean War—fired their small arms.

Other demonstrations included nineteenth-century artillery displays, blacksmithing, and a Civil War medical display. A new evening venture, *The Terrible Price of War*, was a first-person interactive program that took visitors back in time to March 22, 1865, just after the Battle of Bentonville ended. The program showed how the Harper family began cleaning up their home and the daunting task of caring for forty-five Confederate soldiers with scant supplies and no medical experience. Overall 1,408 visitors attended, and 75 participants contributed 900 volunteer hours.

Four Union soldiers won the Congressional Medal of Honor at Bentonville. Their stories will be told in new wayside exhibits to be installed next summer as part of the expansion of Bentonville's driving tour. Currently the fourteen-mile tour uses twenty-nine historical markers from 1959 to interpret six thousand acres. With increased rural traffic, these markers no longer are safe for viewing by visitors. The site received a Transportation Enhancement Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) grant to construct roadside pull-offs and ten exhibit panels at key locations. These exhibits will enhance public awareness of the importance and intensity of the battle, help the staff to provide more comprehensive tours, and safely accommodate large tour groups.

USS North Carolina Battleship Memorial

The annual Memorial Day observance on the fantail of the battleship featured free long-distance telephone service for veterans and an inspirational speech by the commanding officer of the Marine Corps base at Camp Lejeune. U.S. Cellular again offered its VALOR (Veterans and Loved Ones Reconnect) program to veterans, enabling them to call family, friends, and service buddies around the country at no charge. Battleship director Capt. David R. Scheu, USN (Ret), welcomed visitors to the ship while an all-service color guard marched on the colors. The acclaimed Second Marine Division Band performed the National Anthem as an enormous "Holiday Flag" was unfurled from the stern. Dr. Ernest L. Thompson, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Wilmington, delivered the invocation. Captain Scheu then recognized each branch of service, whose members stood with their service flag to enthusiastic applause. Maj. Gen. David M. Mize, commander of the Marine Corps base at Camp Lejeune, delivered the keynote address. The evening concluded with the ceremonial laying of a memorial wreath upon the waters of the Cape Fear River. The U.S. Marine Honor Guard, comprised of instructors from the marine reserve center at Wilmington, fired a 21-gun salute. Buglers closed the observance with the mournful "Taps."

On May 3, the battleship memorial offered a living history day with special tours, audience participation in shipboard drills, home front exhibits, and book signings. A new crew of living history interpreters demonstrated daily activities, drills, and inspections performed by sailors and marines during World War II. In the visitor center, displays highlighted the role of civilians, particularly women, in the war effort on the home front. Three one-hour tours permitted visitors access to living history areas on the main deck, the super structure, and living quarters on the second deck. Authors Danny Bradshaw (*Ghosts of the Battleship North Carolina*), Capt. Wilbur D. Jones (*Sentimental Journey: Memoirs of a Wartime Boomtown*), and Capt. Charles R. "Cal" Calhoun (*Typhoon*) were on hand to sign their books. Artist Don Millar was also available to autograph prints of his recent charcoal lithograph, *Home at Last: Battleship USS North Carolina*.

Western Historic Sites Section

Birth of a Rebellion, a twenty-minute video shot at Horne Creek Living Historical Farm, was shown in the short-film category of the ninth annual Cucalorus Film Festival for independent films in Wilmington in March. The festival, sponsored by Kodak, Panavision, Time-Warner, and the cast and crew of television's *Dawson's Creek*, received dozens of entries from across the nation. The film is a coming-of-age story about a girl who dreams of escaping traditional farm life during the 1920s. Featuring the seamy underworld of Prohibition, *Birth of a Rebellion* touches on such universal themes as conflicts between parents and children. The movie was a project of the North Carolina School of the Arts.

In March the James K. Polk Memorial held "An Afternoon with Mr. Polk". The program combined aspects of living history with historical theater. Unlike most historical plays, visitors assumed roles and interacted with the interpreter who portrayed Polk. The program took visitors back to 1827 to meet Congressman Polk of Tennessee. Part of the visitor center became the dining room of Willard's Hotel in Washington, D.C. Visitors portrayed "reporters" and "citizens" and talked with Polk about current events (from 1827), his political views, his family, and early life in Mecklenburg County. He then led visitors on a first-person guided tour of the site's reconstructed cabins.

In April staff at the Thomas Wolfe Memorial hosted the memorial's first rail excursion, two short trips out of Dillsboro. Participants ate a four-course gourmet meal in the art deco dining car Silver Meteor. This 1940 rail coach evoked the feel of pre-World War II train travel, with which Wolfe was quite familiar. In Dillsboro travelers stayed at a hotel on the bank of the Tuckaseegee River and listened to two Wolfe short stories relating to train travel. One excursion went to Bryson City: the train followed the Tuckaseegee, passing through a tunnel, beside an ancient Cherokee town, and through a pleasing early spring landscape.



News from State History Museums

North Carolina Maritime Museum, Beaufort

David Nateman has been named director of the North Carolina Maritime Museum, effective May 1. Nateman brings twenty years of leadership and educational experience to the position. Most recently he was curator of education at the Polk Museum of Art in Lakeland, Florida. He has also served on the faculties of East Carolina University, the University of New Mexico, and the Teachers College of Columbia University.

An exhibit related to the centennial of manned flight opened at the museum on June 1. *Before They Flew They Floated* examines the North Carolina watercraft used by the Wright brothers to transport their plane and supplies to Kitty Hawk. The exhibit features an

original printer's plate of the newspaper announcement of the historic first flight. A major section of the display highlighting maritime activities, such as menhaden spotting, law enforcement, and coastal defense, that benefited from manned flight, features materials on loan from the Beaufort Historical Association.

North Carolina Museum of History

The inaugural Raleigh international spy conference, titled *Spies, Lies, and Treason: The KGB in America*, will unfold on August 28–29. Internationally known espionage experts and field operatives will discuss the infamous years of Russian undercover activity directed at the United States. The conference is co-sponsored by the North Carolina Museum of History Associates, the North Carolina Museum of History, and Bernie Reeves, editor and publisher of Raleigh's *Metro Magazine*.

The spy gathering features a world-renowned lineup of speakers and panelists. Keynote speaker Christopher Andrew is regarded as the premier scholar and author on espionage activity during the cold war era. Andrew, professor of modern and contemporary history and former chairman of the history faculty at Cambridge University—where he is currently president of Corpus Christi College—is the official historian of the British Security Service (MI5).

UNC-Wilmington chancellor James Leutze, a military and intelligence scholar, will serve as chairman for the two-day event. Also scheduled to speak are espionage experts Brian Kelley, the “wrong man” accused in the investigation of FBI turncoat Robert Hanssen; Keith Melton, a technical adviser to spy agencies and owner of the world's largest collection of spy paraphernalia and detection devices; former KGB general Oleg Kalugin, once the chief of Soviet counterintelligence and supervisor of several United States double agents; Nigel West, a British military intelligence historian and author; and Hayden Peak, curator of historical intelligence at the CIA.

The conference fee is \$250 before July 1, and \$300 thereafter. The cost is \$250 for Museum of History Associates members, regardless of registration date. For registration and hotel information, contact Vincent Cavallari at (919) 733-3076, ext. 291, or vcavallari@ncmuseumassoc.com. Registration information is available at www.raleighspyconference.com. Mail checks, payable to the Raleigh Spy Conference, to Vincent Cavallari, North Carolina Museum of History Associates, P.O. Box 25937, Raleigh N.C. 27611-5937. VISA and MasterCard are accepted.

Staff Notes

David J. Olson, director of the Division of Historical Resources, has been promoted to deputy secretary of Arts and Libraries, effective May 1. Olson served as state archivist from 1981 to 1999. Walter T. Evans, an editor I within the Historical Publications Section, resigned on March 31.

In the Division of State Historic Sites, Deloris Harrell, the first executive director of Roanoke Island Festival Park, has retired. She was honored with a farewell tribute at the park art gallery on May 22. Juliana Hoekstra, former site manager I at Historic Stagville, has been transferred to the State Historic Preservation Office, an agency adversely affected by recent cuts in federal funding for preservation. Jennifer Farley's position as interpreter III at Duke Homestead is being transferred to Historic Stagville. At Roanoke Island Festival Park, Frederick Cross was hired as a maintenance mechanic II, and Kurte Grotke began as a maintenance mechanic I. Sylvia Chappell is retiring as an interpreter I at Town Creek Indian Mound. Kathleen Needham, a historic interpreter II at Historic Stagville,

retired on June 1. Elizabeth Sumner of the division office has been promoted to registrar within Museum and Visitor Services. Her former position as receptionist has been replaced with an automated telephone system. Capt. David Scheu, director of the USS *North Carolina* Battleship Memorial, has received the Bill Sharpe Award from the Travel Council of North Carolina for outstanding public service to the state's travel industry.

Colleges and Universities

East Carolina University

The university board of trustees has approved the naming of the College of Arts and Sciences for the Renaissance polymath Thomas Harriot (1560–1621). Harriot was a multifaceted genius whose work in algebra, navigation, astronomy, cartography, anthropology, natural history, philosophy, and linguistics has remained the subject of scholarly inquiry through the centuries since his death. His research interests represent many of the disciplines in the college, which is composed of departments in the humanities, natural sciences and mathematics, and the social sciences. Moreover, Harriot has a strong historical link with eastern North Carolina. As a key member of the first English colonization effort at Roanoke Island in 1585, he constructed and administered a science research center to determine the commercial potential of the area. Upon his return to England, Harriot published his findings as *A Brief and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia*, the first book in English about the New World, still considered the cornerstone of American natural history. Harriot College will hold a brief dedication ceremony at the annual Faculty Convocation on August 25, at which time an excellent reproduction of the 1602 portrait (thought to be of Harriot) that hangs at Trinity College, Oxford, will be unveiled.

Mary Boccaccio, manuscript curator in Special Collections, retired on July 1.

Mt. Olive College

Dr. Alan K. Lamm presented a paper entitled “The ‘Second’ Battle of Bentonville: The Ongoing Story to Save a Civil War Battlefield,” at the 37th annual Council of America's Military Past Conference in St. Louis on May 8.

State, County, and Local Groups

Alliance for Historic Hillsborough

The alliance, a confederation of historical organizations in Hillsborough, celebrated National Historic Preservation Week, May 5–12, with a full slate of special events centered on the theme, “Cities, Suburbs, and Countryside.” On May 3, a living history tea at the Burwell School Historic Site featured re-enactors in nineteenth-century attire who served high tea and refreshments while instructing visitors in period etiquette and parlor games. The Hillsborough Historic District Commission sponsored a lecture by local architectural historian Barbara Church at the Eagle Lodge Masonic Hall on May 8. She discussed the works of William Nichols, architect of the lodge, whose other projects included St. Matthews Episcopal Church in Hillsborough, Hayes Plantation near Windsor, Gerrard Hall on the campus of UNC-Chapel Hill, and the remodeling of the State Capitol in Raleigh. The alliance concluded the week with its third annual spring garden tour of nine of the loveliest gardens in the historic district. The tour included special exhibits, small

workshops on gardening and flower arranging, and a lecture by Peggy Cornett, director of the Thomas Jefferson Center for Historic Plants at Monticello, on the preservation of historic plants, particularly roses.

Cape Fear Museum

On May 4, the museum hosted a lecture and book signing by Glenn Dedmond, author of *Flags of Civil War North Carolina*, which features several flags from the museum's collection. Dedmond presented stories illustrating the incredible heroism displayed by Confederate flag bearers, including several from North Carolina.

Granville County Historical Society Museum

The museum has opened a new exhibit to honor the fiftieth anniversary of the armistice ending the Korean War. The exhibit, *Freedom is Not Free: The Korean War*, features memorabilia, photographs, and uniforms, and depicts a variety of war scenes, including a Mobile Army Surgical Hospital operating room, a field command tent, and a field gun emplacement. The display also features a time-line of events and a map of Korea that veterans may mark to indicate the locale of their service. The exhibit will run in the Harris Exhibit Hall through July 27. Hours of operation are 10:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M., Wednesday through Friday, and 11:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. on Saturday. Admission is free. For further information, contact museum director Pam Thornton at gcmuseum@gloryroad.net.

Greensboro Historical Museum

Dr. Deborah Barnes, a native of Greensboro and recently appointed director of the Lewis Walker Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnic Relations at Western Michigan University, delivered a paper entitled "Written in Blood: Reading American History in Lynching Narratives" at the museum on June 1. Dr. Barnes presented an overview of lynching as an American cultural practice and concluded her talk with readings from published accounts of lynchings, including several from North Carolina. The program was co-sponsored by the Greensboro Public Library.

The museum has opened a new spotlight exhibit, *Unforgettable: Fifties Evening Wear*, featuring dresses worn by area women on special occasions during the 1950s. Susan Webster, curator of textiles, selected the pieces for the display, which was underwritten by the Judy Davis Endowment. The exhibit will run through August 2004.

Lower Cape Fear Historical Society

At the annual meeting on May 4, winners of several awards presented by the society each year were announced. Susan Taylor Block, author of *Airlie: The Garden of Wilmington* and *Dressed in Sunlight: Eleanor Wright Beane*, received the 2003 Clarendon Award. Jeanie Lessing was honored with the Society Cup for her outstanding service and dedication to local history. Luann Mims was selected for the Cashman Award for her master's thesis, "Rural Preservation in an Urban Setting." The winner of the short story contest was Christy English for "Forked Road."

Mecklenburg Historical Association

Ann Williams, author of *Your Affectionate Daughter, Isabella*, was the featured speaker at the association's dinner meeting on May 19. Her book about Isabella Torrance is drawn largely from the Torrance-Banks Family Papers, the largest extant collection of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Mecklenburg County family papers, housed in the Rare Books and Manuscript Collection of the J. Murrey Atkins Library at UNC-Charlotte.

The Percy Adams Article Prize

The Southeastern American Society for Eighteenth Century Studies (SEASECS) is pleased to announce the 2003 round of its annual Percy Adams Article Prize. This prize recognizes excellence in scholarly studies on subjects from any discipline focusing on any aspect of the eighteenth century. Submissions of multi-disciplinary studies are especially encouraged. Authors of essays, publishers, or editors of journals, anthologies, or scholarly works containing independent essays, are invited to submit for consideration essays/articles published between September 1, 2002 and August 31, 2003. Three (3) off-prints or photocopies of published essays/articles should be sent to the chair of the 2003–2004 Article Prize Committee, Professor Robert M. Craig, College of Architecture, Georgia Tech, Atlanta, Georgia, 30332–0155 or rob.craig@arch.gatech.edu. Please provide your e-mail address to aid in acknowledging receipt of submissions. Submissions in part or in whole in a language other than English must be accompanied by translations into English. A committee of scholars of the eighteenth century representing various disciplines will review submitted essays and select the winner. Winning author(s) must be current members of SEASECS. The \$500 prize will be awarded at the SEASECS Annual Meeting in Savannah, March 2004. The deadline for submission is November 15, 2003.

Society for Historians of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era Best Article Prize

The Society for Historians of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era (SHGAPE) announces its biennial competition for the best published article by a new scholar dealing with any aspect of United States history between 1865 and 1917. The article must have appeared in a journal dated 2001 or 2002. Any graduate student or individual with a doctorate awarded after 1992 who has not yet published a book is eligible to compete for a \$500 award. An article may be submitted for consideration by the author or by others (e.g. a journal editor). The deadline is December 1, 2003. Questions or submissions—three copies of the article plus a copy of the table of contents of the issue in which it appeared—should be directed to: Jacqueline M. Moore, SHGAPE Prize Committee, Department of History, Austin College, 900 N. Grand Avenue, Sherman, TX, 27090.

Call for Lincolnia

The editors of the *Papers of Abraham Lincoln* seek to identify, transcribe, annotate, and produce high-quality images of all documents written by or to Lincoln. The ambitious project will eventually produce a free, comprehensive online edition of the papers, as well as a selective printed version. Any researcher or archivist who has uncovered Lincoln documents in unexpected places, such as small repositories, museums, or private collections, is requested to contact the project directors by e-mail at survey@papersofabrahamlincoln.org, by phone at (217) 785-9130, or by writing to the *Papers of Abraham Lincoln*, #1 Old State Capitol Plaza, Springfield, IL, 62701-1507.

New Leaves

EDITOR'S NOTE: *A special exhibit, Liberty Ships and Airships: North Carolina and the Battle of the Atlantic, opened at the North Carolina Transportation Museum this spring. Many staff members of the Division of State Historic Sites contributed to the research in support of the exhibit. This article reflects some of the findings of Richard F. Knapp, historic sites specialist in the division home office.*

“Liberty Ships and Airships: North Carolina and the Battle of the Atlantic”

by Richard F. Knapp

In the late 1930s Nazi Germany and Japan moved the world toward war. Germany and the Soviet Union dismantled Poland in 1939, France fell in 1940, and England stood alone. In 1939 the U.S. had no combat-ready infantry divisions, while Germany had ninety.¹ Belatedly Congress prepared to spend \$37 billion, more than the U.S. cost of World War I. In five years U.S. war output would include 300,000 aircraft, 5,400 merchant ships, 2.7 million machine guns, and 86,000 tanks.²

By 1940 preparation was well under way. President Franklin D. Roosevelt transferred fifty old warships to the British. He asked the U.S. Maritime Commission to build a “bridge of ships” and told the navy to patrol halfway across the Atlantic. Soon the navy was in an undeclared war with German submarines. Japan attacked Hawaii in December 1941, and America formally joined the war. The U.S. and Britain planned to defeat Germany first. Winning the Battle of the Atlantic was critical to English survival and Allied victory.

In 1941 (before Pearl Harbor) almost a thousand Allied or neutral merchant ships were sunk by enemy action, half of them by U-boats.³ Despite the presence of armed sailors on merchant ships since late that year, the navy was unprepared for anti-submarine warfare. The U.S. had only five subchasers and fewer than a hundred planes to patrol from Canada to New Orleans. But things got worse; from January to June 1942, almost four hundred ships were sunk in American waters.

Vessels were sunk in sight of swimmers, near Virginia Beach and off Wilmington. The Atlantic near Cape Hatteras was called “Torpedo Junction.” Burning oil slicks were common sights. U-boats surfaced to fire on sailors struggling in the water. Bodies washed ashore. Troops patrolled Carolina beaches at night.⁴

From January through April 1942, submarines sank an average of one ship every other day off the North Carolina coast.⁵ In June new construction of ships in Allied and neutral countries was less than 600,000 tons, while losses reached nearly 800,000 tons. In six months Allied navies sank less than one month's output of new U-boats.⁶

But the tide turned. U.S. production of naval escort vessels and standard-design merchantmen—Liberty ships—began to grow. Between 1941 and 1946 America purportedly produced more shipping tonnage than had been built in the previous history of the world.⁷ Airplanes patrolled near shore, and blimps extended surveillance farther offshore.



Convoys of merchant ships protected by U.S. Navy blimps made approximately 89,000 voyages without a single vessel sunk by enemy submarines. Photo courtesy of the Weeksville Naval Air Station Archives, Weeksville, N.C.

Ocean shipping was organized into guarded convoys, and by late 1942 coastal convoys lost only 0.5 percent of their ships.⁸

The United States rushed to develop military bases to train millions of men and women and factories to produce war material. Old factories and bases grew and new ones sprang up overnight. In North Carolina notable new bases included Camp Davis near Wilmington, Seymour Johnson Air Base, Camp Butner near Durham, Camp Lejeune, and Cherry Point Marine Air Station. Major expansion occurred at Fort Bragg. Shipyards in Elizabeth City, New Bern, and Wilmington began to build subchasers, minesweepers, and Liberty ships.⁹ At Weeksville, near Elizabeth City, the navy built a blimp base. Three miles below Wilmington, on the Cape Fear River, work began in February 1941 to convert fifty-seven acres of sand and woods into a shipyard. The new North Carolina Shipbuilding Company began building ships there in May.

Standardization was essential to construction of the Liberty ships. Speed and economy depended on one basic design built time after time. The Maritime Commission chose a simple British model—length about 400 feet, speed 11 knots, capacity around 10,000 tons. Ships were rapidly assembled at many sites, and numerous vendors supplied interchangeable parts to all shipyards. The venture was much larger than a similar effort in World War I that had produced 110 ships.

Using a sort of assembly line and pre-assembled modular components, a record number of ships were built in record time. Steel plates and shapes came into a yard and were pre-fabricated into major sections of ships. These sections went by rail or crane to the ways, where cranes lifted them onto hulls for final assembly. Most of that work was welding; a Liberty ship had about 600,000 feet of welds, rather than rivets. Steel Liberty ships were the first all-welded ships produced in large numbers. Hatch covers, however, remained

wooden and could float as life rafts. After launching, ships received final painting, electrical work, and lifeboats.

More than a dozen shipyards constructed well over 2,500 Liberty ships in five years, the largest run of any ship design in history. Two-thirds of the cargo leaving wartime America went in Liberty ships. Two hundred of the vessels were sunk. Only two restored Liberty ships survive today—the *John W. Brown* in Baltimore, and the *Jeremiah O'Brien* in San Francisco.

Two types of cargo vessels were constructed during the war. The first was the EC-2 (E for emergency) Liberty ship. A standard plan yielded freighters, tankers, troop carriers, hospital ships, ammunition ships, and even aircraft carriers. The general cargo vessel, the most common type, had five cargo holds, a 2,500-horsepower steam engine, and one propeller shaft. The vessel was 441 feet long and 57 feet wide, and carried about 8,500 long tons of cargo.¹⁰ Common defensive weapons were .50 caliber and 20 mm. machine guns. A crew might consist of around ninety civilian seamen and armed naval guards. One major variation was the similarly sized Liberty tanker, which had dummy deck cargo and equipment to hide its tanker identity.

As the war progressed, shipyards began building modified Liberty ships called C-2 ships, better suited for postwar commerce. The C-2 vessels were 459 feet long, 63 feet wide, with engines of 6,000 horsepower. Late-war C-2s had passenger cabins or refrigerated cargo space. C-2s also were navy transport, ammunition, and headquarters ships. Some remained active navy ships for twenty-five years.

The North Carolina Shipbuilding Company (NCSC) was a subsidiary of the huge Newport News Shipbuilding Company of Virginia and one of the nation's original emergency shipyards. By 1940 Wilmington citizens were promoting their region as a potential location for a shipyard.¹¹ The site, with fresh deepwater and rail access, was the best place on the South Atlantic coast for such a facility.¹²

A group of contractors quickly built the initial yard, which in five years expanded to cover 160 acres and had nine shipways, each capable of launching ships. The project, eventually costing more than \$20 million, included more than a mile of waterfront, five miles of paved roads, nineteen miles of railroad track, sixty-seven heavy cranes, and dozens of buildings. By May 1943 production peaked at eleven ships in a single month.¹³

Shipyards workers won every award offered by the Maritime Commission. In five years 243 ships with a deadweight of 2.4 million tons and a length end-to-end of 21 miles were produced, of which 28 were lost (23 by enemy action) in the war. With energetic workers and a mild climate in which much work could be done outdoors, the shipyard delivered vessels on the average after 403,400 man-hours, whereas its contracts allowed up to 640,700 man-hours per ship. The savings in time, combined with low southern wages, enabled Wilmington to set national records for low-cost production of Liberty ships.¹⁴

Production accelerated as the company expanded on-site capacity for steel fabrication, added ever-heavier cranes to build larger sub-assemblies, increased the number of shipways, and thoroughly trained workers. The first ship, the *Zebulon B. Vance*, was delivered in 271 days. Within a year, ships took less than fifty days. In 1943 the *Cornelia P. Spencer* was built in thirty-two days.¹⁵

Fifty-one ships were delivered in 1942, 79 in 1943, 58 in 1944, 44 in 1945, and 4 in 1946. Seven others were launched but undelivered when the shipyard closed in May 1946.¹⁶ Of Wilmington's 243 ships, 126 were Liberty ships. The others were C-2s—some

navy cargo carriers and the rest cargo, passenger-cargo (a few with swimming pools), or partly refrigerated for civilian use.¹⁷

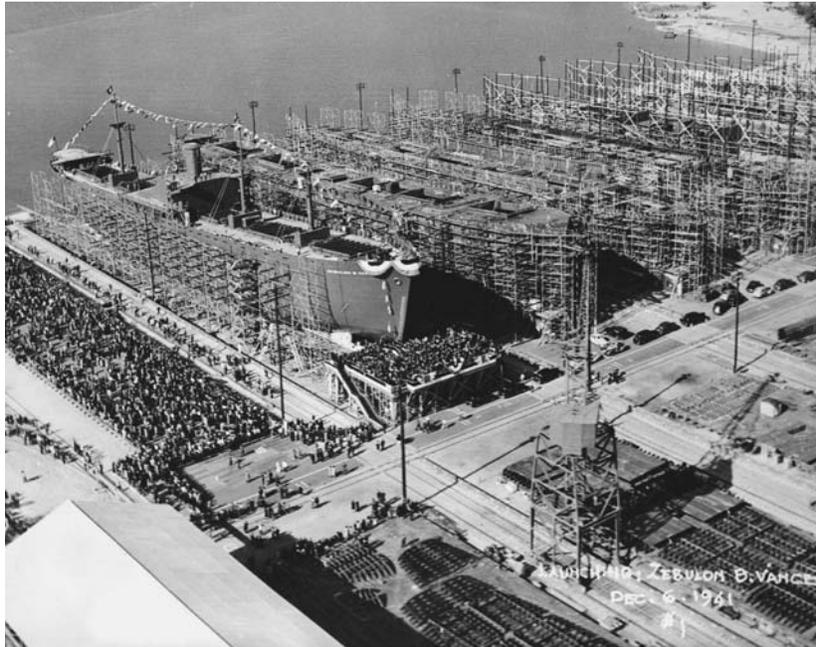
The shipyard and Camp Davis caused a boom and great overcrowding in Wilmington, which had a population of 33,000 in 1940. By 1943 the shipyard employed 21,000 (with a yearly payroll of 370 percent of the town's total payroll in 1940), and Wilmington's population had more than doubled since 1940.¹⁸ That explosive growth caused housing shortages, traffic congestion, strains on infrastructure, and shortages of food, as rationing was based on the 1940 population. Workers rented rooms and attic apartments. Some lived in 530 small trailers funded by the federal government, which also built housing projects, such as 3,762 homes at Maffitt Village near the shipyard. There were lines for everything—buses, food, movies, and gasoline.¹⁹

Newport News initially transferred some of its own experienced personnel, from apprentices to managers, to Wilmington. When the supply of local skilled labor at Wilmington was exhausted, the company turned to surrounding rural areas. Most shipyard workers came from within two hundred miles of Wilmington, as many country folk sought good defense jobs. Hundreds of Lumbee Indian workers rode buses three hours from Lumberton. During the war, 6,813 workers resigned to join the armed forces or merchant marine.²⁰

The shipyard used on-the-job training and established trade schools for workers in the electrical, plumbing, pipe, welding, sheet metal, and steam engineering departments. More than seven thousand welders were trained.²¹



At its peak the North Carolina Shipbuilding Company in Wilmington had the best productivity record of any of the Liberty shipbuilders. After the war, the yard was held in reserve as a stand-by yard until the 1950s, when it was liquidated. The *Velma Lykes*, shown here, was built in Wilmington and delivered in May of 1945. She was sold privately and then scrapped in 1971. Photo courtesy of the New Hanover County Public Library, Wilmington, N.C.



The keel for the *Zebulon B. Vance*, shown here and also built in Wilmington, was laid May 22, 1941. She was launched December 6, 1941 and delivered February 17, 1942. A total of 198 days were spent on the ways and 73 days were spent in the water. She was sold privately in 1947 and then scrapped in 1970. Photo courtesy of the New Hanover County Public Library, Wilmington, N.C.

Around six thousand workers were African Americans. Segregation affected housing and daily city life. The shipyard had three sets of rest rooms—for whites, blacks, and Lumbees. Some African Americans held skilled jobs, such as riveters, riggers, and drillers, on integrated crews; others served on all-black teams. There was tension when blacks entered formerly all-white skilled trades. Yet other southern shipyards rejected any degree of integration.²²

Approximately 1,200 women were production workers, such as welders, working eight-hour days, seven days a week. The number of women peaked in 1943 at 1,628. They labored as band saw operators, messengers, drillers, electrical and plumbing workers, and clerks. The company offered day care for their children. No women worked the third shift.²³

Work went on around the clock. The company cafeteria was open nearly all day. The medical department grew to seven doctors and seventeen nurses. Safety was a challenge; in five years there were 115,000 accidents but only fifteen fatalities. The NCSC supported sports and recreation for its workers.²⁴

Despite the tremendous shipyard output, all was not patriotism and pride. There were substantial allegations from a new national shipyard union of unfair labor practices by the company.²⁵ The union grew to 250,000 members in 40 local branches. Management at Wilmington, as generally in the South, was anti-union. Workers voted at a federally required election in 1942 for no local union, but a sizable minority, which claimed company electoral intimidation, wanted the union. Yet the work continued. In 1945, as production eased, the National Labor Relations Board heard 96 days of testimony from 668

witnesses on alleged anti-union practices. The company paid 51 workers in an out-of-court settlement in late 1946. Hard feelings lasted for years.²⁶

A number of the Liberty ships launched at Wilmington had interesting histories. The *Zebulon B. Vance*, named for the state's Civil War governor and Wilmington's first Liberty ship, was launched on December 6, 1941. She was converted into a hospital ship. Three of the seven Liberty ships designated Gallant ships for exceptional crew courage were from Wilmington. The *Nathaniel Greene*, a Gallant ship, was Wilmington's second ship. On a voyage to Russia, the ship was incessantly attacked by enemy planes and submarines but reached port despite many casualties. She later was torpedoed off North Africa but successfully beached. The *Virginia Dare*, another Gallant ship, laden with high explosives, reached Russia after seventeen days of enemy bomb and torpedo attacks. Later torpedoed in the Mediterranean, she too was beached. The *William Moultrie* also won Gallant ship status on the Russian run.

The *John Harvey* was attacked by German planes in an Italian harbor. The planes sank seventeen ships, killing a thousand men. A nearby tanker blew up, and the *John Harvey* exploded and sank, killing all aboard. The ship carried two thousand bombs of mustard gas, which spread over the harbor and ashore, killing dozens. The *Mount Hood*, an ammunition ship laden with three thousand tons of explosives, exploded in the Pacific. All aboard perished. The largest fragment found on the ocean floor was 16-by-10 feet.

The *Starlight*, a troop transport, sank years later while carrying bombs to Vietnam. Bombs broke loose inside the ship and rolled around for nine days. Then an exploding bomb blew a hole in the hull. Sailors abandoned ship in a gale, but few survived. The burning hulk floated for ten days. The *White Falcon* became the first all-container ship in U.S. foreign trade. Renamed the *Mayaguez*, she was seized at sea by a Cambodian gunboat. American military action freed the *Mayaguez* and her crew. The ship was scrapped in 1979.

Another key Tar Heel contribution in the Battle of the Atlantic was as a base for blimps that patrolled for submarines. After World War I the U.S. Navy took an interest in airships. The rigid airship (with an interior frame, often aluminum) reached its zenith under the Zeppelin Company, which built airships for the U.S. Navy and transatlantic airships, such as the *Hindenburg*. The navy had four or five such airships, some three times as long as a jumbo jet. By 1935 all had crashed or been decommissioned.²⁷ After the *Hindenburg* disintegrated in a fire in New Jersey in 1937, smaller non-rigid airships filled with helium, rather than lighter but flammable hydrogen, became preferable. In such navy airships, officially called blimps after 1943, interior gas pressure rather than the frame gave shape and lift to the ship.

Congress in 1940 authorized forty-eight new blimps and ten bases from Massachusetts to Texas and on the West Coast. Tiny Weeksville, N.C., near large naval facilities in Norfolk, was chosen for a base, as blimps there could cover the Hampton Roads and Cape Hatteras areas.

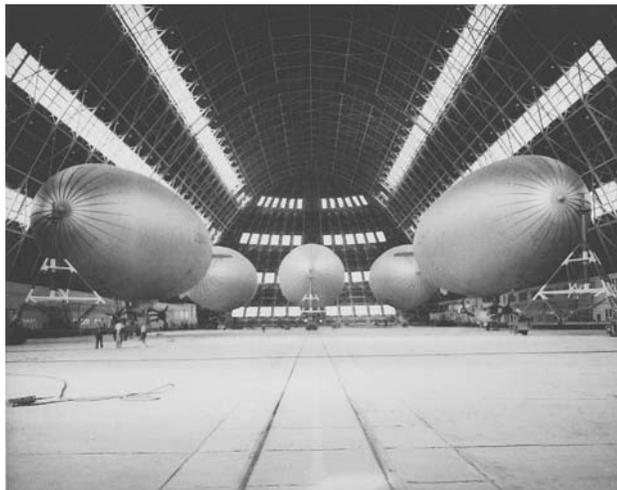
In 1942 submarines sank 454 merchant ships off the American coast. The U.S. at first had only a few ships, about 160 planes, and a handful of airships with which to counter the subs. A blimp could hover over a target, fly twice as fast as subs or move slowly for hours on end, and carry sensors and armament to protect shipping. It could escort ships at night and in bad weather. A blimp might locate and float over a submarine, while surface vessels attacked it. The navy's inventory of blimps peaked in 1944 at 148. They escorted about 89,000 voyages by merchant ships, reputedly without a single escorted ship in a convoy being sunk by submarines. For more than a year, not a single blimp went down.

In August 1941 construction began at Naval Air Station (NAS) Weeksville on a huge steel hangar or airdock, helium storage and service areas, barracks, a power plant, a landing mat, and a mobile mooring mast. A second contract provided for a wooden hangar and additional facilities. The \$6 million, 822-acre base opened in June 1942 with ten miles of railroad track, hangar space for twelve navy “K” airships, and housing for 850 men. By July 1943 the second hangar was done, the first of seventeen wooden hangars in the nation, each saving eight million pounds of steel for war use. The hangars were approximately 1,070 feet long, 296 feet wide, and 192 feet high, each covering seven acres. The few surviving hangars remain the largest wooden structures in the world.



Grounds crew control the landing of a naval airship near Weeksville in 1944. Photo courtesy of the Weeksville Naval Air Station Archives, Weeksville, N.C.

Airship squadron ZP-14 was established at Weeksville in June 1942, close to the Elizabeth City Coast Guard Air Station, a seaplane base. The squadron escorted ships, located submarines, and performed search-and-rescue missions. In 1944 Squadron ZP-14 was replaced by ZP-24 (eight blimps) and transferred to North Africa, making the first transatlantic flight by blimps. During the war around thirty-five blimps were at Weeksville at various times. As mentioned before, in 1942, before Weeksville began operations, a ship was lost every other day to submarines off North Carolina. After blimp patrols began, only one vessel every two and a half months was lost.



Naval airships in one of the hangars at NAS Weeksville during World War II. Photo courtesy of the Weeksville Naval Air Station Archives, Weeksville, N.C.

K-ships were the most common navy airships. They were 251 feet long, with a crew of nine to twelve, and armed with depth charges, bombs, or torpedoes. The blimps had a maximum speed of 67 knots and a range of 2,000 miles; cruised at 500 feet but could climb to 6,500 feet; and routinely flew up to 24 hours. The very low gas pressure inside their outer skin allowed them to fly for a time even with a hole in the envelope.

Initially, blimp crewmen visually located enemy submarines in up to sixty feet of water. Later crews used sound, electronic, and

magnetic means. Easy targets, blimps located subs rather than battled them, but there were a few cases of combat with U-boats. Aided by blimps, U.S. and Allied navies sank hundreds of subs. Twenty blimps were lost.²⁸

The main parts of a blimp are the envelope, the outer skin filled with helium under low pressure; ballonets, small balloons inside the envelope that hold “heavy” air as ballast; the gondola for crew and equipment; and aircraft engines on the gondola to provide forward or backward motion. Since helium is lighter than air or oxygen, a blimp can rise into the air. To ascend, the pilot frees air from the ballonets; the blimp, lighter than air, rises. As it rises, outside air pressure drops and the helium expands, so the pilot adds air to the ballonets to maintain level flight. Rudders and elevators facilitate steering. To descend, the pilot fills the ballonets with air.²⁹

While the war had a dramatic impact on Wilmington and Elizabeth City, the boom in Wilmington faded soon after the conflict ended in 1945. The shipyard and Camp Davis almost disappeared, but tangible reminders remained for years. The shipyard became a state-run port. A few of the old buildings still remain. Dozens of Liberty ships from Wilmington and elsewhere were mothballed in the Brunswick River a mile away; the last was scrapped in 1969. Today some housing built for shipyard workers survives as affordable housing. Wrightsville Beach never went back to being a summer town.

The blimps left Weeksville but returned in 1947. The base had ten blimps and twelve helicopters in the mid-1950s. Blimps patrolled for Russian submarines but on occasion also looked for moonshine stills; one sailor preferred submarines, which didn’t shoot at airships. Anti-submarine technology evolved toward other aircraft, hunter-killer submarines, and undersea listening devices. In 1961 the last navy blimps were retired. NAS Weeksville closed in 1957. Only a few buildings now remain.

From 1971 to 1995 TCOM, L.P. made tethered aerostats (non-powered blimps), and Westinghouse built and maintained blimps in the wooden Airdock 2. After a 1995 fire destroyed the hangar, TCOM moved to steel Airdock 1 and repaired its huge doors, which had been closed for thirty years. TCOM develops lighter-than-air technology. Most American blimps today, except those manufactured by Goodyear, were built or are serviced at Weeksville.³⁰

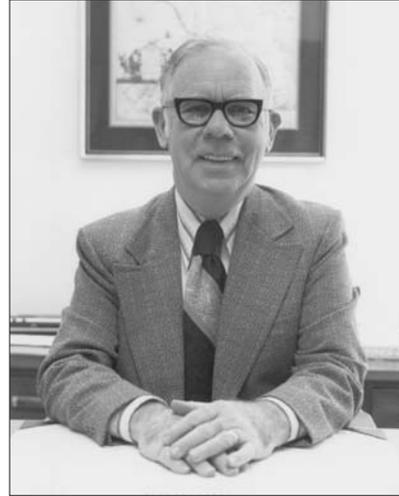
Notes

1. Russell F. Weigley, *History of the United States Army* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1967), 418-419. *The author would like to recognize especially Liza Cahoon, Stephen Chalker, and Ralph Scott, upon whose research much of this depends.*
2. Samuel E. Morison and Henry S. Commager, *The Growth of the American Republic*, 5th ed., 2 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962), 2: 785.
3. Morison and Commager, *Growth*, 789. Before Pearl Harbor seven U.S. merchantmen and the destroyer USS *Reuben James* were sunk by U-boats.
4. William S. Powell, *North Carolina through Four Centuries* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1989), 500.
5. www.elizcity.com/weeksas/timeline.htm. Three U-boats (U-85, U-352, and U-701) sank off North Carolina in 1942.
6. Morison and Commager, *Growth*, 790; *Wartime Wilmington* booklet from Wilmington newspaper (1991), 22.
7. <http://store.aetv.com/html/catalog/vp01.jhtml?id=40238>. This data is from the History Channel’s *Victory at Sea: Mass-Producing Liberty*.
8. Morison and Commager, *Growth*, 791. Transatlantic convoys lost 1.4 percent in the whole year.
9. Powell, *North Carolina*, 500-502.

10. www.goerie.com/liberty/about_the_john_w_brown.html
11. Ralph Lee Scott, "Welding the Sinews of War: A History of the North Carolina Shipbuilding Corporation" (master's thesis, East Carolina University, 1979), chap. 1 notes.
12. North Carolina Shipbuilding Company, *Five Years of North Carolina Shipbuilding* (1946), 8.
13. North Carolina Shipbuilding Company, *Five Years*, 7, 11-12.
14. North Carolina Shipbuilding Company, *Five Years*, 14. L. A. Sawyer and W. H. Mitchell, *The Liberty Ships: The History of the "Emergency" type Cargo ships constructed in the United States during the Second World War*, 2d ed. (Colchester; New York: Lloyd's of London Press Ltd, 1985), 109. Four Liberties were scuttled as breakwaters during the Normandy invasion. One ammunition-laden C-2 exploded in the Pacific.
15. www.coltoncompany.com/shipbldg/ussbldrs/wwii/merchantshipbuilders/northcarolina.htm.
16. North Carolina Shipbuilding Company, *Five Years*, 45-48.
17. North Carolina Shipbuilding Company, *Five Years*, 12-14.
18. *Wartime Wilmington*, 6-8, 11; North Carolina Shipbuilding Company, *Five Years*, 15; Wilbur D. Jones Jr., *A Sentimental Journey: Memoirs of a Wartime Boomtown* (Shippensburg, Pa.: White Mane Books, 2002), 236, has the best discussion of population.
19. *Wartime Wilmington*, 8; North Carolina Shipbuilding Company, *Five Years*, 16.
20. Sawyer and Mitchell, *Liberty Ships*, 108-109; *Wartime Wilmington*, 6; North Carolina Shipbuilding Company, *Five Years*, 18. Thirty-seven hundred workers lived more than 25 miles from the shipyard. About 400 managers and others came from Newport News. Scott, "Welding," chap. 4; North Carolina Shipbuilding Company, *Five Years*, 7.
21. North Carolina Shipbuilding Company, *Five Years*, 19.
22. Scott, "Welding," chap. 4; *Wartime Wilmington*, 7.
23. Scott, "Welding," chap. 4.
24. North Carolina Shipbuilding Company, *Five Years*, 19, 37, 42; Scott, "Welding," chap. 4.
25. Scott, "Welding," chap. 5.
26. Scott, "Welding," chap. 5.
27. www.nastillamook.org/history.htm
28. *Blimp Goes to War* (Video).
29. www.howstuffworks.com/blimp.htm
30. The steel airdock is one of two remaining. Seven *wooden* airdocks remain standing elsewhere: two at NAS Santa Ana, Calif.; two at NAS Moffett Field, Calif.; two at NAS Lakehurst, N.J.; and one at NAS Tillamook, Ore. www.nastillamook.org/sisters/index/htm.

Old Leaves

A pictorial remembrance of former state archivist Dr. Thornton W. Mitchell, who passed away on May 14, 2003.



TOP LEFT: Dr. Mitchell and H. G. Jones, with Mrs. Clifton Beckwith and Mrs. J. M. Broughton, at the display of Jacob Marling portraits in the Archives and History/State Library Building in 1969. CENTER LEFT: Dr. Mitchell, Graham Ferrell, Mrs. Grace J. Rohrer, and Cathy McCarter inspect the construction of the new State Records Center in 1975. BOTTOM LEFT: Dr. Mitchell and wife Memory F. Mitchell received the Christopher Crittenden Award during Culture Week in 1981. TOP RIGHT: Dr. Mitchell at his desk in the State Archives in 1978. BOTTOM RIGHT: Portrait, 1979.

Carolina Comments

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