

# Region of Responsibility

We thought you might like to know—The Museum of the Cape is one of seven museums in the Division of State History Museums. We are one of three regional museums and our exhibits reflect a 20 county region. Be on the lookout as we begin to focus on the history of those counties.



The 20 Counties in alphabetical order:

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|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Anson       | 11. Moore       |
| 2. Bladen      | 12. New Hanover |
| 3. Brunswick   | 13. Onslow      |
| 4. Columbus    | 14. Pender      |
| 5. Cumberland  | 15. Richmond    |
| 6. Duplin      | 16. Robeson     |
| 7. Harnett     | 17. Sampson     |
| 8. Hoke        | 18. Scotland    |
| 9. Lee         | 19. Stanly      |
| 10. Montgomery | 20. Union       |

## A Brief History of Bladen County

The “Mother of All Counties,” a moniker attributed to Bladen County because 55 other counties were created from it. It formed in 1734 from New Hanover County and named for Martin Bladen, English commissioner of the Board of Trade and Plantations. (Board of Trade and Plantations served as the main British office to oversee colonial affairs, which began on May 15 1696.)

Prior to European settlement, the area was occupied by Native American peoples: Waccamaw and Cape Fear. (Cape Fear has come to represent a general population of Native Americans that lived along the river, and identified as such by the European settlers.) During this time, the Native Americans were growing food, hunting with bows and arrows, and making coil pottery.

Bladen County’s geography is rich in rivers that include the Black River, South River, and the Cape Fear River. These rivers provided transportation for crops and naval stores products, allowing for farmers to export their goods.

In addition to three rivers, Bladen County is home to the Bay Lakes and 2 State Parks: Jones Lake State Park and Singletary Lake State Park. White Lake is also a popular attraction for swimming and camping.

Furthermore, the county is rich in colonial history starting with the Scottish settlers. It was the site of the Battle of Elizabethtown, where the Patriots broke Loyalists/Tory power. When the American Revolutionary War began, records indicate that 300 men served in the Bladen County Militia.

Bladen County is the third largest county in North Carolina, encompasses 879 square miles, and is known for Houston peanuts.