

North Carolina's Archives Month Planning Guide



March of North Carolina College students. Billy E. Barnes Negative Collection (P034); North Carolina Fund Negatives (1964-1968). [University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Wilson Library, North Carolina Collection Photographic Archives](http://www.lib.unc.edu/wilson/collections/ncarchives/)



This guide was created by the Archives Week Committee of the Society of North Carolina Archivists. Any questions about the Guide should be directed to the Society of North Carolina Archivists at P.O. Box 20448, Raleigh, NC 27619-0448 or via email at archives_month@ncarchivists.org.

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ARCHIVES MONTH IN NORTH CAROLINA

Introduction

Archives Month is an annual, month-long observance of the agencies and people responsible for maintaining and making available the archival and historical records of our nation, state, communities, and people. The events are a celebration of the work that we and our organizations do, but it is also a time to raise public awareness. By holding exhibit openings, workshops, lectures, open houses, and other related events during Archives Month, North Carolina's archives community can make a concerted effort to bring the importance of our profession to the attention of our state's citizenry and public leaders.

Any agency that deals with archives and historical records in North Carolina is invited to participate in Archives Month. The Society of North Carolina Archivists (SNCA) sponsors the celebration and will serve as an information clearinghouse for events occurring during the month. In addition, SNCA is publishing this guide to help in planning your events and SNCA officers will be available to provide assistance as well.

Why participate?

Your participation in Archives Month is important because increased public awareness of historical records translates into increased support of archives. Archives Month and other outreach efforts help the public and resource allocators such as administrators, trustees, commissioners, and legislators, understand and appreciate that historical records have value for both an understanding of the past and a contribution to the present. By participating in Archives Month, you get to show off your collections and the work done by your staff to your colleagues, patrons, and administrators and demonstrate the value of the records and the work you do with them.

How can you participate?

In structuring Archives Month for North Carolina, SNCA recognizes the wide variety of archival institutions that will want to take part. We have constructed this guide as a working document to serve as an idea generator for institutions. Below are program suggestions generated by the SNCA Archives Month Committee. Institutions are by no means limited to these ideas, but we offer them as a starting point in the planning process. An Event Planning Checklist is included to help you in the planning process as well.

Once you have chosen an event to celebrate Archives Month at your institution, please email it to the Archives Month Committee at archives_month@ncarchivists.org so that it may be added to the [North Carolina Archives Month website](#). In addition, you will want to do local publicity. The final section of this document offers a media guide and a sample press release.

Event Suggestions

Exhibits

Plan an exhibit and schedule the opening for Archives Month. Exhibits can focus on either a special topic or feature the highlights of your collection. Exhibit openings are often accompanied by receptions, which could include special donors, administrators, and frequent researchers. For campus events, this could include faculty and students interested in the topic.

Tours

Behind the scenes tours or open houses can help to demystify archival collections and work. Create a day where interested patrons can meet the staff, tour the facility, and learn about the holdings. Invite special guests as part of this event.

Offer a walking tour based on your institution's collecting strengths and patrons' interests. The tour could cover a college campus, a local neighborhood, a historic building, or even a graveyard.

Family heritage day

Devise a program that celebrates the genealogical endeavor. Work to build bridges between archivists and genealogists by educating them through fun activities and exposure to resources.

Workshops

Present a workshop that will equip the public with the knowledge and tools necessary to save their important documents. From family histories to personal information stored on a computer, many people are unaware of simple solutions to protect these files. With such a broad range of personal preservation topics, this could also turn into a series.

Local history presentations

Local history is a big draw for city, county, and state archives. Invite a local historian to give a lecture about your town or region.

Archives "Road Show"

Create a community event where locals can bring in their old and rare items. This would be patterned after the Antiques Road Show but would not include appraisal values. Local historians can be on hand to make context connections with the artifacts and local events.

Photo days

Local residents are encouraged to bring in their local history-related photographs to be scanned and included in the library's local photograph collection. Encourage the public to become active "collectors" for the archives in the form of a local photograph collection.

The lost art of letter writing

Work with high school teachers or history faculty on an assignment that focuses on the lost art of letter writing. Have students compare old correspondence selected from your collection to the kind of correspondence they conduct via email and text.

Scavenger hunt

For K-12: Create a scavenger hunt for important documents related to state and/or local history. This could be done at school or as a field trip to various historic buildings or places where records are kept. Archivists should work with teachers to identify documents and construct clues.

For colleges and universities: Collaborating with faculty, organize a scavenger hunt that involves students in campus history. Use old campus pictures from yearbooks, newspapers, the university photograph collections, etc. Each individual or team must find the location on campus, tell where it is, and how it has changed since the picture was taken.

Oral histories

Work with teachers on oral history assignments. Students would be asked to tape-record interviews with the oldest member of their family or oldest person in their neighborhood on the topic of “old times.” One technique to generate conversation is to ask the person being interviewed to find a picture or artifact that sparks memories of something that happened in their community and talk about that memory.

Lecture

Invite frequent researchers to present their findings or famous alumnus to recount their time at the institution during an hour-long lecture. Events like this do not require large expenditures. Light snacks and beverages can suffice to make it a fun event.

Pop Up Event

Instead of inviting your patrons to come to you, go to where they are. Identify a potential collaborator who will allow you to occupy some part of their space for a few hours. Take a selection of materials for display to illustrate the kinds of items in your collections and the resources you offer, and interact with individuals who stop to look. The items you showcase may depend upon your intended audience and/or the kind of event you participate in, such as an alumni reunion or a holiday celebration.

Awards or recognitions

Archives Month is a particularly good time to recognize volunteers or people in your community who have supported or made significant contributions to your repository.

Campus histories

Provide campus histories to your institution’s publications, website, social media presence, or work with campus newspaper staff to construct campus histories about topics such as buildings, events, and famous alumni.

Essay or art contest

Sponsor an essay or art contest that is inspired by or draws on a strong collecting area.

Dress up party

Host a party where attendees dress as historical figures from the town, school, etc. The archives could award prizes for best dressed or hold a salon where a particularly prominent citizen is asked questions about his or her life and the time period in which he or she lived.

Wikipedia Edit-a-Thon

Host an event that allows patrons to learn more about their local or campus history by using documents from your collection to create and edit Wikipedia entries.

NORTH CAROLINA ARCHIVES MONTH

EVENT PLANNING CHECKLIST

The Society of North Carolina Archivists has adopted this checklist from the Wisconsin Sesquicentennial Commission and Georgia Archives Week. Please modify this checklist as it pertains to your institution.

Questions to ask

- * What is the goal of this project or event?
- * Who is our target audience?
- * How much money do we need and how will we get it?
- * Who will be in charge of this project?
- * Who can we ask to assist us with this project?
- * Are there any safety or security issues to address?

After answering the questions above, use the following checklist to assist you in planning a spectacular event!

General

Has/Have...

- The budget been finalized and cleared?
- The date and time been set? Does it conflict with similar area events?
- The site been booked and confirmed?
- Food and beverage arrangements been made?
- Insurance needs been finalized and legal matters been addressed?
- Safety measures been determined?

Site Preparation

- Is there a timeline of activities?
- Is there a map of the site?
- Have parking arrangements been made?
- Are there enough outlets and power cords? Is there adequate sound equipment, microphones, and lighting? Has the equipment been tested?
- Is the thermostat set to an appropriate temperature?
- Is there adequate seating?
- Are there adequate signs so people will be able to find your event?
- Have the fire exits and escape routes been clearly marked?
- Is there enough security? Is the staff aware of emergency procedures?

Publicity

- Has a guest list been developed?
- Do the invitations give all necessary information (date, time, location, map, RSVP deadline, reply card, etc.)?

- Has a mailing date been established?
- Have follow-up phone calls or emails been made?
- Have posters been made and distributed throughout the area?
- Have news outlets been notified?
- Has a news release been sent?
- Do you have biographical information about the speakers?
- Do you have brochures, folders, etc. to distribute to guests?

Social Media Suggestions

Below is a list of suggestions for using your social media resources to advertise your Archives Month events and engage patrons

- Post photos or documents from your collection to your Facebook page and ask for viewers to provide captions or guess the subject
- Request patrons send in stories of their research or discoveries at the archive and share them on your blog and Facebook page
- Tweet a fact or quote from archival materials each day
- Tweet hints on caring for records and photographs at home
- Arrange for researchers, donors, or other individuals closely tied to your collections to write a guest post for your blog
- Host an “Ask an Archivist” or “Ask an Historian” live chat
- Host a crowdsourcing event that encourages patrons to submit information for photos or other records that don’t have much metadata or transcribe documents (such as handwritten letters)
- Create and post tutorials for using your resources on YouTube
- Use image generators or picture mashups to create unique images for your archive using current photos and old photos, etc.
- Create a survey using Survey Monkey or another site that allows you to collect data about your patrons or create a “fun” survey based on your collections and report the results at the end of the month
- Create a HistoryPin channel with your scans of your archival holdings to share and promote your collection

A Simple How-To Media Guide

How-To Interview Cheat Sheet for Radio and TV

Answering questions

- Pause after complete statements. The interviewer will appreciate these breaks during the editing process.
- When you think you've answered a question adequately, don't feel compelled to keep talking, just stop.
- Do not say the reporter's name in the middle of a sentence.
- Do not use the phrase "as I explained earlier."
- Think before you speak and be careful not to use *uh, ah, well, yeah, and you know*.
- Respond to negative questions with positive responses.
- **Always** tell the truth. Your credibility is crucial.
- Avoid using "**off the record**" at any time.
- Avoid "**no comment**" answers if you do not have a response. Tell the reporter that you don't have the answer at this time, but will follow up when you have it. However, be sure to follow up.

Clothing (in a studio setting)

- Stick to a conservative, "professional appearance" style.
- Wear a tailored sports coat. **(men)**
- Skirt length should be appropriate -- no mini-skirts. **(women)**
- Wear tan or black hose. **(women)**
- Avoid tight stripes or plaids. On camera, they sometimes produce a moving "zebra-stripe" effect.

Clothing (in an "on-location" setting)

- Dress in "natural" clothes. You are not expected to wear a suit if you're being interviewed in a peanut field or a citrus grove.
- Avoid hats. If you must wear one, push back the brim so people can see your eyes.

Jewelry

- Wear only a few pieces.
- Avoid "clunky" or dangling jewelry. Big gold or high-gloss pieces can reflect studio lights.
- Short necklaces are best. Long necklaces rub against clip-on microphones.

Make-up

- **Women:** Aim for the "natural" look. A woman's "every day" make-up should be fine. Use a matte finish to reduce shine (this includes lipstick).
- **Men:** Most likely, you will not have to wear make-up, but be open to the suggestion. The lighting at some television stations may cause you to look washed out; therefore, you may need make-up to highlight your facial features.

Enthusiasm

- Be animated. Facial expressions, and body language to add vitality to your words. However, be careful not to overdo it.
- Smile. A good first impression can help establish your credibility.
- Be conversational.
- Say it in 30 seconds or less.
- Deliver your message with confidence. After all, you know more about the story topic than the interviewer.

Body language

- Look at the interviewer, not the camera. Glances up or to the side make you appear shifty-eyed and untrustworthy.
- Sit still in your chair. Rocking or swiveling can take you out of a camera person's shot.
- Don't look at notes during an interview, although you can refer to them if you get "stuck."
- Stay seated when the interview is over. You might still be on camera and trip over a wire or do something else awkward.

Other warnings

- Don't chew gum or play with your pocket change or keys while on television.
- Never wear black or white for television interviews. Aim for mid-tone colors. Dark- or bright-colored clothes can make your face look extremely washed out or dark under television studio lighting.
- Your blouse/shirt should have a place to clip a microphone.
- Don't wear light-sensitive glasses. Studio lighting will make your glasses darker; viewers won't be able to see your eyes.

CONTACT TIMELINE

Print	Lead Time
Newspapers (some sections have longer lead times, such as food, travel, calendar listings, etc.)	One to two weeks (dailies)
Trade Magazine (monthly)	Six weeks to two months
Consumer Magazine (monthly)	Five to six months
Metro Magazines (monthly)	Three to four months
Weekly Magazines	One to two months
Sunday Magazines (with Sunday newspapers)	Three to four months

Television	Lead Time
Public Service Announcements	Six to eight weeks
National Morning Shows	One to two months
Local Talk Shows	Four to six weeks
Local News	Two days

Radio	Lead Time
Public Service Announcements	Six to eight weeks
Promotions	Two weeks to two months
Talk Shows	Four days to one month
News	Two days

Local TV News. More people get their news from local television programs than any other source. That's one reason why there's intense competition to land stories on these shows. Another reason is that only a small number of stories can be aired in the approximately 12 minutes that the average 35-minute local TV news shows reserve for actual "news." (The rest is commercials, sports, chit-chat, teasers, and weather.) To break into the local news your story has to have strong visual appeal and you have to be persistent. (Yes, you can get covered even if your story isn't about mayhem!) Contact the assignment editors at your local TV stations. In your pitch, emphasize visuals.

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE OR HOLD UNTIL [DATE]

Date:

Contact:

Company/Organization:

Phone:

Email:

[Insert Organization Name] Celebrates Archives Month

[Date]

[City], N.C. — [Organization] will hold [event title] on [Day of the week], [Month] [day], [year] at [location] from [time] [a.m. or p.m.] to [time] [a.m. or p.m.] This event will feature [give information about the event only to explain the who, what, where, and why].

[Second paragraph should go into more detail about the event in 2-3 short sentences.]

[Organization] is holding this week in conjunction with the Society of North Carolina Archivists' celebration of Archives Month, held annually in October. Archivists and repositories throughout the state will participate in Archives Month to highlight the importance of records of enduring value. Archivists are trained professionals who assess, collect, organize, preserve, maintain control of, and provide access to information that has lasting value, and they help people find and understand the information they need in those records.

[Statement about organization.] The Society of North Carolina Archivists is a statewide professional organization. Founded 1984, it promotes cooperation and the exchange of information among individuals and institutions interested in the preservation and use of the archival and manuscript resources of North Carolina.