



Historic Edenton State Historic Site

Summer 2014

Volume 3, Issue 1

Roanoke River Lighthouse Opening Soon!

It has been a long journey for the 1886 Roanoke River Lighthouse, but the final phase of its renovation is almost complete. The Lighthouse is projected to be completed and opened for tours this summer.

Historic Edenton State Historic Site and the Edenton Historical Commission are working hard to prepare for its opening. The Commission has been busy collecting furniture and working with the State curators to furnish the building appropriate to its 1880s roots. Meanwhile, Historic Edenton State Historic Site is planning a series of trainings for volunteer historic interpreters to help lead tours and programs for this exciting “new” building.

Are you interested in volunteering your time to the 1886 Roanoke River Lighthouse or would you like more information on its tours and opening? Contact Historic Edenton by calling 252-482-2637 or by email at Edenton@ncdcr.gov. You can also visit www.edentonlighthouse.org to learn more about the building’s history and its long journey from the mouth of the Roanoke River to the waterfront of Historic Downtown Edenton.



The 1886 Roanoke River Lighthouse after completion of its exterior renovation last spring.

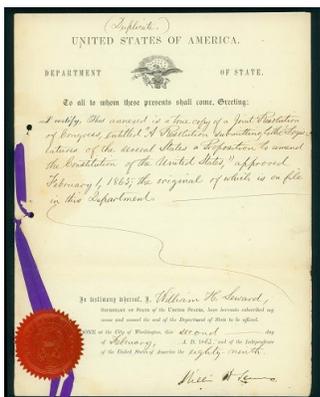


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Juneteenth Tour Coming to Edenton



A handful of documents changed the character of the United States. The 13th Amendment that formally ended legal slavery in this country is one of them. This important document will be exhibited by Historic Edenton State Historic Site at the 1767 Courthouse on June 5, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

As part of the observance of the 150th anniversary of the Civil War led by the N.C.

Department of Cultural Resources, and in recognition of Juneteenth, June 19, the date many African-Americans observe as when the last of the enslaved in 1865 learned they were free, there will be a tour of North Carolina’s copy of the 13th Amendment in June.

Historic Edenton is the first venue on the tour. Edenton was an important stop on the maritime Underground Railroad

as African-American watermen helped runaways seeking freedom. It was the setting of *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, by Harriet Jacobs, that detailed her maritime escape from slavery in Edenton and her transformation into an advocate of equality for African-Americans and women.

Harriet Jacobs and the Search for Freedom

By Charles Boyette, Historic Interpreter



Pencil (graphite) drawing of Harriet Jacobs, based on famous photo of her that is owned by Harvard University (N_86_4_1). Drawing was commissioned by George Stevenson and completed by artist Keith White of West Side Gallery and Studios, Raleigh, NC 27601, in February 1994. Original is from PhC.122, North Carolina State Archives, Raleigh, NC.

Freedom is never free. There is always a price to be paid for it. No one knew that better than Harriet Jacobs. Harriet was born into slavery in Edenton, North Carolina. Her parents were also enslaved and her father worked as a carpenter. She famously writes “I was born a slave; but I never knew till six years of happy childhood had passed away.”

At age 12, life changed drastically for Harriet after the elderly lady who owned her died and willed her to a young relative. This young relative was the daughter of a prominent physician and plantation owner, Dr. James

Norcom. Harriet came under his control since her owner, his daughter, was only 3 years of age.

By the time Jacobs had turned 15, Dr. Norcom had begun to make inappropriate advances towards her. After refusing Norcom numerous times over the years she could no longer bear his cruel attentions. She had sought solace from her situation by having a relationship with a young white lawyer named Samuel Tredwell Sawyer with whom she had 2 children.

At age 22, after several years of abuse in the Norcom household, Harriet decided she had to seek freedom but it was to come in stages. She left Noncom’s home and sought refuge with her Grandmother, Molly Horniblow. Molly was a free African-American woman who ran a successful bakery in town. She had been born in South Carolina as the daughter of an enslaved woman and her

white master. When the Revolution broke out, Molly’s father sent her and her mother from South Carolina to Florida out of harms way. Unfortunately, the ship was seized by privateers and unable to prove their status she and her mother were sold back into slavery. She spent most of her life as an enslaved cook for the Horniblow family, who owned a large tavern here in Edenton, before she herself found freedom again.

Harriet stayed in the attic crawlspace of her Grandmother’s home for seven years. Norcom made a large effort to find her and even threatened her family to make her come out of hiding, but his attempts failed. After years of this life in hiding, one night she was able to dress as a sailor and escape on a ship out of Edenton to through the Maritime Underground Railroad.

While living in Philadelphia, Harriet worked for a family active in the abolitionist cause who encouraged her to record her life story and escape to freedom. Her writings were self-published as the book *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, which became one of the leading books depicting what slavery was like for a woman.

After the Civil War Harriet worked as a early Civil Rights activist helping to start hospitals and schools for African-Americans. She ended her days running a boarding house in Cambridge, MA with her daughter. Her story is one of the true examples of how the search for freedom often comes with a high price but is worth every penny.

There is so much more to learn about Harriet Jacobs life. Come by our Visitor Center at 108 N Broad Street in Edenton and see our display on her life, request a walking tour on the history of her time in Edenton, or pick up self-guided maps and explore Edenton and Harriet’s history on your own.



The Lesser Known Founding Fathers

By Charles Boyette, Historic Interpreter

Edenton during the American Revolution was a center of the Patriot activity. Many leading citizens took a leading role in supporting America's independence with their time, money, and efforts. Yet many of these leaders are not household names like George Washington and Benjamin Franklin. In honor of the upcoming 4th of July holiday, we would like to highlight each of these men who also made a significant contribution to the Patriot Cause.

Samuel Johnston was a wealthy landowner and lawyer. His wealth and high status made him one of the key movers and shakers in North Carolina politics. He openly, and without hesitation, chose to back the Patriots. He served as a judge, legislator, governor, and was one of the first state senators. During the Revolution he served as a representative to both the Provincial and Continental Congresses.

Joseph Hewes was a very successful merchant and shipyard owner who lived in Edenton. He came from a family of wealthy landowners and was educated at Princeton University. He freely and openly contributed to the cause by serving as a delegate at the Provincial and then Continental Congress. His business ability was put to good use by serving on financial committees. Some of his best work was done as the Secretary of the Naval Board which essentially made him one of the first Secretaries of the US Navy. His hard work and support helped to establish the Navy as a fighting force and he obtained an officers commission for naval hero Captain John Paul Jones. If all that was not enough,

Hewes signed the Declaration of Independence for North Carolina.

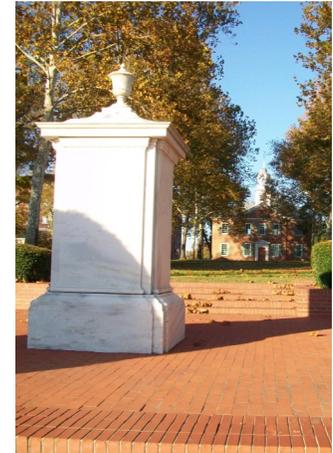
Dr. Hugh Williamson was a scientist, scholar, physician, and merchant who made his residence in Edenton and went on to serve as a Surgeon General for North Carolina Troops during the Revolutionary War. He went on to serve as a delegate to the Continental Congress and then the Constitutional Convention where he signed the U. S. Constitution for North Carolina.

Last but not least was Judge James Iredell. Iredell came to Edenton as a young man from England to serve as tax collector for the port of Edenton. Soon after arrival, he began to study law under Samuel Johnston. He went on to serve as Attorney General of North Carolina during the Revolution. He was influential in the efforts to get the Bill of Rights included in the US Constitution and was asked by George Washington to serve as one of the first United States Supreme Court Justices.

All of these men in some way contributed to the cause of freedom. All were prominent successful individuals who risked their good names and fortunes to the cause of liberty and freedom from England. They knew if the Revolution was lost they would be disgraced, imprisoned, and their fortunes and property seized. Yet with all this hanging in the balance they cared more for honor and freedom and joined the Patriot Cause.



Portrait of Samuel Johnston on display in the James Iredell House.

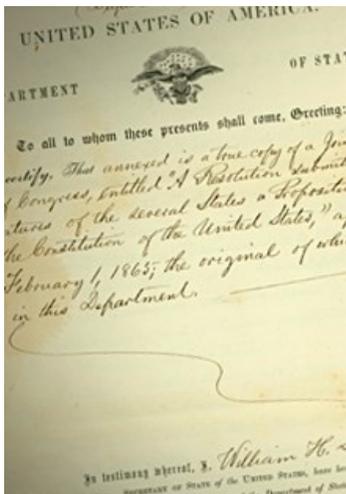


Joseph Hewes Monument on the Courthouse Green .



Portrait of James Iredell on display in the James Iredell House.

Upcoming Summer Programming at Historic Edenton



The Juneteenth Tour: The Thirteenth Amendment on Display

Thursday, June 5, 2014, 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.

1767 Chowan County Courthouse

Free Admission

We are excited to host a tour of the Thirteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, which will be touring the State this summer before going on display in the State Capitol for its 150th anniversary. This very important amendment outlawed slavery in the United States (except for punishment for crime) and nullified the antebellum slave codes (laws). North Carolina's copy of the 13th Amendment was one sent to the states in February 1865. In celebration of this day, we will also have Harriet Jacobs Walking Tours at 10 a.m., 11 a.m., 1p.m., and 3 p.m. Tours will depart from the Historic Edenton Visitor Center at 108 N. Broad Street and will be free. There are limited spots on each tour, so be sure to arrive early or call 252-482-2637 in advance that day to check availability or to reserve your spot.



Revolutionary War Encampment

Saturday, June 21st, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Weapons and drill demonstrations at 11 a.m., 1 p.m. and 3p.m.

Courthouse Green

Free Admission

Learn about the Revolutionary War and the men that fought on both sides of the war in this special interactive living history encampment. Meet Redcoat and Patriot soldiers, learn about their clothing and equipment, watch weapons demonstrations, and experience camp life during this fun-filled historical day. Also a part of this special event, the Florie, a patriot armed boat that will be doing cannon firing demonstrations from the boat throughout the day. The Florie is a reproduction Albemarle Sound Shad Boat, the state boat of North Carolina, and was built per original specifications. The crew of the boat from the Submarine Battery Service, Historical Impressions, performs 18th and 19th century living history programs throughout the eastern United States. The Redcoats are volunteer interpreters from the 64th Regiment of Foot, one of the oldest recreated living history organizations in the United States, formed in 1958, and is recognized by the modern British Army and the Staffordshire Regiment Museum in England.



Beat the Heat Tours

Tuesday—Saturday in the month of August

Tour departs from the Historic Edenton Visitor Center

\$2 for adults, \$1 for youth ages 13-18, free for children 12 and under

Explore the James Iredell House and learn how families coped with the summer heat in the colonial era.



Changes to the Edenton Trolley Tours



This past winter, the Historic Trolley Tours had a few changes in operation. Tickets can now be bought in the Penelope Barker Welcome Center and the trolley tours now depart from the foot of Broad Street, Tuesday - Saturday at 10:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m., and 2:30 p.m. The trolley tour itself still remains the same great experience following the same route and led by State Historic Site Interpreters. Group Bookings are also still available and can be made by calling Historic Edenton State Historic Site at 252-482-2637 or emailing them at Edenton@ncdcr.gov.

Historic Edenton State Historic Site

108 North Broad Street

Tel: 252-482-2637

Fax: 252-482-3499

E-mail: Edenton@ncdcr.gov

Website: www.edenton.nchistoricsites.org



Site Hours of Operation

Tuesday - Saturday
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Closed Sundays and Mondays

Call for Holiday Schedule



NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF
**CULTURAL
RESOURCES**