



On Your MARC

MUSEUM & ARCHIVES OF ROCKINGHAM COUNTY

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4th Quarter
Visitor Count
460
2016 Total
1,774

MARC faces exciting new year *By Jordan Rossi, Executive Director*

Because members and friends responded to our fundraising requests, calls for volunteers, and invitations to events, MARC begins 2017 with a sense of optimism and aplomb. In 2015 and 2016, we laid the groundwork for a number of projects. In 2017, we will start to make those plans become realities. You will want to visit MARC often to watch as progress continues!

Preservation. Great strides have already been made on the renovation and preservation projects at Wright Tavern. You will find recognition of the contributors who have made this vital work possible on the following pages of this newsletter.

Additionally, this year MARC is relaunching our volunteer-powered artifact cataloguing initiative. On Friday afternoons from 2 to 4 p.m., volunteers and staff pull on gloves to inspect and accession artifacts donated to the museum. This is essential in the long-term preservation of our precious heirlooms, and it gives museum-lovers an opportunity to see and contribute to what goes on at the MARC behind-the-scenes. Come join us!

Exhibitions. The John Burton Agriculture collection will open to the public in spring 2017. The MARC, with the support of Rockingham County, John and Peggy Burton, and Forrest Bray, raised funds to remodel the 1970s jail portion of the courthouse building to hold large agriculture equipment from the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

By the end of the year, you can also look for new exhibits on the Town of Mayodan, the natural history of Rockingham County, and the Korean War. Staff and volunteers are hard at work bringing these projects to fruition.

Education. And, of course, we will continue to offer enlightening educational programs and host school and tour groups throughout the year.

You will want to stay informed of all the exciting things in store at MARC this year. For current information about MARC, renew your membership and stay in touch in the following ways:

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 Follow us on Facebook: Museum & Archives of Rockingham County
 Twitter: @MARCHistory



Photo credit: J. Rossi

(L to R) Bob Carter and John Burton moving equipment into the agriculture exhibit.

MARC Receives Grant

By Jordan Rossi, Executive Director

Marion Stedman Covington Foundation awards MARC a matching grant for Wright Tavern restoration project

Four months ago, on a warm August evening, we gathered at the MARC's annual Summer Soirée to enjoy excellent food, delightful company, and philanthropy. At the conclusion of the silent and live auctions, we requested you direct your attention and resources to one last project - the Wright Tavern Fund-a-Need campaign.

We asked for your help to replace the Tavern's porch, repair the southeast rooms formerly rented by the Wentworth Post Office, and replace two 40 year-old heating and air units. At 200 years old, Wright Tavern required these upgrades and repairs to remain accessible year-round for public use as a site for history education. The total cost of the renovation project as presented was estimated to be \$24,900.

In a showing of incredible support and generosity, you contributed over \$10,000 at the Soirée. By the end of the following week, the Wright Tavern Restoration project was over half-way funded.

I am pleased to announce the Marion Stedman Covington Foundation matched your donations in the amount of \$11,450, bringing the funded total to \$24,900. Thanks to you and the Covington Foundation, the Wright Tavern restoration work began in November with the replacement of the porch and heating and air units. Repairs to the southeast rooms are nearing completion now.



The Tavern porch has been repaired, replaced and stained as part of the restoration process.



Marion Stedman Covington's overwhelming desire was to enrich the lives of others, and it was this desire which led her to establish the Marion Stedman Covington Foundation in 1986. She was a leader in NC's historic preservation movement, and the Board of Trustees for the Foundation has chosen to narrow the focus of these awards to historic preservation. <http://mscovingtonfoundation.org/>

Our selection for a Covington matching grant is a notable achievement for MARC; there are numerous non-profit organizations vying for this valuable assistance. We are grateful to the Foundation for rewarding the generosity of our patrons and for further validating the historic value of Wright Tavern.

MARC Receives Gift

By Jordan Rossi, Executive Director

Donation from the William Bethell Chapter of the NSDAR allows expansion of the Tavern restoration project



Photo credit: F. Waynick



Photo credit: F. Waynick

TOP: The old Tavern post office fixtures are now installed in the Humphrey Law Office building which once served as a post office. BOTTOM: Members of the William Bethell Chapter NSDAR make their presentation to MARC (left to right) Martha Stanley, Susan Bullock, Deb Mabe, Jordan Rossi (MARC Executive Director), Carol Adams, and Mary Barrett (Chapter Regent).

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I am thrilled to recognize the incredible generosity of the William Bethell Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR) for their donation of \$10,000 in support of the Wright Tavern restoration project.

Thanks to their philanthropy, the MARC is able to expand the Tavern project beyond its original parameters. We can replace broken shutters and complete additional repairs in the Tavern, as well as improve other buildings on the Tavern complex.

Support from the William Bethell Chapter of the NSDAR was made possible by a donation from Serena Krohn to honor the birthday of her late mother, Alta Hendrix. Krohn, like her mother before her, is a member of the Bethell chapter. The group plans to use the remainder of Krohn's gift to support the DAR School in Crossnore, NC. About half the children at this residential school have been abused, abandoned, or neglected.

Named for Captain William Bethell, Sr., who served as Captain of the North Carolina militia and fought in the Battle of Guilford Courthouse, the William Bethell Chapter of the NSDAR was chartered in 1931 under the leadership of Mrs. Morrison Bethea. Of the charter members, three were descendants of Bethell. The chapter became inactive during World War II, but Miss Gertrude Carraway led efforts to reorganize it in 1947,

and it has remained active since then. "Our motto is 'God-Home-Country,'" says Chapter Regent Mary Barrett, "and our objectives are historical, educational and patriotic. We believe supporting the Museum and Archives of Rockingham County helps us meet those objectives."

We are most appreciative of the support provided to the MARC by this group of women who are so dedicated to our history.

Feature Article

Finding history in paper and fabric

By Fletcher Dalton, MARC Secretary

In my youth, I labelled my parents as hoarders. Dad and Mom kept *everything*. They had endured the Great Depression and consequently held on to anything that could be stored for later use or re-use, including paper bags, bits of thread on nearly empty spools, and every item of their clothing that held its original shape and texture. Fortunately, there were no hand-me-downs; there were only two children, my sister and myself. However, we frequently saw clothing we had outgrown on children in my mother's classroom.

Discovery. Now I have turned into my parents. The difference is that I collect only written material that I discover, such as documents, letters, invoices of consequence, and photos of family gatherings. Mom had the presence of mind to write the dates and the names of family members on these memorabilia.

Often, these artifacts provide answers to questions we otherwise would not know to ask. I recently re-discovered a little pamphlet in this collection entitled *The Rockingham County Bicentennial Quilt*. One page listed the quilters who participated in this project, and among them is Mrs. Elbert Dalton, my mother. Precisely because she kept everything, I was reminded of the quilt sewn some 40 years ago to commemorate the 200th anniversary of American independence. After inquiries, I learned the quilt is currently hanging in the Eden Public Library.

My recollections about this quilt led me to consider the importance of preserving and protecting such valuable objects. Many museums and homes have quilts that have been passed down through generations. Questions about care, proper methods of packing or displaying—all these topics must be considered if the quilt is to be given the tender, loving care that honors both the quilt and the original quilter. If you are fortunate to be the custodian of such a splendid heirloom, there are many websites offering information about maintaining the quality and value of quilts to help you protect and properly memorialize your treasure.



This photo and additional information about the Rockingham County Bicentennial Quilt may be viewed on the DigitalNC website:

<http://library.digitalnc.org/cdm/ref/collection/ncimages/id/5731>

Coming Events



Collard Greens



Kale Greens



Turnip Greens



Mustard Greens

“EAT, READ, LEARN: GREENS” A LESSON IN HISTORY AND CULTURE LEARNED THROUGH FOOD Saturday, February 18 1:00 p.m. at MARC

*This program is sponsored jointly by MARC, RCC, and the
Rockingham Early College High School
in observance of African American History Month*

Greens.

Uncooked . . . many varieties, many shapes.

Cooked . . . they look so much alike!

Taste . . . Love them. Hate them.

Family tradition. Super food in popular culture.



Rockingham
COMMUNITY COLLEGE



This multicultural and intergenerational program offers participants the experience of tasting a variety of greens prepared in Rockingham County tradition by some of our county's notable chefs. Participants will learn about ways foods are influenced by culture through the discussion of articles related to this topic. (Articles will be available on the MARC website to read prior to the event.)

Early College and RCC invite you to attend a related event in the Advanced Technology auditorium at RCC, a skype discussion with Michael Twitty, on Friday, February 10 at 1:30 p.m. Twitty is the author of the forthcoming book, *The Cooking Gene: a Journey Through African American Culinary History in the Old South*, which explores the foodways of enslaved people in the American South.

MARC invites you to the 4th annual

Celebration of American Music

at our new venue, Rockingham County High School auditorium

Sunday, March 5, at 4:00 p.m.

A showcase of Rockingham County talent
to provide financial support for MARC's mission to
preserve and share the county's history

**Tickets are available at the MARC, from MARC Directors,
and for purchase on the MARC website**

Volunteers make it happen!

Early College students help deck the MARC halls

The historic courthouse, home to our museum, is the perfect backdrop for splendid holiday decorations. However, as we all know, the process of digging out decorations and creating displays is a major undertaking. Thankfully, students from the Rockingham Early College High School's chapter of the Tarheel Junior Historian Association volunteered to assist MARC's Programs Committee and staff with the work and pleasure of bringing holiday cheer to the MARC.

The Early College chapter is affiliated with the NC Tarheel Junior Historian Association, which is coordinated by staff at the North Carolina Museum of History. Established in 1953, the purpose of the Association is to encourage young people to study local and state history and to help them better understand and appreciate their own place in history.

Valencia Abbott, a Programs Committee and MARC member, serves as faculty sponsor of the RECHS chapter. She encourages students to engage in service work and to participate in MARC events. Since the school's location on the RCC campus is nearby, our collaboration is both convenient and mutually beneficial.

We appreciate the students' help in this and ongoing projects at MARC. We are pleased to partner with them to preserve and share Rockingham County history.



Photo credit: L. Barrett



Photo credit: L. Barrett



Photo credit: L. Barrett

Top: Claire Lewis, Kensi Laube, Kennedy Horsley, Elaine McCollum, and Truman Tisdale string lights on the huge tree in the rotunda. Left: The nature tree on the portico, designed by Libby Barrett, is adorned with dried okra pods from the Wright Tavern garden, bird nests, holly sprigs, and topped with a raw cotton plant. Right: When the work is completed, Claire Lewis observes the scene with MARC's antique sleigh full of "gifts" adjacent to the beautifully decorated tree.

Recent Events



Photo credit: L. Barrett

October's second annual Pickin' at the MARC Fiddlers Convention brought growth in the strength and number of performers. The Virginia-Carolina Connection, including: (L to R) Jon Johansen, Arnie Solomon, Barbara Wilson, Greg Wilson, and James Hyler, took first place honors in the Bluegrass Band division.



Photo credit: J. Bullins



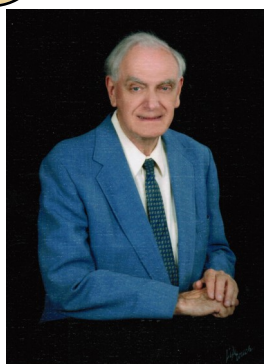
Photo credit: J. Bullins



Photo credit: J. Bullins

Our December 7 program commemorating Pearl Harbor Day featured excerpts of a video interview with the late William "Bouse" Williams, who was stationed at Pearl Harbor on that fateful day in 1941. (Middle photo) His daughter, Bonnie Connolly of Stoneville, shares her reflections on his experiences and his military memorabilia that she donated to the MARC.

The Wright Tavern Christmas celebration grows more popular each year. (Above) Marcia Jones serves refreshments to members of the Carolina Colonial Dancers. (Bottom left) Watching friends enjoy Christmas cheer and good company seems to hint of earlier times in the Tavern's history.



Mr. History: Bob Carter, County Historian

The history of the “Arts Council building”

Part I

For the past twenty-six years, the Rockingham County Arts Council and the Dan River Art Market have been located in the Martin-Irving house at the intersection of Tyre Dodson Road and NC Highway 65 in Wentworth. This white brick building, which was recently vacated by the arts group, has a long and interesting history dating over one hundred fifty years.



Martin-Irving house, located at 1122 NC Highway 65 in Wentworth, in 1925. Notice the front porches as they were on the original structure.

Deed research shows that the front section of the house was built by 1853. This part of the building is of Greek Revival architecture, with two stories, a hip roof, and chimneys on each end. There are fireplaces in all four rooms. The doors are of two panel design and the windows are 9 over 9 panes. The mantels and door facings are of plain Greek Revival style. Though it is unusual, the halls on both floors are narrow and show no evidence that a stairway to the upper floor was ever located in the hall. Originally the stairway must have been located in a rear wing that has been demolished.

In 1853, business partners Montgomery, Gunn, and Felts sold the house to local attorney John H. Dillard (1819-1896) for the sum of \$1,325. Dillard was a native of Rockingham

County who had set up his law practice in Wentworth in 1846 after he received his law degree in Virginia. He established a partnership with attorney Thomas Ruffin, Jr., which continued until 1861 when Dillard was elected Captain of Company G of the 45th Regiment of NC State Troops. He held this position for only a short time before resigning and then resuming his law practice in Wentworth. In 1868, Dillard moved to Greensboro and formed a law partnership with John A. Gilmer and his former partner, Thomas Ruffin, Jr. Later, Dillard and Robert P. Dick started a law school in Greensboro which continued from 1878-1893. Dillard also served as an Associate Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court from late 1878 until February 1881. He continued to practice law in Greensboro until his death in 1896.

In Wentworth, Dillard owned the brick house for only two years before selling the property to James F. Clack in 1855 for \$1,400. A few months later, Clack sold the building to Thomas Settle, Jr. and Thomas Ruffin, Jr., who set up their law practice there. After two and one-half years, in 1858, they sold the building back to John H. Dillard for the sum of \$1,500.00.



A current view of the Martin-Irving house

(To be continued in the April issue of *On Your MARC*.)

MARC Business

WANTED

Audio/video equipment

Audio and video components are constantly changing, and that often leaves consumers wondering what to do with old equipment as they buy upgrades. It also leaves historians in a lurch as we need older equipment to transfer sights and sounds recorded on various platforms onto digital files for preservation. Donating your used equipment (in working condition) to MARC is the best way to solve both problems!

Please contact MARC if you have any of the following items to donate:

- ◆ Flat panel TV's less than 5 years old
- ◆ Video cameras in earlier formats: Hi8, Digital8, or MiniDV
- ◆ Tape recorders: Reel-to-reel or Cassette

Short subjects....

Many thanks to the **Western Rockingham Service League** for their **donation** of \$200 for MARC operations! Donations such as theirs provide the resources MARC needs to employ staff and pay museum expenses.

The **MARC website** offers a **secure** and easy-to-use **service to accept your donations and event registrations**. We continue to encourage donors to **become Sustainers by pledging monthly or quarterly donations** to MARC. This assists us with budgeting throughout the year. Using our website for automatic payments makes it simple for you!

During the **fourth quarter**, we welcomed **tour groups** from Reidsville Middle School and Rockingham County Middle School. We also hosted members of the Citizen's Academy. MARC is a perfect destination for students, church groups, and civic organizations!

Rockingham County Community Foundation grant facilitates partnerships to create natural history exhibit

How has nature influenced the development of human societies in Rockingham County? The MARC has an opportunity to explore this question thanks to a \$22,000 grant from the Rockingham County Community Foundation. The grant was made possible by support from the Dan River Basin Fund for Rockingham County, a component fund of the North Carolina Community Foundation courtesy of a generous grant from Duke Energy.

In partnership with the Virginia Museum of Natural History, the MARC will curate an exhibition exploring Rockingham County's natural features – from our rivers to mineral deposits and flora and fauna. An interactive experience, the exhibit will encourage visitors to consider how nature influenced the lives of their ancestors and how it influences their lives today.



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MARC Hours of Operation

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 1 pm–6 pm
Saturday 10 am–4 pm

MARC Admission

Adult	\$ 5.00
Seniors & Students	\$ 3.50
Children	\$ 2.50
Children under 4	FREE
Family Pass	\$15.00
MEMBERS	FREE

Visit www.themarconline.org for individual and business membership information and forms.

MARC Your Calendar

Friday, February 10—1:30 p.m.

Skype discussion with Michael Twitty

In the Advanced Technology auditorium on the RCC campus. Sponsored by the MARC, RCC, and Rockingham Early College High School.

Saturday, February 18—1:00 p.m.

“Eat, Read, Learn: Greens”

At MARC—Food tasting with readings and discussion, presented in conjunction with RCC & Rockingham Early College High School

Sunday, March 5—4:00 p.m.

“Fourth Annual Celebration of American Music” talent showcase and fundraiser

The event is at a new venue this year, Rockingham County High School in Wentworth

Thursday, March 23—6:00 p.m.

Board of Directors Meeting

Saturday, August 12

Summer Soirée at Pennrose Country Club

Members who receive newsletters by email save the MARC valuable printing and postage costs! You can keep your email address current by emailing changes to MARCconnection@gmail.com



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