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Federation NCHS
Bulletin

October 2026 Federation of North Carolina Historical Societies
Volume 46, no. 10

Federation News

The 1786 Haley House, part of the High Point Museum's Historic Park, will be open to Federation Newsome Award Presentation attendees before the 4 p.m. event on Tuesday, October 27. The house is the oldest in Guilford County still on its original foundation. retouched image: Wikimedia commons photo

Join us October 27, 4-5:30 p.m. for a reception to honor the Federation's special America 250 NC Newsome Award winners at the **High Point Museum**! We will be honoring three members and projects for outstanding local history contributions to the America 250 NC commemoration:

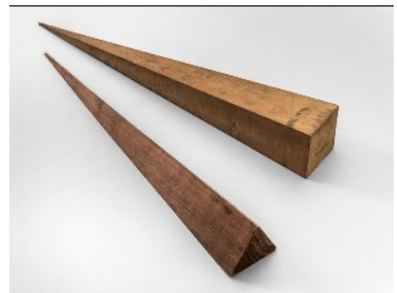
City of Raleigh Museum's participatory project and exhibit, *Patterns of Belonging: English Learners' Reflections on America 250*. Building on a special curriculum for English Language Learners that explored the themes of freedom, culture, and the American dream, the museum incorporated 30 student journals with reflections and drawings into the exhibit, as well as a mural with shapes inspired by patterns the students contributed. Artist Adriana Ameigh, a Puerto Rican abstract painter, sculptor, and muralist based in Raleigh created the exhibit centerpiece from the students' drawings.

- **Odyssey for Democracy**'s Black Oral Histories of Beaufort County project highlights efforts to preserve Black community stories through 22 interviews. The organization partnered with 13 local and national nonprofits, including Federation members **Washington Waterfront Underground Railroad Museum**, **P.S. Jones Museum**, and **Historic Port of Washington Project**.
- **Stanly County Museum and Historical Society**'s America's 250th Field Trips and Traveling Exhibit project hosted field trips for 3rd graders across the county, integrating museum visits, a scavenger hunt, and library programs. The museum coordinator is also completing visits to all 5th grade classrooms, for a total of 2,300 students in 2026.

All Federation members are welcome to attend. Please sign up if you plan to come, or email Federation coordinator Adrienne Berney (adrienne.berney@dncr.nc.gov) so we can plan as hospitable a reception as possible.

A key member of the Federation's DNCR staff team, Danielle Shirilla, is transitioning to a position as Digital Projects and Outreach Manager for the NC Digital Heritage Center. She'll still be advancing our office's mission of supporting history and collecting organizations statewide, with a new focus on digitization and access. Digital NC is such an important partner in this work, and it's wonderful that Federation members will have another friendly face at UNC. Find Dani's new contact at digitalnc.org/about/staff/. Above left: Dani worked with intern Ari Smith to assist **Historic Turner House** director Cheryl Williams with a cataloging project as part of the Traveling Archivist Program in May.

Member News



The star pattern and point molds in the Old Salem Museums & Gardens collection (985 b) were used to make 26-point stars in Salem and came from a local family. Julius A. Leinback (1834-1930) is credited with making the first Moravian stars in Salem with wooden molds. [See object #16 in Our State's article.]

Our State Magazine's "North Carolina in 50 Objects," includes contributions from the **High Point Historical Society** and two DNCR locations: 1989 Southern Furniture Market ephemera from High Point (#13); a Carolina tartan kilt from the **NC Museum of History** (#19); and a tool from the **Thomas Day State Historic Site** (#22). How many of the 50 objects connect to your museum's collection?

Chatham County Historical Association has contributed to another episode of PBS North Carolina's Homegrown History, The Forgotten Coal Mine That Built a Nation. Coalfields along North Carolina's Deep River helped build the U.S. Enslaved laborers forged munitions during the Revolutionary War from the coal, which later powered the Confederacy and industrialization. Although the mine was a valuable resource, its history includes great risk and tragedy.

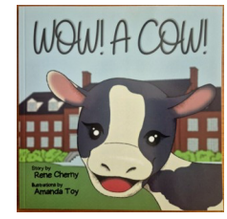
Gaston Museum of Art & History Congratulations to Director Ali Pizza for winning the 2026 Museum Leadership award from the Southeastern Museums Conference!

Digital NC Additions:

Charlotte Mecklenburg Library contributed five new yearbooks including three years of *Crisp N' Curls* from the Presbyterian Hospital School of Nursing in Charlotte, 1953-1955; the 1966 edition of *Tryonta* from Tryon High School; and the 1951 edition of *Chenoca* from Cherryville High School.

Member Events

- Now through Oct. 24, **Kings Mountain Historical Museum**, in partnership with the Catawba Cultural Center presents the exhibit, *Choosing Sides: The Catawba Nation & the Fight for Independence*.
- Now through Oct. 22, **City of Raleigh Museum** exhibit, *The Park with a City in It*, celebrating 50 years of the Raleigh greenway system. Adam Forman, Assistant Director of Parks, Recreation & Cultural Resources, will discuss "Capital Area Greenway: The Next 50 Years" on Oct. 6 at noon.
- Oct. 5, 7-8 p.m. **Wake County Historical Society**, Isaac Hunter and His Tavern, Mordecai Visitors Center Classroom. Having researched the Hunters for over 20 years, WCHS President Emeritus Belle Long will delve into the family's history to discuss how Isaac made his mark on the county and state. Tickets $5 members; $10 nonmembers.
- Oct. 6, 4:30, **Page-Walker Arts & History Center**, *Wow! A Cow!* Special Children's Reading. Bring your K–2nd grade readers to see and hear a new picture book bringing a treasured chapter of Cary's history to life. Cary Town Council Representative Michelle Craig will be the featured reader, and author Rene Cherny will be there to meet participants. After the reading, children can enjoy an activity inspired by the book. Based on an oral history provided by David J. Martin, a Cary resident who grew up in Cary during the Depression, *Wow! A Cow!* reflects themes of resilience, community, and the lessons learned through hard and honest work. **Info:** http://www.friendsofpagewalker.org; 919-460-4963.



- Oct. 10, 10 a.m.-noon, **Ahoskie Museum**. Two presentations on Revolutionary topics will include War, Tea, & Textiles, with Paige Myers, Textile Conservator from the NC Museum of History; light refreshments.
- Oct. 10, 10 a.m. & 1:30 p.m., **Person County Museum of History** will offer guided tours of the Shorty Lawson Museum of the Black Tenant Farmer. Free event; registration required.

- Oct. 10, all day, **Charlotte Museum of History**, East Side Sol. A vibrant celebration of East Charlotte and Hispanic Heritage Month, filled with curiosity, culture, and community! Free event.
- Oct. 12, 11 a.m., **Sampson County History Museum**, A Tea Party Steeped in History with Alison Carr portraying Betsy Ross. Tickets $35; for reservations contact **Kay Raynor**, 910-305-1534.
- Oct. 16, 5:30, **Historic Saluda** presents, Stories from the Cemetery. Tickets $20.
- Oct. 17, 2-4 p.m., **Southport Historical Society**, Living Voices of the Past at the Old Smithville Burying Ground. A dozen historical Southport citizens will present, including five new historical portrayals. $5 suggested donation. All proceeds support the Old Jail Museum.
- Oct. 23-25, 5:30 p.m. **Chatham County Historical Association**, Spirits of Pittsboro's Past walking tours. Take a guided walk through downtown Pittsboro for a memorable evening of local folklore and costumed interpreters portraying figures from the town's past. The journey begins at the historic courthouse and winds through old cemeteries and more. Tickets: $25 members; $30 nonmembers.
- Oct. 24, 1-2:30 p.m. **Preservation Zebulon,** Time Capsule reveal and creation at PNC Bank, Arendell Ave. In October 1976, a group of Zebulon citizens held a ceremony with more than 100 people to bury a time capsule at People's Bank (now PNC Bank). Exactly 50 years after the original ceremony, PZ will present this treasure and reveal the contents. The group is also soliciting contributions for a new time capsule intended for Zebulon residents in 2076!
- Oct. 24, **Museum & Archives of Rockingham County**, Revolutionary Roundtable, a discussion honoring the service and sacrifice of Rockingham County's Revolutionary War patriots and exploring their lasting legacies with stories and insights from local historians and descendants.
- Oct. 27, 6-7, **Asheville Museum of History**, Hike with a Historian: the History of Fred Seely's Overlook Castle with Heath Towson. Tickets: members free; nonmembers $10.
  Nov. 8, 3 - 4:30 p.m., **Greensboro History Museum,** Revolutionary Road Trip: a Conversation with Darley Newman. Travel expert Darley Newman chats with Museum Director Carol Ghiorsi Hart about her new book, *Revolutionary Road Trip: Hidden Stories of America's Founding Journey.* The book follows the host of PBS's *Travels with Darley* on a journey through American Revolution sites, including Guilford County.
- Nov. 12, 6 - 8:30 p.m. **Preservation Zebulon**'s Zebulation at the Olde Raleigh Distillery will feature the winners of PZ preservation awards and the annual Zebulon Memory Project film, "Answering the Call: The Perry Fire Chiefs," which documents the service of Sidney Perry and his son Chris as leaders of Zebulon's Fire Department. $50 tickets include a catered meal from Parker's Barbecue, tea, dessert, and a cash bar.
- Nov. 16, 6:30 p.m., **Mecklenburg Historical Society**, Amanda Brantley, Site Manager at Reed Gold Mine, will present the Gold Rush in North Carolina. in the Fellowship Hall of the Trinity Presbyterian Church, 3115 Providence Road, Charlotte.
- Nov. 17, noon-5 p.m., **Preservation NC**, Fayetteville Ramble. Highlights include a stop at the Museum of the Cape Fear's 1897 Poe House. Tickets $25.
- Nov. 21, **Lincoln County Historical Association**, Author Elliot Secrest will discuss his book, Patriot Colonel, the Life and Times of Frances Locke at the Lincoln Cultural Center. Free program. Call 828-777-8707 for more information.

DNCR News

America 250 NC will return to the State Fair this year, October 15-25! Come see our display each day in Dorton Arena. Above, Archivist Michelle Witt staffed the event in 2025.

Library of North Carolina is excited to announce fiscal year 2027-2028 LSTA grant opportunities. Libraries are invited to apply for funding that supports a new or improved program or service that will solve a specific problem or meet an identified need of the library's current or potential users. [Consider partnering with your public library for a local history initiative!]

DNCR History Events

- Oct. 7, noon-1 p.m. hybrid program, **Museum of the Albemarle**, Thomas Day – Cabinetmaker and Free Person of Color. Day was renowned for his work in North Carolina and Virginia. Despite being an enslaver, he had ties to northern abolitionists and the American Colonization Society, Assistant Site Manager David Rayburn of **Thomas Day State Historic Site** will discuss Day's contradictory life and the research conducted since his home and workshop were acquired by the State of N.C. in 2024.
- Oct. 7, noon-1 p.m., virtual program, **State Archives of N.C.**, Not All Were Patriots: The Other Side of the American Revolution in North Carolina. Archives staff will explore some of the varied reasons why individuals and groups were not able to support independence in 1776. Some fought for the Crown, while others fought for their right to neutrality.
- Oct. 10, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., **President James K. Polk Historic Site**, "The Enslaved Polks" Wayside Unveiling and Historical Hearth Cooks Demonstration, "Small beer" could be made at home with simple ingredients, barley malt, hops and water. It could be cooked over the daily fire and, though it did not have a long shelf life, it could be made in big or small batches.
- Oct. 14, 7 p.m., the **Library of NC and State Archives** host NC Trivia Night at the Transfer Co. Food Hall in Raleigh. Join in the fun with fascinating trivia about the Old North State. Bragging rights are on the line in this Carolina contest of wits! No registration required.
- Oct. 17, **President James K. Polk Historic Site**, Death & Dying special tour exploring the place of death in the early 1800s. Walk through the steps of a wake with a trained docent who will explain the community's past response to death, body preparation, the wake, burial, and stone cutting techniques. The quarter-mile tour ends in Polk family cemetery. Tickets: $8 adults; $5 seniors/children.
- Oct. 21, noon-1 p.m., hybrid program, **Museum of the Albemarle**. Honoring Holocaust Survivors Who Moved to North Carolina. Lee Holder, director of the Gizella Gross Abramson Holocaust Center in Kinston, will discuss the lives of some of the 390 Holocaust survivors who moved to North Carolina, featured in the exhibit *Finding Home Again*, on display at the Museum of the Albemarle.
- Oct. 24, 1-2 p.m., Mayo River State Park, Byrd's Ledge History Hike. Learn about the local history of the dividing line between North Carolina and Virginia.
- Oct. 28, noon–1 p.m., virtual program, **NC Museum of History**, History at High Noon: Maco Light. Explore the mystery of the Maco Light, one of North Carolina's most famous ghost stories! Reported for more than a century near old train tracks in Brunswick County, this legend is about a ghostly railroad conductor named Joe Baldwin. After a tragic accident, some claimed to spot Baldwin's spirit searching for his lost head. This talk will examine the real history behind the tale and how the story became an important part of local folklore.
- Nov. 4, 2-3 p.m., virtual program, **State Archives of NC**, Friends of the Archives Annual Meeting: Remembering the American Revolution in the Cherokee Homeland. Shana Bushyhead Condill (Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians), Executive Director of the Museum of the Cherokee People, and Andrew Denson, professor of history at Western Carolina University, will discuss the challenges involved in remembering the Revolution in the mountain region. In particular, they will examine the planning and creation of the Museum of the Cherokee People's current exhibition, *Unrelenting: Cherokee People and the American Revolution*. A brief presentation of FoA business will follow the program at approximately 3 p.m.
- Nov. 10, 6-8 p.m., **NC Museum of History**, "The Samuel Adams of North Carolina?": Cornelius Harnett and the Revolution in North Carolina. presentation by Professor Jason Stroud in conjunction with the exhibit *Witnesses to the Revolution: North Carolina and the War for Independence*, a collaborative effort with the Wilson Library, UNC. Only dimly remembered today, Cornelius Harnett of Wilmington was recognized in his time as among North Carolina's most powerful and influential Patriot leaders. This lecture will explore the American Revolution in North Carolina by taking a closer look at Harnett's life.

Free Webinars

- Oct 6, 2 p.m. New Art Preservation Fund grants. If you need help for a conservation project, this is your chance to learn about a new grant! (Applications due Oct. 30.) A recording will be shared on the **APF** website. Submit questions in advance by emailing admin@artpreservationfund.org.

- Oct. 6, 4-5 p.m., Collection Moves: Success through Flexibility and Realistic Expectations, **FAIC Connecting to Collections Care**. Drawing on the Minnesota Historical Society's Ramsey House project, Collections Manager Todd Topper will discuss the process of inventorying, packing, documenting, and relocating approximately 18,000 objects, while sharing workflows, partnerships, challenges, and lessons learned.
- Oct. 8, 10 a.m., Building Competitive Grant Applications, **Visit NC**. Dr. Amy Wade of UNC's School of Government will discuss the fundamentals of successful grant writing. Whether you're new to grant writing or looking to strengthen future applications, you'll leave with practical tips to develop more competitive proposals.
- Oct. 15, 2 p.m., Learn to Build Your Own Clamshell Box, **Gaylord Archival**. Conservator Rebecca Elder will provide step-by-step instructions.
- Oct. 18 - Dec. 8, Documenting America **Wikipedia Course**. This **free** course teaches best practices in contributing evidence-based, comprehensive information to promote a deeper understanding of American history and provides a chance to shine a light on your community's local history. 8 weekly online courses, 2-3 p.m.; **Deadline to register: Oct. 9**
- Oct. 22, noon – 1 p.m. The Art of the Ask: Tips for Crafting Compelling Grant Narratives, **DHPSNY**. As grant funds become harder to secure, creating compelling grant narratives that sell your organization has never been more important. Join professional writer Lori Litchman for tips to strengthen your grant proposals through storytelling and strong writing.
- Oct. 27, 12:30-1:30 p.m. Grant Writing for Collections Preservation, **NEDCC**. Learn how to jump start a preservation project and apply for grant funding.
- Oct. 28, noon-1 p.m. Salvage Priorities: What's Next?, **CCAHA**. How do you communicate collection salvage priorities beyond your own institution? With the help of case studies, Preventative Conservator Maddie Cooper will focus on documenting priorities, working with first responders, the use of "Knox Boxes" for securing keys and institutional records, and the unique challenges of fire emergencies.
- Nov. 2, noon-1 p.m. Wet Salvage for Home and Community Collections **CCAHA**. Through a combination of presentation, video demonstrations, and discussion, learn to salvage objects like books, coated paper (such as magazines and other glossy media), and 20th century photographic materials in the event of a water emergency.

Conferences

- Oct. 19, **National Trust for Historic Preservation**'s National Preservation Law Conference. Washington, D.C.
- Oct. 25-27, **Preservation North Carolina** Conference. High Point.
- Nov. 5-8, Southern Historical Assoc. annual conference. Atlanta, GA.
- Nov. 9, N.C. Preservation Consortium Annual Conference: Preservation 250. Raleigh. Registration deadline: Oct. 26**.**
- Nov. 17-19, Preserving America Conference, Richmond, VA, sponsored by **Americana Corner** and **American Battlefield Trust**. Tailored to organizations with small staffs and modest revenues, the conference will focus on best practices in development, marketing, and programming.
- Nov. 17-19, **Northeast Document Conservation Center**, Digital Directions: Foundation for Digital Collections. Virtual.
- Nov. 19-21, NC Maritime History Council Conference. New Bern.
- Feb. 6, 2027. **Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society, Inc.** 24th Black History Month Genealogy Conference. Greensboro. For more information, please contact: Lamar DeLoatch, President of NC-AAHGS at aahgsnc@gmail.com.
- Feb. 21-24, 2027, Small Museum Assoc. Conference. Rochester, NY.
- Apr. 3-5, 2027, **N.C. Museums Council** Conference: Climbing Upward: Museums in Times of Change. Asheville. **Proposal deadline: Oct. 9.**

Grants

- Mars History Tellers Award provides $15,000 to an outstanding interpreter at an American history museum or historic site. **Deadline: Oct. 23**.
- Art Preservation Fund (APF) funds conservation treatment and preservation projects for art and historical collection items. This is APF's first grant cycle and has **two funding tracks**: one for applicants that already have a treatment proposal and are ready to proceed, and one for those that need an expert to define scope and cost before treatment. **Deadline: Oct. 30**.

- **Daughters of the American Revolution** Historic Preservation grants fund preservation and conservation for documents, artifacts, and buildings. **Deadline: Oct. 31**.
- Small Museum Collections Care grant from the Costume Society of America provides $1,500 to support costume and textile collections. **Deadline: Nov. 1.**
- Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) offers 13 funding opportunities to history organizations and libraries, including Inspire Grants for Small Museums. **Deadline: Nov. 13**.
- NEH Collections Stewardship Grants support projects that preserve and make available physical and digital collections important for research, teaching, and public engagement in the humanities. Funding can including conservation and preservation, collections assessments and planning, rehousing and preventive care, cataloging and description, digitization, and education and training for students and professionals in collections stewardship. **Deadline: Dec. 15.**
- Unity Cemetery Preservation Fund supports preservation, recording, and programs related to historic African American cemeteries. Applications are now open, **deadline Feb. 28, 2027**.

Rolling Deadlines

- Cannon Foundation quarterly grants fund capital improvements or equipment projects for organizations providing historic or environmental preservation services in North Carolina.
- T-Mobile Hometown Grants fund up to $50,000 for community projects in towns with populations under 50,000.
- NC Land and Water Fund land donation mini grants provide up to $50,000 to cover costs associated with land donation and stewardship. Nonprofits with properties where historic or cultural events occurred are eligible for this service to conserve land in perpetuity. Next quarterly **deadline: January 15**.
- North Carolina Preservation Consortium and the North Carolina Museums Council Disaster Relief Grants assist collecting institutions affected by disasters. Applicants must be institutional members of NCPC or NCMC and must be within the de-clared North Carolina disaster areas as defined by FEMA or the Governor of N.C.
- Society of American Archivists Foundation Opportunity Grant program provides funding to help archival repositories seize unexpected, time-sensitive opportunities, i.e., projects that would otherwise be out of reach without timely external financial support. Applicants must demonstrate they are prepared to begin and complete the work within eight months of the award date.
- The Dudley Flood Center Youth-Led Mini Grants (up to $500) support youth-driven projects that promote history, civic engagement, and social justice within their communities. These grants encourage young leaders to develop and implement projects that address local issues by engaging in the study of history and the principles of equity and community empowerment.
- The Federation of N.C. Historical Societies offers no-interest loans to members of up to $15,000 for projects including publications and special programs.

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History Help

W.M. Cline photographer, "Cherokee Pottery and Bead Worker, Cherokee Indian Reservation," 1937, Massengill Postcard Collection, PC.184, State Archives of N.C.

In time for American Indian Heritage Month in November, the School for Advanced Research has released the *Indigenous Collections Care Guide*. The guide was produced in consultation with Indigenous communities. Survey your collection this month to determine what guidance might apply.

In a recent *Engaging Places* blog post, Historic Site consultant, Max Van Balgooy encourages public history practitioners to go beyond "Learn" and "Appreciate" for strategizing better visitor outcomes. Historic sites and house museums often begin planning interpretation by asking what stories they want to tell, which objects they want to display, or what activities visitors should experience. Those are important questions, but they don't define success. A stronger starting point is:

- **What do we want visitors to know, feel, or do as a result of this experience?**

That shift—from what the museum presents to what happens for the visitor—can make interpretation more meaningful.

Federation of North Carolina Historical Societies
4610 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-4610
919-814-6863

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