



America 250 NC

COMMEMORATIVE ACTIVITIES HIGHLIGHTS

North Carolina will commemorate the 250th Anniversary of the Revolution with wide ranging activities across a multi-year commemoration beginning on April 12, 2024 and ending in December 2026, although additional events will continue through 2033. The activities listed here are subject to change and additional programs and products may be added as the commemoration grows. The commemorative activities will empower North Carolinians to consider what the concepts of “We the People” and “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” mean both historically and for modern day residents. The Department of Natural and Cultural Resources (DNCR) is the state agency charged with overseeing this important commemoration.

Thematic Approach

Two interpretive pillars with additional thematic avenues to further explore these concepts: **Revolutionary NC** (the historical events of the Revolution) and **When Are We US?** (exploration of the concepts of freedom, civic responsibility, overcoming challenge, and change).

Educational Outreach

- **Teacher Resources.** Before and during the commemoration of the 250th, DNCR will create curriculum materials and sponsor teacher workshops on “Revolutionary North Carolina,” and “When are We US?,” themes. Partnering with non-profit professional development organizations associated with state universities, DNCR staff will contribute expertise, historic locations, and digital materials associated with their collections to the program. Facilitated pedagogical sessions will explore teaching strategies, activities, and lessons for integrating workshop themes back into the classroom. Educational materials will be made widely available free of charge on the dedicated commemorative website, workshops, and through the broader DNCR network of social media, web tools, and educator resources. Additional materials will feature discussions of civil discourse and basic civics education.
- **Tar Heel Junior Historian.** The statewide history club for students managed by the North Carolina Museum of History will highlight content related to the two themes across the commemorative time period.
- **ANCHOR** ([A North Carolina History Online Resource](#)). The online resource will grow with additional materials that support commemorative themes through digital imagery of artifact, library, and archival materials from across the department accompanied by interpretive essays, including downloadable documents kits with suggested classroom activities.
- **Student art contests** around commemoration themes.
- **Archaeology Days.** The Office of State Archaeology will sponsor at public excavation events at various state historic sites (i.e., Halifax, Edenton, Brunswick Town, Tryon Palace, etc.) with coordinated student involvement.
- **Reading the Revolution.** The State Library of NC will host a series of authors of history and historical fiction at various libraries around the state as well as Summer Reading Revolutionary-Themed or “When Are We Us” Programs—for public libraries across the state.

Online and Other Resources

- **Central coordinating website.** A new commemorative web portal will contain: an online joint calendar of reenactments, programs, etc. of state partners; updated Timeline of the Revolution;

centralized access to other DNCR offerings such as [ANCHOR](#), [NCPedia](#); online exhibits featuring artifacts, documents, landscapes, and historic houses in thematic bundles.

- **“Revolutionary NC Trails.”** Driving and hiking tours to include battlefields and other places of interest along with suggested itineraries with both print and online components.
- **Digitization of Materials.** DNCR entities will digitize and provide greater access to collections along commemorative themes to emphasize the underrepresented stories of the period, genealogical value, and support of the K-12 curriculum.
- **Podcasts/blog/newsletter.** A series will feature DNCR and partner locations on topics related to the wide spectrum of commemorative topics and develop behind-the-scenes videos of our preparations for the 250th as well as “what we are finding” as we do the preliminary research to plan the 250th.
- **Online class(es) and Events.** Online learning opportunities for adult learners on topics such as “Finding Revolutionary Ancestry,” trivia contests, and other topics such as civic engagement
- **Social media campaign.** Coordinated social media campaign across all platforms to share information about the commemoration, including selected hashtags to connect the statewide commemoration for users.
- **Documentaries.** Series of short films on commemorative themes to support online and special events and activities.
- **Publications.** Special issues of *Tar Heel Junior Historian* (Museum of History); the *North Carolina Historical Review* (Office of Historical Research); Image and essay book on NC in the Revolution; a children’s book series; revival of appropriate out-of-print Revolutionary titles in electronic and print-on-demand formats.
- **Speakers Bureau.** Historians, curators, archivists, historical interpreters from across the Office of Archives and History will develop presentations on various Revolutionary-era topics.

Exhibitions

- **Major exhibition.** The NC Museum of History will mount a central exhibition, **“When Are We US?”** to examine moments across 250 years when our nation struggled to come together, including some seemingly straightforward topics (Halifax Resolves), some more fraught with struggle (Civil Rights movement) and some lighter ones, too (the Hurricanes win the Stanley Cup). Along the way, we would tell stories about the challenge of coming together to grow our state and nation over time.
- **Two traveling exhibits.** Centered on our two main interpretive pillars, traveling exhibits will be developed. The interpretive panels will explain the basic history of the Revolution in North Carolina as well as the changes over time that have crafted our new state and nation, based on the question of When are we US? At least two copies of each exhibition are planned, and will be shared with partners across the state at low to no cost: community colleges, public libraries, local history museums, historic sites, etc.
- **One-Day Wonders.** The State Archives will develop a special, pop-up exhibit featuring original documents from the Revolutionary era. Local partners (libraries, colleges, museums, historic sites) wishing to host the free exhibit in conjunction with another USA 250th event will be able to apply for the exhibit to come to their local community. Staff from the Archives accompany the exhibit and are available to speak with visitors. The Archives anticipates holding approximately 12-15 one-day special events across the 33-month commemorative period. Exhibit should be completed, ready to travel and scheduled by April 12, 2024.
- **Maritime Museum System Exhibit.** The Maritime Museum System (three museums) is exploring the development of an exhibit about the Revolution along the coast—mainly about North Carolina’s sponsorship of privateering, which will be largely reproduction, illustration, and video-based.

- **Mobile Museum** DNCR is exploring the development of a mobile museum which will be used to carry a version of a joint exhibit of those listed above (Visionaries of Freedom/North Carolina in the Revolution and When Are we US?) to various community events and festivals.
- **Revolutionary Documents on Exhibition** in State Capitol and Legislative Building. North Carolina's copy of the Bill of Rights, the Halifax Resolves, George Washington's letter welcoming North Carolina to the Union and perhaps one or two other items will be displayed individually for very limited times in the State Capitol with a special program for each.

Events

- **Large commemorative events.** DNCR will collaborate with state and local partners to sponsor events such as: Ceremonial joint session of the legislature; Ceremonial meeting(s) of the State Supreme Court (Chowan County Courthouse, Burke County Courthouse, State Capitol); Opening Event at State Capitol with partners (Congress of descendant/patriotic groups); enlarged traditional 4th of July events across the state.
- **Community Events.** DNCR will encourage and facilitate community events in all 100 counties, including suggested programs such as reading the Declaration of Independence at county courthouses on July 4, 2026; special concerts across the state in conjunction with the North Carolina Arts Council and the North Carolina Symphony. To encourage a cohesive statewide commemoration, tool kits for planning events, including sample exhibit materials, press packets, suggested activities, and DNCR support will be made available to partners.
- **Special Programming.** DNCR entities will focus regular programming/activities during the commemoration on the America250th themes: special reenactments, lectures, tours, and similar activities, all featured in social media and online outlets. Other programs will include panel discussions, mock debates, special tours, musical presentations, arts activities, and sponsored excursions will highlight various aspects of the commemoration.

Partners

DNCR is partnering with a variety of local, state, and federal partners to accomplish the goals of the commemoration:

- North Carolina Commission on Indian Affairs
- NC Department of Public Instruction
- North Carolina Humanities Council
- North Carolina Museums Council
- Federation of North Carolina Historical Societies
- North Carolina Literary and Historical Association
- North Carolina Folklife Festival
- National Park Service (NC units)
- Daughters of the American Revolution
- Sons of the American Revolution
- Society of the Cincinnati
- Colonial Dames
- Old Salem Historic Sites and Properties
- Historic Hillsborough Commission
- Historic Murfreesboro Commission
- East Carolina University
- University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

About: *The NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources is a cabinet-level state agency that oversees 27 historic sites, seven history museums, two art museums, two science museums, three aquariums, 41 state parks, the Zoo, the Symphony, the State Library, the State Archives, the Arts Council, the State Historic Preservation Office, the Office of State Archaeology, and the African American Heritage Commission. All divisions of the agency will participate in the 250th commemoration.*