

# 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. This series focuses on the history of those counties within our region of responsibility.



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 Robeson County

In 1787, Robeson County was formed from Bladen County. It is named for Colonel Thomas Robeson, who, ironically, fought at the Battle of Elizabethtown during the Revolutionary War, which is in Bladen County. In land area, Robeson County is North Carolina's largest county at 951 square miles.

Its best known geographic feature is the Lumber River, which stretches 115 miles, 81 miles designated by the National Park Service as a wild and scenic waterway. It is believed that the Lumbee Indians took their name from the river. The Lumbee are North Carolina's largest tribe and their ancestors, along with Cheraw, were the first peoples to inhabit the area. The European settlers included Scottish, English, Welsh, and French immigrants.

During the Civil War, many of the American Indian men wanted to avoid being conscripted, or drafted, into the Confederate Army. They hid in the swamps and fought against those oppressing them. The group formed under the leadership of the Lowry's, whose leader eventually rose to be Henry Berry Lowry. Lowry was never captured and what happened to him is one of North Carolina's history mysteries. The outdoor drama, *Strike at the Wind!* tells the complex story of the Confederate Home Guard, of Union control, Lowry and his men's elusive way of life, and the area residents who supported him.

Robeson County is also home to the University of North Carolina at Pembroke. Established in 1887 as the Croatan Normal School, it became a constituent of the University of North Carolina in 1972. In 1996 it officially became the University of North Carolina at Pembroke (UNCP).

In the Robeson County town of Maxton existed the Laurinburg-Maxton Army Air Base. The base played an important role in World War II where 20,000 glider pilots and crewmen were trained for campaigns in Burma, Africa, Sicily, and Normandy.



North Carolina Postcards, North Carolina Collection  
Photographic Archives, Wilson Library, UNC-Chapel Hill