

FAMILY FUN DAY CELEBRATES CHARLOTTE'S AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE

Enjoy free hands-on workshops, tours, musical performances and history experiences

CHARLOTTE, N.C., Feb. 14, 2018 – Come celebrate the history and culture of Charlotte's vibrant African-American community from the colonial period to the present on Saturday, Feb. 24, at The Charlotte Museum of History's Family Fun Day, from 12-4 p.m. The event is free and made possible in part by a grant from Walmart.

Visitors will experience tours of the historic Hezekiah Alexander Homesite, navigate the Great Dismal Swamp, enjoy music from the Voices of Eden Gospel Choir and explore the world of historical heroes and villains found in the pages of graphic novels. Clayworks will offer an innovative workshop on African Masks.

Activities and Experiences

Visitors of all ages will enjoy a full afternoon of free activities, including:

- **Tours of the Hezekiah Alexander Home Site**, *at the top of each hour.*
Tours will focus on the African-American colonial experience in Charlotte, including both the lives of the enslaved people who labored at the home site and the experiences of a small group of free black people in Charlotte. The Hezekiah Alexander House (ca. 1774) is the oldest home in Mecklenburg County, listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It was owned by one of the framers of North Carolina's first constitution and bill of rights.
- **The Great Dismal Swamp Maze**, *from 12-4 p.m.*
The name "Great Dismal Swamp" can conjure up images of despair. But for an estimated 500,000 enslaved people, the swamp represented freedom and a chance to escape the horrors of enslavement. Visitors can try their hands at navigating some of the dangers of the Great Dismal Swamp and learn about these communities and the hardships they endured to have basic freedoms.

- **Voices of Eden Gospel Choir**, from 1-1:30 p.m. and again from 2-2:30 p.m.
The Voices of Eden Gospel Choir will perform, sharing the rich history of Gospel music and its connection to the African-American experience.
- **Drawing Charlotte's Heroes**, from 12-4 p.m.
Graphic novels help us tell stories, share lessons and understand moments in history. Guests are invited to make their own page of a graphic novel featuring important historical figures and heroes from the Queen City's past. Librarians from the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library will discuss the graphic novel as an art form and will share examples that feature African-American characters, including works such as John Lewis' *March* series and Marvel's *Black Panther* anthology.
- **African Masks Clay Workshop**, from 1-2 p.m. and again from 2:30-3:30 p.m.
In this hands-on workshop with Clayworks, participants will construct their own African masks from clay. In Africa, masks have been used for celebrations, ritual dances, and social and religious events since before Paleolithic times. *This activity has limited seating and requires pre-registration under the Events tab at charlottemuseum.org.*

How to Go

The *African-American History Family Fun Day Celebration* is Saturday, Feb. 24, from 12-4 p.m. at The Charlotte Museum of History's eight-acre campus at 3500 Shamrock Drive. The free event is made possible in part through a contribution from Walmart. Please note: the African Masks Workshop with Clayworks has limited seating and requires pre-registration under the Events tab at charlottemuseum.org.

About The Charlotte Museum of History

The Charlotte Museum of History engages a broad audience in the history of the Charlotte region through the stories of its people, places and events to promote dialogue and historical perspective. The museum is the steward of the Hezekiah Alexander House (ca. 1774) and home site, a site listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the oldest home in Mecklenburg County. To learn more, visit charlottemuseum.org and follow the museum on Facebook and Twitter (@CLThistory).

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