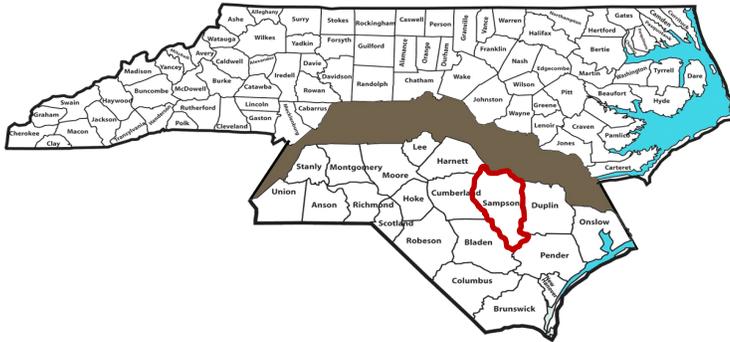


Region of Responsibility

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:

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 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 Sampson County

In 1784, Sampson County was formed from part of Duplin County and named for Col. John Sampson, a member of North Carolina's House of Commons. The first inhabitants of the area, and their descendants are still present in the county today, are the Coharie Indians. European settlers to the area included English, Welsh, and Scots.

The second largest (in area) of North Carolina's counties, parts of Wayne and New Hanover counties would eventually be annexed into Sampson County. In the central part of the county, at the confluence of the Coharie and Six Runs creeks, begins the Black River, known for its bald cypress trees, the fifth oldest tree species in the world. Some of the river's cypress trees are over 1600 years old.

The 13th Vice-President of the United States, William Ruffus King, was born in Sampson County in 1786. King left UNC in 1804 to study law with William Duffy of Fayetteville. Sampson County is also the birthplace of Micajah Autry, who died with Davy Crockett at the Alamo; and, Theophilus Hunter Homes, Lieutenant General in the Confederate Army whose father was Governor Gabriel Holmes.

Another Sampson County native is John Merrick, founder of the NC Mutual Life Insurance Company. Merrick was born enslaved in 1859 and eventually became one of the most successful African-American businessmen in the county, having embarked on a series of business ventures. Founded in 1898, the NC Mutual Life Insurance Company is headquartered in Durham.

Since 1969, the present-day Coharie Tribe holds an annual Powwow, which raises funds for the tribes cultural and educational activities. The first recorded meeting of the tribe took place in 1910. Enoch Emmanuel was elected chief and he served in that position for 16 years. Today, the Coharie chief is elected by the tribal membership every four years. In 1971, the Coharie Tribe was formally recognized by the state.



Powwow Grand Entry 2019, Coharie Cultural Center