

## Meck Dec Day through the ages

**The document may be in doubt, but the celebrations have been held for years. Free fair Saturday will take a look back.**

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The Charlotte Museum of History will let visitors travel back through decades of history on Saturday when it hosts a Meck Dec fair at the Hezekiah Alexander Homesite.

The Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence is said to be the first such declaration made in the 13 original colonies during the American Revolution, predating the official Declaration of Independence by more than a year. It supposedly was signed on May 20, 1775, at Alexandriana, a historic home between Huntersville and Charlotte.

A committee of Mecklenburg County citizens, including Hezekiah Alexander, had gathered to declare independence from Great Britain after hearing of the Battle of Lexington, Mass. Although there long has been dispute over whether the Mecklenburg Declaration actually existed – no written copies of the original remain – and whether it truly was a declaration or simply a series of radical resolves that fell short of declaring independence from Great Britain, Mecklenburg County continues to celebrate the event.

This year, more than a dozen area history organizations from the area will set up demonstrations to let visitors see how the time period they represent would have observed the anniversary. “We all represent different times in history,” said Christy Williams, director of marketing and events for the Charlotte Museum of History.

Costumed re-enactors will stage demonstrations of life during their period in history, and Kitty Evans of Historic Brattonsville, a Revolutionary War-era site in York County, S.C., will give slavery interpretations in the home's kitchen.

Other organizations scheduled to have demonstrations include Andrew Jackson State Park, Carolina Maps, the Charlotte Folk Society, Fort Dobbs State Historic Site, Historic Latta Plantation, Historic Rosedale Plantation, the Historical Center of York County, the Lincoln County Historical Association, McGill Rose Garden, the Museum of York County, the Olde Mecklenburg Genealogical Society, President James K. Polk State Historic Site, the Public Library of Mecklenburg County and Rural Hill.

“It's an opportunity for people to come and see all the historical associations,” Williams said. Visitors can learn about the groups' specialties and what they offer the public.

The free evening fair will include games for children, and the home and galleries will be open for tours. Food will be available, but orders must be placed in advance, and visitors also are encouraged to take picnics. Beverages will be available for purchase.