

Winter 2009

Anthemion

North Carolina State Capitol Foundation

Learning Comes Full Circle

By Terra Schramm, Education & Outreach

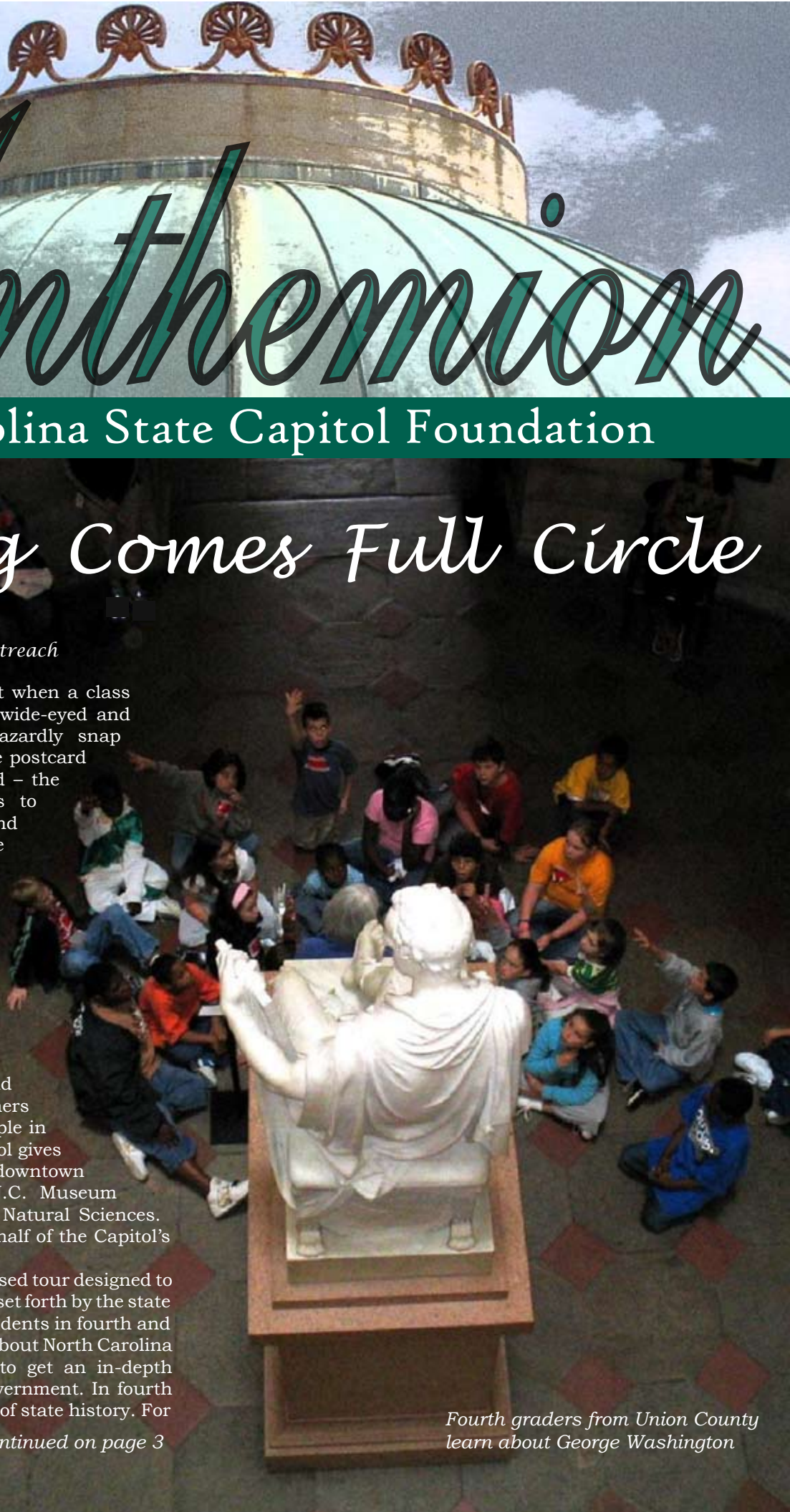
Four guides live for the moment when a class first enters the State Capitol, wide-eyed and whispering in awe. As they haphazardly snap pictures of everything – including the postcard display and Larry the security guard – the children file in, crane their necks to glimpse the top of the rotunda, and point inquisitively at the busts in the first floor niches. In most cases, the students are hooked right away, “I enjoy telling ‘the story’ to well-behaved children,” said Ann Fowler, a veteran volunteer of nearly eight years. “I love to see people who really like to be in the building and feel the history of their state.”

On any given weekday in the spring or fall, the Capitol and grounds are abuzz with chaperones, students, and slightly frazzled teachers from all corners of the state. Serving up to 1,200 people in 20 school groups each day, the Capitol gives more guided tours than any other downtown Raleigh attraction, including the N.C. Museum of History and the N.C. Museum of Natural Sciences. School tours account for more than half of the Capitol’s annual visitation.

Each group receives a curriculum-based tour designed to meet specific social studies objectives set forth by the state Department of Public Instruction. Students in fourth and eighth grade spend the year learning about North Carolina history and often visit the Capitol to get an in-depth look at the former center of state government. In fourth grade, students are taught the basics of state history. For

Continued on page 3

Fourth graders from Union County learn about George Washington.





Edward T. Davis

This has been a remarkable year for the Capitol. Projects many years in planning are now coming to fruition, new programs instigated by the State Capitol Foundation are in the works, plans for a new Visitors' Center are underway, and a new administration is in place.

The State Capitol Foundation completed a series of retreats over the summer and early fall to define our responsibilities. Specifically, we refined the committees that oversee and support the Capitol and its programs. These committees include:

Property, Education, Nominating, Marketing/Public Relations, The State Capitol Society, Legislative Affairs, Finance/Endowment and the proposed Visitors' Center. These committees are currently meeting to define their mission statements and creating realistic implementation schedules. We are grateful for Barbara Currier who provided leadership as our facilitator and for the work of our second vice-president, Kim Shope, in securing a great meeting space at the Angus Barn.

In coming issues I will highlight the goals of each committee as they begin to plan for the future. In the interim, I want to share several tentative goals that the Education and the Property Committees have discussed. The Education Committee will be working closely with Capitol staff to ensure that educational programs for both children and adults will be offered at the Capitol and with our friends in other museums and historic facilities throughout the state. Another goal of this committee is to oversee the anticipated 2009 publication of a history of the Capitol written by Raymond Beck. Look for updates on this project in future issues of the Anthemion.

Prior to the formation of the Education Committee, Capitol staff scheduled the following lectures for 2009: "The Paradox of Tar Heel Politics" by Rob Christensen (Jan. 31); "The History of Union Square" by landscape architect Susan Little, F.A.S.L.A. (Feb. 16); and "North Carolina's Fight for the Bill of Rights" by Assistant Attorney General Karen Blum (April 18). All lectures will take place in the Capitol at 1:00 p.m. and are free and open to the public.

The Property Committee has asked architect Joseph Opperman, F.A.I.A., to help us assemble a comprehensive master plan for the ongoing maintenance of the building. Mr. Opperman is well known internationally for his work with this nation's most important historic buildings and we are fortunate to have his expertise at the Capitol. The outcome of this study will result in a detailed and prioritized list of maintenance and restoration which will be required over the next ten years.

We hope you will participate in one of the exciting lectures being delivered over the coming months, or simply stop by to become reacquainted with North Carolina's most important civic structure. We look forward to seeing you!

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Anthemion

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For more information about the State Capitol, visit our Web site at www.ncstatecapitol.org, or call 919-733-4994.



Learning *Continued from cover*

these groups, docents focus on important events, people, and symbols associated with North Carolina’s past and discuss how things have changed over time. When eighth graders visit, their tour builds on the introduction they received in the fourth grade while introducing more complex topics. Eighth grade groups may ask docents to focus on the social and political reasons behind the creation of a new State Constitution in 1868 or the Capitol’s role in the Civil War and Reconstruction.

Dedicated volunteer docents lead the majority of the Capitol’s school tours and are the primary reason that the Capitol can continue to give guided tours. Many other historic sites and museums have had to find new methods in the face of staff and budget cuts. Though guides have certain core topics that must be addressed in each tour, docents have the flexibility to customize their tour to the needs and interests of each school group. For many docents, this flexibility is what keeps them coming back to volunteer. Chuck Crew, one of the Capitol’s newest volunteers, enjoys a taking a light-hearted approach to help his groups retain the information. “[It] depends on the age group, but I ask them to at least remember my fun facts,” Chuck said. “For instance, the State Capitol was built using the state rock – granite. And, with 15 electoral votes, North Carolina is tied for the eighth most important state when it comes

to electing the President and Vice President.” But what really gets a laugh from Chuck’s groups? “Now you can tell your friends that you saw George Washington wearing a skirt,” he says with a grin.

New volunteers receive a comprehensive docent manual detailing the history of Raleigh, Union Square, and of course, the Capitol itself. They also participate in a two day training session and shadow the tours of other docents and staff before taking a group on their own. Throughout the year, the Capitol staff offers special tours and lectures on various topics so that docents can build upon their knowledge and incorporate new information into each tour. “I enjoy constantly trying to learn new things to make the tours more interesting and exciting so I can make history come alive to the students,” said Vickie Goeking, a volunteer



Docent Ann Fowler talks to fourth grade students from Reidsville in the Senate Chamber. Photo by T. Schramm

since 2005. “When teachers who have toured the building many, many times...tell me they learned things they didn’t know before, it excites me to know that their own excitement in a fresh approach will likely carry over to their students.”

In this way, learning comes full circle at the Capitol. The more that our state’s students and citizens are educated about this National Historic Landmark, the more capable they will become to apply the lessons of the past to shape North Carolina’s future.



N.C. Standard Course of Study

Capitol tours meet the following objectives for 4th and 8th grade students :

4th Grade

- 3.02 Identify people, symbols, documents & events associated with North Carolina’s history
- 4.03 Examine the importance of responsible citizenship and identify ways to participate in civic affairs
- 4.04 Examine the ways in which North Carolinians govern themselves & identify major government authorities on the local and state level

8th Grade

- 4.03 Assess North Carolina’s role in the Civil War & analyze the social & economic impact of the war
- 4.04 Evaluate the importance of the roles played by individuals at the state & national levels during the Civil War & Reconstruction
- 9.02 Identify past & present state/local leaders from diverse cultural backgrounds & assess their influence

Intern Takes a Hands-on Approach to History

By Terra Schramm, *Education & Outreach*

Though you won't be able to tell by simply looking at it, there is something different about the Capitol's latest exhibit, *Fun Times in Hard Times: How We Played in the Great Depression*. Never before has the Capitol displayed an exhibit conceptualized, researched, and written by a guest curator who also happens to be a student intern.

Charis Guerin, currently a senior studying history at N.C. State University, has spent countless hours in downtown Raleigh learning about the different functions of the Capitol as an historic site. Charis first approached the Capitol about creating an individual internship at the suggestion of a professor. The Capitol's curator of collections, Tiffianna Honsinger, agreed to oversee her placement and created a unique internship to help Charis explore which aspects of public history (the practice and study of history outside of academia) interested her most.

Charis initially gravitated toward work in collections management and became engrossed in creating an inventory of the nineteenth century books in the third floor library. When in need of a break from the dusty tomes, she followed docents on school tours and began leading tours on her own. She learned a simple artifact conservation technique and went to work on some old liquor bottles destined for display in the West Committee Room. To get a feel for children's educational programming at the annual July 4th event, Charis cheerfully donned an 1850s-style dress – hoop skirt and all – and helped teach kids how to write with quill pens, despite the sweltering heat. "Her enthusiasm for all aspects of museum practices is endless," remarked Tiffianna.

Even while balancing school and a part-time job at nearby Historic Oak View County Park, Charis wanted to take on a new, bigger project at the Capitol. After exceeding expectations with her work on collections, educational programming and tours, Tiffianna offered Charis the unprecedented opportunity to work as a guest curator on an exhibit topic of her choice. Charis mulled it over and came up with *Fun Times in Hard Times*. "I really wanted to create an exhibit that I had not seen before," Charis said. "A lot of exhibits focusing on the Great Depression highlight the struggles of the period and tend to ignore the good that may have shown up in people's lives. Therefore, I decided

to research what adults and children used to do to relieve themselves from the stressful economic situation and in the process my exhibit topic came to life."

Fun Times in Hard Times showcases twentieth century North Carolina history, an era seldom interpreted at the Capitol. The exhibit illustrates that despite unemployment, failing banks, financial uncertainty and other setbacks, families and children across the state found creative ways to keep their minds off their troubles and their spirits high. "I suppose more than anything I hope that those who view the exhibit will take away from it the knowledge that people who lived during the Great Depression were not without hope, laughter, and imagination," said Charis. Though conceptualized months before experts began comparing the

current economic downturn to the Great Depression, the exhibit's topic could not be timelier.

After she graduates with honors this spring, Charis plans to pursue a Master's degree in public history at NCSU. From there, she hopes to earn her doctorate in history or American studies and eventually work as a museum curator or a director of one of North Carolina's historic sites. Charis feels certain that working on the exhibit and other projects at the Capitol have helped prepare her for a successful career in the field of public history. "I believe the most important thing I've learned

is that historic sites, such as the Capitol, are concerned not only with the preservation of the past, but are also intent on providing the public with an interpretation of history that is both creative and engaging," Charis explained. "Artwork, docent-led tours, educational programming, exhibits...they all pull a site together and make history fun for people of all ages."

And the Capitol, too, has benefited greatly from Charis's internship. "Working with interns, Charis in particular, has been one of the most rewarding parts of my job," Tiffianna said. The primary role of any historic site or museum is to educate the public. While school tours, exhibits, lectures, and special events are the most common educational platforms at the Capitol, the one-on-one education an intern receives is vitally important for both the student and site. The Capitol, as a training ground for a budding public historian, is quite possibly preparing one of its future guardians.



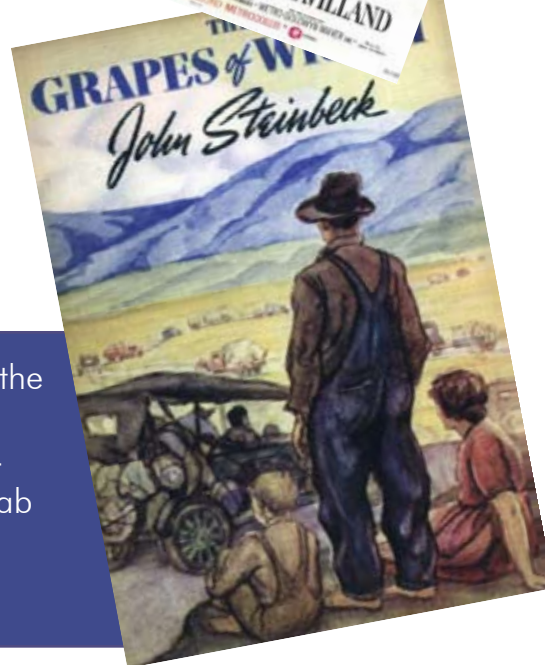
Taking a break from the quill pens, Charis Guerin, left, poses with Capitol volunteer and reenactor Woody Ragan at the 2008 July 4th Celebration.



FUN TIMES IN HARD TIMES: HOW WE PLAYED IN THE GREAT DEPRESSION

JANUARY 23 - APRIL 18, 2009

The Great Depression affected the lives of Americans everywhere and North Carolinians were no exception. Despite unemployment, failing banks, financial uncertainty and other setbacks, families and children across the state found creative ways to keep their minds off their troubles and their spirits high.



"Some of my favorite pieces in the exhibit are the WPA posters shown on the introductory panel. The contrast between their simple lines and vibrant colors really make them pop out and grab the viewer's attention!"
- Charis Guerin, guest curator

Monumental Makeovers on Union Square

For a week last November, conservator Ron Cavalier and his crew worked to make molds of the Henry Lawson Wyatt and Governor Charles B. Aycock statues. After the molds were made, the crew cleaned the statues and restored their original patinas, all courtesy of the Borglum Historical Center in South Dakota. The molds are now at the Borglum Historical Center, where copies of Aycock and Wyatt will be made and installed in the museum's sculpture garden. Below are photographs documenting the process and results of their work.



Days 1-4

Multiple coats of a thin rubber compound are applied on days one through four. Each coat must be allowed to dry thoroughly before the next is applied. The coating protects the statue from the plaster and ensures that all the detail of the original statue is captured in the mold. The metal "fins" create the seams where the mold will be separated. Aycock is pictured on the left, Wyatt is at right.



Days 5-6

After the plaster has had time to fully dry, the mold is gently removed in sections. The pieces are then carefully prepared and packed up to be sent to South Dakota. The cleaning process, which is relatively short compared to the time it takes to make the mold, will happen as soon as the plaster comes off.



Day 7

After the molds come off, the old oxidized patina is gently removed and new protective laquer is put over the bronze. The Wyatt statue's once overly gold patina was replaced with a darker one to replicate the statue's original 1912 look. The once visible greenish tinge, a tell-tale sign of wear and pollution, has been removed from the Aycock statue.



From the Site Administrator: Education Links Us



Deanna J. Kerrigan

Growing up in suburban Washington, DC, I spent many field trips touring the Smithsonian buildings. While I can't remember more than a handful of facts I learned on those trips, the experience of being in a place that filled me with such fascination and awe for history and the arts was impressive. In fact, I loved the museums so much that as a middle school student I regularly skipped school, took the bus downtown and visited my favorite parts of the museums over and over again. Once teachers and parents connected, however, these trips came to an abrupt halt. My mother still laughs, "Go figure, I had the kid who skipped school to visit the museum!" Go figure, and here I am now.

Rarely does a week go by that we don't hear about the Capitol field trip experiences of our adult visitors. These visits, sometimes made 40 or 50 years ago, made clear impressions on the men and women who visited as children, and they recall those trips with great fondness. They remember how the rooms were laid out,

what the decorations looked like and whether or not the legislature was in session. They remember the bus ride, their excitement at coming to Raleigh and whether or not they met the Governor. It is proof positive that our work with young children makes an impact on them and often makes a difference in their lives. We are grooming future generations of state leaders, historians and Capitol fans. It is wonderful and meaningful (if not sometimes noisy) work and we love it.

Did you know that the Capitol welcomes over 100,000 people each year and more than 60% of them are school children? On any given day, our volunteers and staff handle 18-20 tours, arriving every 15 minutes from morning until 3:00. Every 15 minutes! While other local sites have given over their guided tours for self-guided experiences that require fewer volunteers, Capitol volunteers still provide the personal touch people expect from "the people's house." It is that kind of guided inquiry that keeps children engaged, encourages them to ask questions and pushes them to think about history in new ways. We are connecting the past to our future generations every day. Maybe one of them will return here as a volunteer, site administrator or even Governor. And maybe we will have planted that seed. Go figure.

Calendar of Events

Capitol Lecture Series

The Paradox of Tar Heel Politics

January 31

Rob Christensen will speak about his book, "The Paradox of Tar Heel Politics: The Personalities, Elections and Events that Shaped Modern North Carolina." Christensen, a political columnist for *The News & Observer*, will sign copies of his book after the talk. Come learn about the personalities, politics, and campaigns that shaped North Carolina, past and present. 1:00 p.m.

African American Read-In

February 7

Local celebrities, community leaders and students read from works by their favorite African American writers at the Capitol for the 20th annual National African American Read-In. Fiction and non-fiction for children, teens, and adults will be featured in an afternoon of great works.

Capitol Lecture Series

The History of Union Square

February 16

Susan Little, of Little and Little Landscape Architecture, will speak on the fascinating history of the Capitol grounds and the sidewalk enhancement project. Using historic photographs, plans and maps, Little will trace the evolution of Union Square from unkempt hog pasture to tranquil downtown oasis. 1:00 p.m.

An Afternoon at the Capitol: N.C. Kids and the Great Depression

March 14

Learn more about what life was like during the Great Depression. This fun program will feature Depression-era snacks, games, crafts and more. Dress up in 1930s garb and step back in time to see how N.C. kids got along during the Great Depression. 1-3 p.m. For ages 6-12. Free, pre-registration required.

Become a Pillar of Society: Doric, Ionic, or Corinthian

State Capitol Society Membership & Donation Form

Membership benefits include a handsome cast-metal State Capitol pin, yearly membership card, subscription to *Anthemion* quarterly newsletter, reduced rates for annual history excursions, reduced admission to Capitol social events, invitations to public programs, & special tours by request for your organization or company.

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- Rotunda Membership \$100
- Doric Membership \$500
- Ionic Membership \$1,000
- Corinthian Membership \$2,500
(corporate 2 years, individual 3 years)
- Crown Membership \$5,000
(corporate 3 years, individual 5 years)

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