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WHERE HISTORY HAS A HOME



For more information, see page 2.



HOME PAGE

NEWSLETTER - FALL 2009

The
CHARLOTTE MUSEUM
 of HISTORY

WHERE HISTORY HAS A HOME

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CHANGES & CHALLENGES



The best history museums are reinventing themselves to create a vibrant, exciting environment that is interactive, experiential, flexible, and responsive. In the last few months, we have not been immune to the economic climate, and have kept you updated on the precautions we have taken in response to recent economic hurdles.

Despite those hurdles, the Charlotte Museum of History has been dedicated to providing the community with a high quality experience, and to using our Strategic Master Plan as our guide to progress in areas that reflect our

core mission and programming goals. We are committed to finding innovative ways to grow and expand amongst these unique circumstances.

The recent addition of Angelica Docog in the Director of Program position has allowed for a meticulous evaluation of current programs and a revamping of future offerings. New low cost, high impact initiatives, including Day of the Dead activities and an American Indian Heritage celebration, will provide diverse educational opportunities and increase our community scope.

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The
CHARLOTTE MUSEUM
of HISTORY

WHERE HISTORY HAS A HOME

Dear Friends of the Museum,

This summer I've been reminded more than once of George Bailey. Do you remember him, the small town banker played by Jimmy Stewart in "It's a Wonderful Life"? When George, depressed by the adversities he's facing, begins to wonder whether his life is worth living, he is saved by the angel Clarence. Clarence proves to George his worth by taking him back in time to see how much worse off his community would have been if George hadn't been there.

Here's what brought George to mind: In the intense competition for the limited funding available for non-profits, Charlotte's cultural organizations, and especially its historical sites and museums are losing ground. Our museum's funding from the Arts and Science Council has been cut over 38%. Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools has eliminated all field trips, ending its long standing policy to require every third grader to visit a local historic site. I've heard leaders in our local government and business communities seriously question whether, in the current circumstances, our local history organizations such as the Charlotte Museum of History, should continue to survive.

It is clear that Charlotte needs a visit from the angel Clarence. The museum-less world he would show us would reveal a diminished sense of our earliest roots and a community devoid of a local collection of historic artifacts. The oldest surviving home in the county would be in ruins, and most importantly, there would be a loss of generations of history lovers who got their first taste of Charlotte's past through a class field trip to the Hezekiah Alexander Homesite. Our museum's impact is undoubtedly much greater than it may appear.

A recent national study conducted by the American Association of Museums (AAM) found that after their families, Americans rank authentic artifacts in history museums and historic sites most significant in creating a strong connection to the past. We provide a common experience that families can share across generations. These experiences are essential to quality of life, which many agree is necessary to sustain growth in the local economy.

The AAM also found that Americans view museums as one of the most important resources for educating our children, and as one of the most trustworthy sources of objective information. At the Charlotte Museum of History, not only do we provide educational programs, but we use local and state curriculum standards to shape them.

We intend to be "Clarence" for the Charlotte Mecklenburg Schools. We have convened a CMS Teacher Advisory Committee, and we are determined to not let this region's young people lose their connection to local history. We will start with one school at a time until we once again become the only county in North Carolina to require every third grader to visit an historic site.

We need you to join us and be Clarences for the Charlotte community. There is a risk that a third grader who loses the opportunity to see an historic site with their class on a field trip will never see one. We cannot afford to take that risk in Mecklenburg County. For more information about how you can help, call Angelica Docog, our new Director of Program at the museum. Together, we can continue the celebration of our cultural heritage.

Mary Davis Smart
Mary Davis Smart
President and CEO

Continued from page 1

Today, collaboration is not only encouraged, but is increasingly necessary for growth and sustainability. Our Exhibits team has shifted their focus to take advantage of collaborative opportunities that progress our exhibits program as defined in our Strategic Master Plan. Recent partnerships with organizations such as the Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department and the North Carolina Supreme Court Historical Society will give rise to exciting exhibit opportunities in the coming year.

In this ongoing effort to maximize our resources and find creative solutions to current problems, the Charlotte Museum of History and McColl Center for Visual Art recently began a staffing collaboration in our Finance Departments. This will allow both organizations to maintain and grow fiscal management and accountability.

Additionally, fourteen of Charlotte's historic sites and organizations recently sat down to discuss our shared goals and vision for the future, identify barriers, and most importantly, propose a plan of action for a collaborative future. Together, we explored various ways in which to share services and resources. This ongoing partnership will result in a business plan for the organizations to work together to become stronger, healthier, and more sustainable.

Undoubtedly, the Charlotte Museum of History will feel the effects of the 38% decrease in funding from the Arts and Science Council (ASC). Although we are facing considerable challenges, we have not been paralyzed and vow to remain aggressively proactive about our future. This fiscal year, the ASC has asked that all cultural partners adjust their reporting to reflect concise metrics outlines. The museum has used this new requirement as an opportunity for outcome restructuring, with an emphasis on measurable results.

Reporting the number of Facebook fans, electronic newsletter open rates, or website clicks allows us to outline our reach to new contemporary audiences in nontraditional ways; bringing history into the future. Reporting visitation in multiple categories and tracking our income streams allows us to identify and diversify our growth areas, and tap into the potential they reveal. On the surface these metrics look like statistics, but a deeper look will help appropriately determine what counts.

We have come to a time when accountability and collaboration are essential for the health of all of our local cultural institutions. At the Charlotte Museum of History, we are very excited about the potential the future holds, and we look forward to rising to the challenges of the times, and meeting and exceeding the needs of the community.



EXHIBITS UPDATES

Charlotte Stories: Our Collections, Your Treasures



We all have stories to tell. But did you know that objects can tell stories, too? Treasured pieces of family history, dusty and forgotten items stored in the attic, and picture books full of memories...all have stories.

Our current exhibit *Charlotte Stories: Our Collections, Your Treasures* highlights seldom-seen items from our constantly growing collection of over 13,500 artifacts, as well as treasures borrowed from private individuals. All of them have stories to tell about the people, places, and events of our area. Based on the mandate in our mission statement that we “collect, preserve, research and interpret,” the exhibit provides visitors with a deeper understanding of how the museum cares for and gives voice to the material legacy of this area’s past.



The museum was very pleased that the exhibit received a positive review in the March/April issue of *Museum*, the American Association of Museums’ flagship publication and a key resource for museum professionals on issues and developments in the field. The author, Catherine Lewis, wrote:

“The museum makes its work more transparent and engages the audience in a conversation about the profession. It gives visitors a window into the world of museums that makes them more educated and sympathetic to the sheer complexity of the profession. This dialogue is conspicuously absent in most museum settings, which makes the exhibition particularly effective. A visit

to *Charlotte Stories* demonstrates that meaningful exhibitions do not have to be blockbusters, with million-dollar marketing budgets and high-tech interactive elements. On the contrary, the museum staff creatively engages audiences and lets the artifacts tell their own stories, something other institutions would do well to emulate.”

Lewis is an associate professor of history, director at the Museum of History and Holocaust Education, coordinator of the Public History Program at Kennesaw State University, and special projects coordinator at the Atlanta History Center.

The exhibit was designed to allow for artifact rotations during its run. Recent changes to the exhibit include a bright and colorful bicentennial quilt given to the museum in 1976 and made by local students. Another local treasure now on display is a sword made by Isaac Price around 1800. Price was a gunsmith and goldsmith from the Steele Creek area. He and his brother manufactured the guns and swords carried by many local militiamen during the American Revolution.

Be sure to visit the museum in fall 2009 when we will add more artifacts to the exhibit. The museum’s website also has the full exhibit review and downloadable guides to help you document and care for your own collection of treasures.



EXHIBITS UPDATES

Mec Dec Flag and Hornet’s Nest



On May 16 at our annual Mec Dec Day celebration, Tom Phlegar, docent and member of the Sons of the American Revolution, presented the museum with a hornet’s nest and Mec Dec flag. On the steps of the Hezekiah Alexander House, Board Trustee Colonel J. Quincy Collins, Jr. accepted these gifts on behalf of the museum. Phlegar, Don Blackmon, and Ashley Dembowski all worked together to locate and safely remove the hornet’s nest so that we could have this symbol of local revolutionary rebellion.

The hornet’s nest has been associated with Charlotte and Mecklenburg County since 1780, when Lord Charles Cornwallis referred to the area as “a hornet’s nest” of rebellion during the American Revolution. Locals adopted the nickname with pride. The hornet’s nest nickname has been used by a military regiment, scouting groups, a fire company, and even a professional sports team. The symbol appears on the seals of both Charlotte and Mecklenburg County. It has been used on commemorative badges, buttons, tokens, and even cups and saucers.

Mec Dec Day is an annual event in May that celebrates Mecklenburg’s break with British rule and Mecklenburgers’ role in the forefront of the struggle for independence. The first recorded celebration was in 1825, and the tradition continues today. Mec Dec stands for Mecklenburg Declaration – of independence, that is!

The flag is now on display in the second floor rotunda and will shortly be joined by the hornet’s nest. Recently taken to the Virginia Museum of Natural History, the nest has been placed in their anoxic chamber. This gradually, over a period of a few days, replaces 60% of the air with carbon dioxide. Once this level is reached, it is maintained, then gradually returned to normal over a period of 22 days. This suffocates any living thing in the artifact, rendering it safe to be displayed. A special thanks goes to Registrar Jill Harris at the Virginia Museum of Natural History for making this service available to us free of charge.

Charlotte Neighborhoods: NoDa

Now a popular, hip urban community for artists and professionals, the neighborhood of NoDa (an acronym for the North Davidson Arts District) emerged during the late 1980s as a rebirth of an older neighborhood that had seen its share of ups and downs. The area that would become NoDa got its start over one hundred years ago as a working-class mill village in North Charlotte.

In a walk through the commercial district of NoDa, it’s hard to miss Charlotte Fire Station Number 7. It was built in 1935 and designed by Charles Christian Hook, an architect of local and regional importance whose designs included the Duke Mansion, the VanLandingham Estate, Charlotte City Hall, and the Carolina Theatre.

Charlotte introduced motorized fire engines in 1911, which meant that fire stations no longer had to accommodate draft animals. Designs began to focus on the firefighters and included cement floors, ample windows, and kitchens to support a two-platoon system. Additionally, Fire Station 7 has a rear one-story wing that once served as a small

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EXHIBITS UPDATES



Image courtesy of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission

jail cell. There are only four surviving fire stations built during this period in Charlotte, and Station 7 with its single-bay is the smallest.

You can learn more about NoDa in the *Charlotte Neighborhoods* exhibit currently on display at the Charlotte Museum of History. Opening in 2006, the *Charlotte Neighborhoods* exhibit series, which has already highlighted Plaza-Midwood, Brooklyn to Biddleville, Center City, and now NoDa, has looked to educate visitors about how a community changes and develops over time – from the residents to the architecture. Opportunities to work with other organizations and individuals have arisen from this exhibit series, and we are pleased that *Charlotte Neighborhoods: Center City* will be on display at Charlotte NC Tours, who provide historic tours of Charlotte. The community has a unique opportunity to learn about the histories of these neighborhoods in the context of these organizations who share the history of this area.

Beneath the Badge

The Charlotte Museum of History is pleased to announce that our next exhibit, *Beneath the Badge: Policing in Charlotte and Mecklenburg County, 1865-2009*, will open on March 27, 2010. The exhibit will explore the history of the Charlotte Police Department, the Mecklenburg County Police Department, and the 16-year-old Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department. It will include scores of artifacts and photographs explaining changes in patrol, communications, investigations, and technology, among other things. The exhibit also will document the introduction of African-Americans, women, and other minorities into the police force.

This exhibit will mark the debut of our Community History Gallery. This initiative, outlined in our recent Strategic Master Plan, allows us to create a larger impact in documenting this area's history as we look to partner with local organizations and groups to help them collect, preserve, research, and interpret their stories. We understand that we are not the only ones who want to actively preserve this community's legacy. Through this initiative, we will use our skills and expertise to assist our partners in the development of historical documentation programs. Each project will culminate in an exhibit that opens at CMH and then is permanently installed at a site of the partner's choosing.



Image courtesy of the CMPD Public Affairs office

“We are very excited about the opportunity to work with the Charlotte Museum of History not only to preserve the important history of our department but also to share that history with current, former, and future police officers and the entire community,” said Deputy Chief Harold Medlock, who serves as chairman of the CMPD History Committee. “Numerous people within the CMPD have spent years working toward this goal. I’m thrilled it is coming to fruition.”

HOW I SPENT MY SUMMER VACATION

Kyle Evans, Education Intern



“I spent my summer internship primarily focused around developing an American Revolution Tour. The proposed tour will take place at the Hezekiah Alexander Homesite and will center around the Alexander Family’s involvement in the American Revolution, as well as Mecklenburg County’s involvement as a whole. I enjoyed all aspects of developing this tour and am excited to present the finished product soon!”

For more information about themed guided tours at the museum and homesite, please contact Sheryl Jacoppo at sjacoppo@charlottemuseum.org.

Carly Getson, Education Intern



“My main project for this internship was to write a guided tour script for *The Carolina Mountains: Photography of Margaret Morley* exhibit, for staff, docents, and volunteers to use while guiding either adult or school groups through the exhibit. As a graduate student at UNC Charlotte working on a MA in Public History, this project was an invaluable experience in combining the researching of a new topic and figuring out how to present that topic to diverse public audiences.”

To schedule your guided tour of *The Carolina Mountains: Photography of Margaret Morley* exhibit, please contact Sheryl Jacoppo at sjacoppo@charlottemuseum.org.

Heather Otis, Collections Intern



“Working in the Collections Department this summer has taught me that the skills necessary for this occupation extend far beyond what can be taught in a classroom. While some of the basics such as proper techniques for labeling, handling, and describing accessioned artifacts can be easily taught, as Anne Lane instructed me, a great percentage of this job involves the constant accumulation of new knowledge and skills. In my weeks here as an intern, I have accrued a few of these skills that would make for an odd resume in any other field, but are meaningful in the museum world. If there is one thing that I have taken away from being a CMH intern this summer, it is that the museum field is constantly progressing in one way or another. Although sometimes it feels a bit daunting, it has reaffirmed my desire to continue my education towards a career in the museum field.”

You too can learn about caring for objects and discovering the stories of their origin by visiting our exhibit *Charlotte Stories: Our Collections, Your Treasures*.

Sami Katzenberg, Communications Intern



“As a Communications Intern, my favorite project was developing a social networking presence for the museum, creating both Twitter and Facebook accounts. With the ever expanding internet world, it is increasingly necessary that non-profits use every line of communication available as a promotion tool. Being able to connect directly with our patrons

at the click of a button is an invaluable resource, which, if used to its full potential, could reap great benefits for the museum. I am very lucky to have had this opportunity and hope that my contributions to the museum will continue to be a success.”

To read more about the museum’s social networking initiatives, please see our *Faring Forward* article on page 14.

Nicole Davis, Education Intern



“I’ve always had a thirst for learning, especially about history, which led me to the museum first as a visitor, then as a volunteer, and now as an intern. This internship has given me a chance to broaden the types of tours I am able to present, and given me the opportunity to develop a lesson plan that can be used as part of the hands-on tours for students. I was also able to introduce geocaching to the museum, an initiative that increases public awareness of the museum and supports the mission and Strategic Master Plan. It really has given me a chance to work with all the things I love, teaching, history, and learning, all in the same process. Museum education is very important and it is something I am proud to be a part of.”

Learn more about Geocaching on page 14, or visit our website at www.charlottemuseum.org for in-depth instructions.

Emily Sparks, Collections Intern



“My first day at the museum was my introduction to collections work. That day, I was given a box of objects, a miscellaneous collection of what seemed to be junk found in the drawer of a sewing machine. Several days were spent writing description and condition reports, taking photos, and putting everything into a computer database. Even during the most tedious of these activities, working at the museum brought me an awareness of how we study the past. At the Charlotte Museum of History, I have learned a lot about process and that there are always questions and unknowns. These questions will undoubtedly influence my future studies.”

You too can learn about caring for objects and discovering the stories of their origin by visiting our exhibit *Charlotte Stories: Our Collections, Your Treasures*.

PUBLIC PROGRAMMING

The Food Historian in the Kitchen September 21, 2009: 7:00-9:00pm



Food history is full of useful information, including food preservation advice, great and forgotten recipes, and a myriad of alternative, and often "green," technologies. From early bread pudding recipes to celebrations of fresh fruits of the garden, food historian Sandy Oliver will discuss how decades of historic research has enriched her daily life and can do

the same for yours. Guests will also have an opportunity to see what Charlotte's local farms and food organizations are growing and cooking up for our community.

Admission: \$7 for museum members; \$10 for non-members. Reservations are required. Your organization can sponsor this event, or become an event vendor. Contact Halley Cella at hcella@charlottemuseum.org for further information.

Revolutionary Charlotte September 26, 2009: 10:00am-3:00pm



Discover the Revolutionary War in the Carolinas by exploring the way soldiers and families lived, worked, played, and fought during this important part of history. September 26 is also

Smithsonian Museum Day at Charlotte's only Smithsonian Affiliate Museum. Enjoy free general admission for you and a guest by presenting the Museum Day admission card. The card is available in the September 2009 issue of Smithsonian magazine or downloadable via the Smithsonian Museum Day website.

Admission: Free museum admission. No reservations are required.

Women Making History Series featuring Milbry Polk October 14, 2009: 11:30am-1:00pm



The Women Making History luncheons return this year with Milbry Polk as the first featured speaker. Ms Polk is the author of ten books including *Egyptian Mummies*, co-author of *Women of Discovery*, and contributing editor for *The Explorers Journal*. She was a photojournalist, exploring the

Middle East, Asia, and more recently the Arctic. Her current work focuses on supporting the work of women explorers, through the organization Wings WorldQuest, which she co-founded. Ms Polk is the daughter of William Polk, author of *Polk's Folly* and many other books, and is the descendant of Col. William Polk from Charlotte.

Mark your calendars now for the second and final luncheon for this year on April 10, 2010, featuring Anna Hayes, author of *Without Precedent: The Life of Susie Marshall Sharp*.

Admission: \$35 for museum members \$45 for non-members - per event; Reservations are required.

Haunted Homesite October 24, 2009: 6:00-9:00pm



Treat your family to a fun evening at the museum's annual Haunted Homesite event! Families will have the opportunity to go on an outdoor tour with some scary surprises on the

historic grounds of the Hezekiah Alexander Homesite. Inside the museum, enjoy a variety of hands-on activities, crafts, and storytelling. Learn about the Day of the Dead, a special holiday celebrated in Mexico, Central America, and in parts of the United States, held each year on November 1 to honor the dead. The outdoor tour is recommended for ages ten and up. All are encouraged to come in costume and compete for prizes for the most unique, good, bad, and ugly costumes!

Admission: \$5 for museum members; \$7 for non-members. Reservations are required.

Civil War Lantern Tour November 21, 2009: 6:00-9:00pm



Relive the Civil War as you take an in-depth look into the conditions, hopes, and fears of common foot soldiers of the war. As you progress through different camp settings on the grounds of the Homesite, you will see the campfires, smell the cooking, and listen to the stories from the period.

Admission: \$8 for adults; \$6 for students and senior citizens. Reservations are required.

ONGOING PROGRAMMING

Living History Sundays

The Charlotte Museum of History presents Living History Sundays on the first Sunday of every month. Guests of the museum may participate in interactive demonstrations of colonial skills. The demonstrations are included in regular museum admission.

The Carolina Mountains Living History Sundays

In the fall months, the Living History Sunday programming will connect visitors with the museum's newest exhibit, *The Carolina Mountains: Photography of Margaret Morley*.

October 4, 2009: 1:00-4:00pm



Experience traditional foodways, and their connection to today. Historic demonstrators, vendors, and displays from local farms and food organizations will be available to

museum visitors.

November 1, 2009: 1:00-4:00pm



Learn about traditional textile production, and its development throughout the years. Historic demonstrators, vendors, and displays from local quilting and weaving organizations will be available to museum visitors.

Bring in your own fabric heirlooms and learn from experts tips and tricks about how to preserve your very own treasures.

December 6, 2009: 1:00-4:00pm



Museum visitors will be able to experience traditional photography, and its growth to where we are today. Demonstrators, vendors, and experts in the field of photog-

raphy will be available. Bring in your own photographs and antique cameras, and learn tips and tricks from experts about how to preserve your treasures for future years.

Admission: Event admission is included in regular museum pricing. Reservations are not required.

Guided tours of the exhibit for students and adults are available by advanced reservation. Please contact Sheryl Jacoppo at sjacoppo@charlottemuseum.org for more information.

Colonial Craft Workshops

In response to the many requests from museum members and the public, and the popularity of learning 18th century colonial crafts, the Charlotte Museum of History will begin offering a new series of workshops for adults. Participants will have the opportunity to spend an evening learning a colonial craft and making new friends.

The workshops will take place from **7:00-8:30pm**, unless otherwise noted, and are recommended for adults, ages eighteen and up.

September 14, 2009: Commonplace Books



Commonplace books are our version of a journal or scrapbook in which our colonial ancestors kept useful information such as recipes, quotations, proverbs, and tables of weights and measures. These books were unique to each individual user. Join us

to make your own commonplace book and learn about its use in the 18th century.

November 16, 2009: Paper Quilling



Paper quilling is a centuries old art form in which strips of paper are rolled, shaped, and glued together to make decorative designs. This art form was particularly popular in the 18th century. Come learn the basic coil forms and make several items

for your holiday decorations.

Admission: \$15 for museum members; \$20 for non-members. Space is limited and is availability on a first come, first served basis. Reservations are required.

Museums on Us

The Charlotte Museum of History is now a partner in the Bank of America Museums on Us™ program. Show your Bank of America check, credit, or ATM card to the front desk on the first full weekend (Saturday and Sunday) of every month for free admission!



HOMESCHOOL PROGRAMS

Classes are recommended for children ages seven and up, and take place from 10:00am-12:00pm, unless otherwise noted. Reservations are required for all classes. A minimum of five children are required or class will be cancelled. No refunds are available unless the program is cancelled by the museum.

September 11, 2009: Colonial Trades Day



Experience two colonial trades, such as basket weaving, pottery, wood-turning, weaving or spinning, paper marbling and book binding. *Trades mentioned are subject to change without notice.

Admission: \$8 for museum members and \$12 for non-members.

November 13, 2009: Harvest Cooking



Roll up your sleeves and prepare your own colonial harvest lunch of foods available seasonally in the colonial North Carolina backwoods.

Admission: \$8 for museum members and \$12 for non-members.

October 16, 2009: History Detective Series – Decoding the Past, Part 2



Using *The Carolina Mountains: Photography of Margaret Morley* exhibit, learn how to analyze photos as historical clues into the lives of people of the past. Bring in

personal photos to investigate.

Admission: FREE to museum members and \$8 for non-members.

December 11, 2009: History Detective Series – Exploring the Holidays



Examine 18th century holidays, and their connections and contrasts to current celebrations. Dissect a variety of historical festivities, their origins, links to the region,

and their variances amongst colonies.

Admission: FREE to museum members and \$8 for non-members.

Please direct any questions to Sheryl Jacoppo at sjacoppo@charlottemuseum.org.

Itty Bitty Fun Program

In cooperation with the Homeschool Programs, the museum offers special programming for children ages three to six, taking place on the same dates and times as the programs mentioned above. Each Itty Bitty day involves story time, crafts, music and dance time, and various interactive games. Admission: \$5 per child. Reservations are required. Parents must stay with your Itty Bitty participant throughout the program.

BIRTHDAY PARTIES

Your birthday can make history! Contact Brandie Macdonald at bmacdonald@charlottemuseum.org to see how your child can celebrate his or her birthday at the Charlotte Museum of History.

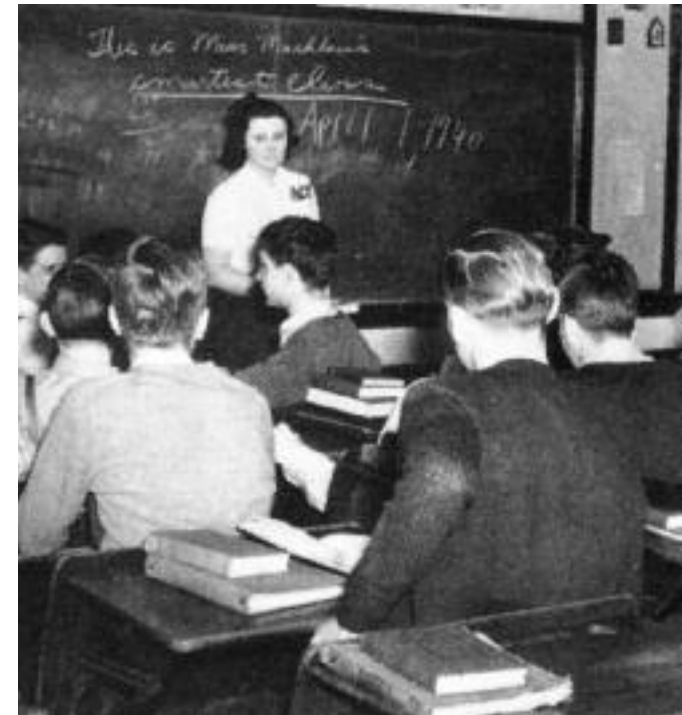
STAFF UPDATES



The museum has concluded the search for a Director of Program, who will serve as Education Director and take on a substantial role in the implementation of our Strategic Master Plan. **Angelica Docog** joined the staff in mid-July and has hit the ground running, by developing our new adult Colonial Craft Workshop Series. For more information about the series, please see page 9.



Lee Goodan, Exhibits Manager, has been accepted to the Smithsonian Affiliations Visiting Professional Program at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. Funded by a Technical Assistance Grant awarded by the Arts and Science Council, Lee will spend three weeks with the Smithsonian staff this October, researching and exploring the potential for our Hand on History Room, an interactive children's gallery outlined in our Strategic Master Plan. The program will provide Lee with valuable exposure to an established team of exhibit professionals and educators, focusing on how young children learn in museums. This will be a wonderful opportunity to see multiple exhibits, evaluate children's spaces at different Smithsonian museums, and use Smithsonian colleagues to both discuss insights and serve as sounding boards for ideas.



From the chalkboards of the 1940s...

UNC Charlotte's Graduate School has come a long way. Central High School served as the humble beginnings of UNC Charlotte. From the collection of the Charlotte Museum of History, this year-book photo demonstrates the basic tools available for learning in the 20th century classroom.

Today's graduate students learn via smart rooms, state-of-the-art computer and research labs, and participate in online classes from the comfort of their own homes.



... to the whiteboards of today.

The Graduate School offers eighteen doctoral and sixty-two master's degree programs ranging from science and engineering disciplines to education and social sciences. Plus many opportunities for students who already have their degree, to pursue a class of interest.

The Graduate School at UNC Charlotte is pleased to support the Charlotte Museum of History. To become a museum member, please call **704-568-1774** or visit www.charlottemuseum.org.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: MAURA COOPER



Maura Cooper, Collections Volunteer, and Anne Lane, Collections Manager, first met over thirty years ago in the Washington, DC area, through their mutual interest in calligraphy. Many years later, they became reacquainted upon discovering both were now living in the Charlotte area. During Maura's recovery from breast cancer nearly seven years ago, Anne suggested she volunteer at the Charlotte Museum of History as a positive distraction. Years later, Maura still dedicates her time to the museum in the Collections department; out of those seven years, she has been recognized three times for most volunteer hours served during the year.

Maura's personality, work ethic, and background make her ideally suited for collections work. Her patience and meticulous attention to detail were developed by work as an assistant librarian and by her many years practicing the arts of calligraphy and calligraphic type design. She is an English major with excellent proofreading skills, and has the rare ability to know when to ask questions.

Asked about her favorite of the many projects she has worked on at the museum, Maura cites her recent work scanning and cataloguing 147 original Alexander family documents dating from 1767 through 1901. Aside from the high-resolution scans, she entered measurements and summaries into the database. This required puzzling out numerous styles of handwriting, some of them nearly 250 years old. Having this information in searchable format makes these documents accessible for both staff and researchers, and having the good-quality scans means they can be read or used in exhibit graphics and publications without having to disturb the often-fragile originals.

Outside the museum, Maura and her husband Stu Ott live in the University area, and are owned by two Abyssinian cats, Sugar and Star. Among her many talents is cooking – she is a trained chef, a 1986 graduate of the Restaurant School in Philadelphia.

COLLECTIONS CONNECTION: STINSON LOOM FROM DUSTY TIMBERS TO FINISHED FABRIC IN ONLY TWO WEEKS

By Anne Lane, Collections Manager

1976.012.001 – For the nearly seven years I've worked here, it has been a little-noted heap of insect-riddled timbers lying on the floor of the attic in the Rock House. The description in the museum database is terse: "Pine loom with most of the necessary parts. Made by Cyrus Stinson, 1839." A little more sleuthing turns up this history from the Notes file: "John Stinson was born in Ireland around 1740. He moved to Connecticut, then to Virginia where he became an overseer for Mr. Miller. He married Mr. Miller's daughter and they moved to Mecklenburg County. They both died there during the winter of 1778-9 from an epidemic in the county. The loom was made by Cyrus Stinson, the grandson of John Stinson. Cyrus is buried at Old Morning Star Church. A family tree is also in the file." A glance up at the donor's name indicates that this piece was handed down in the Stinson family, who gave it to the museum in 1976.

Lee Goodan, Exhibits Coordinator, suggested we try to rebuild this loom for the *Carolina Mountains* exhibit. I went online and into our own files and started learning about the parts that comprise a loom - terms such as lease sticks and raddle and temple and castle. Museum Registrar Kevin Larrabee and I then spent a morning crawling around in the house attic, trying to identify and label these huge timbers and figure out whether we truly had "most of the necessary parts." We carried them down to the gallery, and were too excited to wait to attempt its assembly. One part fit into another, and before you knew it, we had a loom!

Amy Morgan, a long time museum volunteer who weaves, made heddles and warped the loom, and determined that only a few parts were missing: the harnesses that carry the heddles and move the warp threads up and down. Leslie Kesler, Curator, turned up a database record labeled "possible loom parts," among which were the two yokes we needed for the harnesses. Kevin manufactured the last few simple bits; then Amy spent a couple days sitting on the floor in the midst of the loom, making heddles – thread guides made of string – and then doing the warping. It gave us all a thrill when she sat down and wove a length of fabric on this 170-year-old piece of pinewood machinery.

You can see this loom on display in our most recent exhibit, *The Carolina Mountains: Photography of Margaret Morley*, through the end of the year. Traditional textile production will also be the subject of our Living History Sunday on November 1, 2009.

For more information see page 8, or visit our calendar on the museum website.





FARING FORWARD AT THE MUSEUM



Geocaching, one of the museum's latest initiatives, is a GPS guided scavenger hunt that allows adventure seekers equipped with GPS devices to locate geocaches, or hidden treasures. There are nearly 865,000 geocaches around the world!

Geocaching is enjoyed by people from all age groups, and encourages a strong sense of community and support for the environment, while teaching navigational skills such as the use of GPS devices, compasses, and maps. It also educates the seeker about their surroundings. Caches can be hidden in numerous places and concealed in a way to optimally promote its location. Treasure finders are encouraged to share their experiences online with the entire geocaching community.

The museum is now home to one geocache for hunters to locate, and eight people have already logged its find. The museum hopes that through geocaching it will be able to reach and educate a new community of people that may not have visited otherwise. Geocaching will also help the education department in lesson plan development encouraging compass and directional skills.

You can start your own high-tech adventure as a geocacher by visiting www.geocaching.com. There you can search for caches according to zip code or address. Each cache has a profile with a description and the longitude and latitude coordinates of its location. Equipped with your personal GPS device, program the given coordinates into the device, and set off on your search for the geocache. After finding your treasure, be sure to sign the physical log book that is located in the cache and leave a note on the cache's profile on the website.

The museum's cache coordinates can be found on the website under the profile name "Charlotte's Best Kept Secret."

The Charlotte Museum of History has recently joined the social networking community.



Become a fan of the Charlotte Museum of History on Facebook.



Follow the museum's tweets on Twitter under profile name CLThistory.



View our Flickr photostream at www.flickr.com/charlottemuseum.

Help us go green! Sign up for our History Happenings newsletter on our homepage, www.charlottemuseum.org. You can also download an online version of this newsletter on the website. To be removed from the mailing list for this printed newsletter, please email cwilliams@charlottemuseum.org.

NEWS FROM DEVELOPMENT

Consider Becoming One of Our Partners in History!

Partners in History is our newest sponsorship initiative that promotes both the museum and leading businesses in Charlotte through a targeted advertising campaign. Each advertisement links artifacts and exhibits within the museum to a business in a specific industry. It is this common connection that makes the campaign unique and successfully promotes both entities. Each company who participates has exclusive rights for their particular industry and has the ability to customize their ad to emphasize whatever they deem most important. For further information on how your company can participate in this initiative, please refer to our website: www.charlottemuseum.org.

Changes to Membership Program

As a result of the focus groups held in the fall of 2008, the museum has made some changes to the membership program to better serve the needs of our members. These changes include: new pricing for Individual and Household level; the introduction of the new Dual Senior level; and some benefit adjustments. Please refer to our website: www.charlottemuseum.org or call (704) 568-1774 for further details about these changes

Preserve the Past and Protect the Future through a Legacy Gift to the Charlotte Museum of History

Please consider making a bequest to the museum through your will or estate. Your legacy gift will allow us to offer thought provoking exhibits and stimulating programs and events for future generations for many years to come. If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity, please contact **Mary Davis Smart**, President & CEO at msmart@charlottemuseum.org.

Membership & Donation Form

I AM NOT INTERESTED IN MEMBERSHIP AT THIS TIME BUT HAVE ENCLOSED A DONATION OF \$ _____

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I WOULD LIKE TO BECOME A MEMBER OR RENEW MY MEMBERSHIP AT THE FOLLOWING LEVEL:

- Individual \$35
- Dual Senior \$55
- Household \$65
- Keystone \$125
- Patriot \$250
- Patron \$500
- Benefactor \$1,000
- President's Circle \$2,500
- 1774 Society \$5,000

METHOD OF PAYMENT

CASH IN THE AMOUNT OF \$ _____

CHECK IN THE AMOUNT OF \$ _____

PLEASE CHARGE MY MEMBERSHIP TO THE FOLLOWING CARD:

AMERICAN EXPRESS VISA MASTERCARD

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Please complete and return with payment to:

The Charlotte Museum of History
Attn: Membership Department
3500 Shamrock Drive
Charlotte, NC 28215

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