

CHARLOTTE “HIDDEN HISTORY” TOURS KICK OFF WITH A VISIT TO HISTORIC AFRICAN AMERICAN SCHOOLS

CHARLOTTE, N.C., Oct. 29, 2019 – The Charlotte Museum of History will kick off a new tour series, “Hidden History,” on Saturday, Nov. 9, by giving people a chance to visit some of Mecklenburg County’s historic Rosenwald Schools, which educated African American children during the Jim Crow era.

The tour will feature two restored Rosenwald Schools – McClintock School in Steele Creek and Caldwell School in Huntersville – as well as the Siloam School, which is in the University area and is currently endangered due to disrepair. During the self-guided tour, attendees can visit the schools, learn about preservation efforts and speak to alumni and others who are helping to save the schools and their history.

“Our new Hidden History tours are about local history that is hidden in plain sight,” said Adria Focht, president & CEO of The Charlotte Museum of History. “Rosenwald Schools were built throughout the segregated South in the early 1900s to educate African American children. Of 26 Rosenwald Schools originally built in Mecklenburg County, only seven remain. Some of them are in disrepair, while a few others have been restored by churches, individuals and community groups.

“We hope this first Hidden History tour will show people how historic buildings can serve community needs when we preserve them and how they can fade into obscurity when we forget about them. Local African American communities built Mecklenburg County’s Rosenwald Schools, and their work fostered a generation of well-educated African Americans, despite the lack of resources and hardships they faced due to racial segregation. This is history worth protecting and remembering.”

The museum is spearheading the Save Siloam School Project, an ongoing community effort to restore the historic Rosenwald-era Siloam School and open it to the public on the museum's east Charlotte campus. The restored building will serve as an educational space for programming and exhibits that foster dialogue about racial cooperation and reconciliation. The museum plans to offer tours of the building and make it available as a community resource.

This event is made possible in part by a generous sponsorship from Walmart.

HOW TO GO

The self-guided tour takes place from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 9. Tickets are \$15 at charlottemuseum.org/events. All proceeds go to the Save Siloam School Project. This event is rain or shine.

About Rosenwald Schools

In the early 20th century, educator Dr. Booker T. Washington conceived of a program to build high-quality, free schools for African American children throughout the segregated rural South. He enlisted the aid of Julius Rosenwald, president of Sears, Roebuck and Co., to finance the effort, and on Oct. 30, 1917, they created the Julius Rosenwald Fund. The program offered matching funds and architectural plans to communities that wanted to build schools for black students. The partnership produced more than 5,000 schools in the South in the early 1900s – 813 of them in North Carolina. By 1928, one-third of the South's rural African American school children and teachers were served by Rosenwald Schools.

How to Support the Save Siloam School Effort

People can support the Save Siloam School Project by making a tax-deductible donation at charlottemuseum.org/siloam or by sending a check to The Charlotte Museum of History at 3500 Shamrock Drive, Charlotte, NC, 28215. Write "Save Siloam School" in the memo line. Call [704-568-1774](tel:704-568-1774) or email info@charlottemuseum.org for more information.



About The Charlotte Museum of History

The Charlotte Museum of History engages a broad audience in the history of the Charlotte region through the stories of its people, places and events to promote dialogue and historical perspective. The museum is the steward of the 1774 Alexander Rock House and home site, a site listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the oldest home in Mecklenburg County. To learn more, visit charlottemuseum.org and follow the museum on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

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