Preservation 250

2026 NCPC Annual Conference Schedule

November 9, 2026

McKimmon Conference and Training Center
North Carolina State University
1101 Gorman Street
Raleigh, NC 27606

9:00 - 9:30 am – Conference Check-in and Registration

9:30 - 9:40 am – Welcome & Introduction- Kim Kenyon, NCPC President

9:40 - 10:40 am – Keynote Address: "*82d Airborne Division from France to Afghanistan, 82d Museum telling the story from Berlin to Bragg"* - John Aarsen (Ret. Brigadier General), 82d Airborne Division War Memorial Museum

10:40 -10:50 am – Break

10:50 - 11:30 am – Session 1: Lightning Round Presentations

10:50 -11:00 am –*Taking a crack at North Carolina's Liberty Bell* -
Corey Riley, North Carolina Museum of Art, and Jennifer French, North Carolina Museum of History

11:00 -11:10 am – *NC State University Libraries Film Survey* - Todd Kosmerick and Ella Mayfield, North Carolina State University Libraries

11:10 -11:20 am – *Utilizing Crowdsourced Transcription to Enhance Identification of Enslaved Individuals in Southern Baptist Church Records* - Ashelee Gerald Hill, Wake Forest University

11:20 -11:30 am – Q&A

11:30 am - 12:30 pm – Lunch

11:35 - 11:50 am – Lunch Time Presentation: *North Carolina Digital Heritage Center Updates*-Kristen Merryman, Head, NCDHC

11:50 am - 12:10 pm – Annual Business Meeting - Kim Kenyon, NCPC President

12:10 - 12:30 pm – Poster Session: *When Printing Paper Isn't Enough: Using Laser Scanning, Modeling and 3D Printing in Preservation*-Anja Schwieterman, East Carolina University

12:30 - 2:20 pm – Session 2: Preservation Practice & Policy

12:30 - 1:10 pm – *Without Documentation, Preservation Becomes Amnesia: Recording the Decisions That Shape Cultural Memory* - Gerald Ward, High Point University

1:10 -1:30 pm – *Let There be Light (exposure policy)* - Bryan Hilley, Nasher Museum of Art, Duke University

1:30 - 2:10 pm – *Marks the Spot* - Marian Inabinett, High Point Museum

2:10 - 2:20 pm – Session Q&A

2:20 - 2:30 pm – Break

2:30 - 4:20 pm – Session 3: Preserving Oral Histories and Cultural Memory

2:30 - 3:10 pm – *The Memory Abides: Capturing Lived Experiences in a Changing Landscape* - Lucy Waldrop and Rebecca Williams, Duke Medical Center Archives

3:10 – 3:30 pm - *The Story of Rassie McLeod, a Boy Who Influenced the South's Most Influential Playwright* - Della Owens, Harnett County Public Library

3:30 – 4:10 pm - *Using AI Within the Oral History Preservation Lifecycle* - Alston Cobourn and Jennifer Daugherty, East Carolina University

4:10 - 4:20 pm – Session Q&A

4:20 - 4:30 pm – Closing Remarks (Paige Hendrickson, NCPC Vice President)

Conference Session Descriptions:

Keynote Address - Speaker John Aarsen (Ret. Brigadier General), "*82d Airborne Division from France to Afghanistan, 82d Museum telling the story from Berlin to Bragg*"

> Telling the 82d Division's story from France 1918 to Afghanistan 2021 over 109 years of history and the challenges of preserving and curating its collections from the trophy room in Berlin to the "little museum" at Fort Bragg.

Session 1: Lighting Round Presentations:

Taking a crack at North Carolina's Liberty Bell - Speakers Corey Riley, North Carolina Museum of Art, and Jennifer French, North Carolina Museum of History

> As part of North Carolina's celebration of America's 250th anniversary, the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources asked the North Carolina Museum of History to display the 1950 Liberty Bell replica from its collection during the July 4th festivities. After five decades outdoors on Bicentennial Plaza, however, both the bell's surface and steel mounting structure had deteriorated significantly and required extensive conservation work before the bell could be displayed again. The project was completed on schedule through a collaborative effort between the North Carolina Museum of History and the North Carolina Museum of Art (NCMA). In particular, access to NCMA's Nd:YAG laser proved instrumental in addressing the surface of the painted steel mount and successfully completing the conservation work in time for the celebration.

NC State University Libraries Film Survey - Speakers Todd Kosmerick and Ella Mayfield, North Carolina State University Libraries

> This lightning talk will discuss the NC State University Libraries Special Collections Research Center's film survey. The survey is reviewing 16mm moving image film in the archival and manuscript collections in order to record condition issues but also to collect more physical description information that can then be added to collection finding aids. With the survey data, the staff makes informed decisions about rehousing individual reels or storing them in more optimal environments, and based on the collected information we have also made decisions about reformatting specific reels or outsourcing film restoration or other film preservation work. The survey began in 2023, and to date we have surveyed approximately 1500 reels of film.

Utilizing Crowdsourced Transcription to Enhance Identification of Enslaved Individuals in Southern Baptist Church Records - Speaker Ashelee Gerald Hill, Wake Forest University

> With this talk I will present my processes and challenges for utilizing transcribed original records from Baptist churches in antebellum North Carolina to develop an index of enslaved individuals' names. Prior to emancipation, enslaved persons were prohibited from congregating or establishing their own places of worship. In accordance with this regulation, many enslaved individuals were either baptized into white congregations and/or documented in the church's general records. These transcriptions are the result of a collaborative effort between SCA at Wake Forest University and From the Page, a web-based platform that supports crowdsourced transcription services. Creating an index of the names of enslaved individuals within these records will improve their discoverability for genealogists and researchers exploring family histories. By indexing and incorporating these names into platforms such as Enslaved.org, researchers can more easily access digitized and transcribed records, potentially overcoming common barriers such as paywalls and research dead ends. This will also be an opportunity to share additional information regarding will also share how enslaved individuals were integrated into their communities.

Lunch Time Talk:

North Carolina Digital Heritage Center Updates-Kristen Merryman, Head, NCDHC

> Kristen Merryman is the Head of the North Carolina Digital Heritage Center. This talk will deliver general updates from the North Carolina Digital Heritage Center.

Poster Session:

When Printing Paper Isn't Enough: Using Laser Scanning, Modeling and 3D Printing in Preservation - Anja Schwieterman, East Carolina University, Maritime Studies Graduate Student

> The technologies of 3D printing and laser scanning can be implemented in preservation and conservation settings. A 3D printed laser scan of the negative space of an object can allow for more accurate adhesion of materials.

Session 2: Preservation Practice & Policy

Without Documentation, Preservation Becomes Amnesia: Recording the Decisions That Shape Cultural Memory - Speaker Gerald Ward, High Point University

> Preservation is often understood through visible outcomes, such as a repaired binding, a stabilized manuscript, a protective enclosure, or a rehoused collection.

Yet one of its most consequential activities is less visible: documenting what was observed, what was done, what was left unchanged, and why. Historic collections frequently bear evidence of undocumented interventions, including rebinding, trimming, washing, tape repairs, replacement leaves, and other alterations that can obscure provenance, structure, use, and material history. The same risks apply to contemporary decisions. Without clear records, future custodians may be unable to determine whether an object's condition reflects neglect, intentional nonintervention, deferred treatment, or an earlier preservation strategy.||Drawing upon examples from book conservation, collection assessments, and institutional preservation planning, this presentation will examine condition reports, treatment records, photography, catalog notes, housing documentation, and preservation assessments as tools for sustaining cultural and institutional memory. It will also consider practical documentation strategies for organizations with limited staffing and resources. As the United States reflects upon 250 years of cultural heritage, preservation professionals must consider not only which objects survive, but whether the knowledge surrounding their care survives with them. Documentation ensures that future conservators, librarians, archivists, and researchers inherit not only the artifact, but also the reasoning, uncertainties, and ethical choices that shaped its preservation.

Let There be Light (exposure policy) - Speaker Bryan Hilley, Nasher Museum of Art, Duke University

Light is a double-edged sword. It illuminates collections for viewing while simultaneously causing irreversible damage. Even so, my museum has never had written guidelines for light exposure. So in 2024 I began the task of creating one from scratch. This presentation will focus on my process with the intent to inform others hoping to do the same. Although resources and guidelines exist they each have their own pitfalls. Some can be outdated or highly technical. And overwhelming one publication's suggestions is at odds with the next. Not to mention that current practices now include length of exposure alongside intensity. Using my own personal experience, I will try to demystify what should be standard practice. I also want to highlight the difficulties cultural institutions face in implementing lighting policies. Earlier this year I conducted an informal survey on exhibition lighting. Over half of respondents do not have written guidelines. Reasons for this varied from staff and budget limitations to lack of understanding or interest from leadership. I hope to empower smaller institutions to pursue actions to ensure collections are safe from light.

Marks the Spot - Speaker Marian Inabinett, High Point Museum

> Cities, counties, the State, and civic organizations delight in erecting historical road signs and other markers, but the local museum, library, or historical society is often where the public comes when a question arises. Who is keeping track of these markers and, more importantly, how can they help you share your local history with the public? The High Point Museum began documenting various markers around the city as part of an internship. In this presentation, the speaker will show how the Museum is using the project to share local history and draw attention to important places and people in High Point.

Session 3: Preserving Oral Histories and Cultural Memory

The Memory Abides: Capturing Lived Experiences in a Changing Landscape - Speakers Lucy Waldrop and Rebecca Williams, Duke Medical Center Archives

> Oral histories gather, preserve, and give a voice to people, communities, and participants of past events. Duke University Medical Center Archives holds a robust oral history collection documenting the history of Duke Health, affiliated schools, and the individuals who worked to create today's health system, as well as helping to shape Durham, North Carolina. While our first oral history is from 1955, actively interviewing and collecting personal narratives began in the 1980s and 1990s. The program continued to grow into the 2000s when there was an oral historian on staff. Today, we no longer have a dedicated oral historian, and, with less resources, we have to be creative in order to continue adding oral histories to our holdings.||In this presentation we explore how personal narratives shape the collective and community memory, sometimes acting as the only recorded account; resource challenges to collecting oral histories in a time of frequent budget cuts and some ways we successfully continue to collect them; oral history collection management workflows; and outreach and access to our oral histories. In a world of a quick sound bites, being able to commission, collect, preserve, and provide access to longer format personal narratives helps to reconstruct past events, capture marginalized voices, build a shared identify, and support future research.

The Story of Rassie McLeod, a Boy Who Influenced the South's Most Influential Playwright - Speaker Della Owens, Harnett County Public Library

> It is the goal of the Harnett County Library that, by sharing this program with the North Carolina Preservation Consortium, that it will inspire others to take a closer look at their own histories and to choose to uplift and highlight underrepresented

voices and stories in their communities. For Harnett County, it was the NC America 250 commemorative theme ""gathering of voices"" that inspired us to collaborate with many partners, including the Paul Green Foundation, to create a memorial service program for Paul Green, a man originally from Harnett County who became a Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright and a champion for racial equality. However, this memorial service was not just for Paul Green, but also for Green's childhood best friend, a boy who was born in the late 19th century during a time and in a place that did not value his voice as much as Green's due to his race, but this boy was someone who Green valued dearly and who influenced him all of his life. In Green's own words, he asks:||""What is it that influences a person? What makes his emotions or his thinking? Things that happened way back in my childhood had a tremendous effect on me…as poor as we were, in our farm my father constructed a sort of a shack of a tenant farm, and there was [an African American] family living in that shack, and they had a little boy…"" That boy was Rassie McLeod, Paul Green's childhood best friend. McLeod died at a young age due to an illness brought about by the poor and unsanitary living conditions in which the McLeod family had to live as tenant farmers on the Green Farm. The death of his friend shook Paul Green and influenced him the rest of his life: "Knowing Rassie taught me more about racial justice and equality of people. I didn't have to have any preacher tell me or any sociologist. When all that [racial injustice and inequality] was around me I knew it was wrong. It wasn't true. Andy why? Because I have known a boy named Rassie, smart as a briar. Always, Rassie was with me, you see? He showed me. And so I was lucky in that because so many people had no Rassie in their lives. So, I owe him much."

Using AI Within the Oral History Preservation Lifecycle – Speakers Alston Cobourn and Jennifer Daugherty, East Carolina University

In this session, we will discuss how AI technologies can beneficially play a part in the oral history preservation lifecycle. We will cover AI tools that can be used for transcription, time stamping, translations, and video and sound editing, as well as for improving access. Ethical considerations and other issues about the use of AI in oral history work will also be addressed. Attendees will leave enabled to assess the use of AI in their own oral history work.