



GREETINGS July 2024



**The Friends of Historic Halifax continues its mission in supporting the Historic Halifax state site.**

**We hope you did not miss the statewide opening to the three year commemoration period for the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence on April 12-14 of this year.** The event was well attended and had much to offer with historic homes open, living history, mini-lectures, Fife and Drum Band, and even Austin Curtis, the famous African American jockey of Halifax. The Halifax Resolves Day will continue to be celebrated every April 12 so be sure and keep it noted on your calendar. Thanks to Lori Medlin and the Halifax County Tourism organization for new signage and banners.

**MORE NEWS:** The historic site **Visitors Center will close for renovations** this August. Staff will continue to offer tours from their temporary headquarters in the Tap Room. We look forward to 2026 when we will have new exhibits and a site store.

On August 1, 1776 **Cornelius Harnett read the Declaration of Independence** to Halifax citizens on the steps of the courthouse. Come and see this re-enactment at 7 pm this August 1<sup>st</sup>. Light refreshments will be available. The actual footprint of the colonial courthouse has been located by recent ground-penetrating radar and the site has plans and funding to outline and distinguish this footprint.

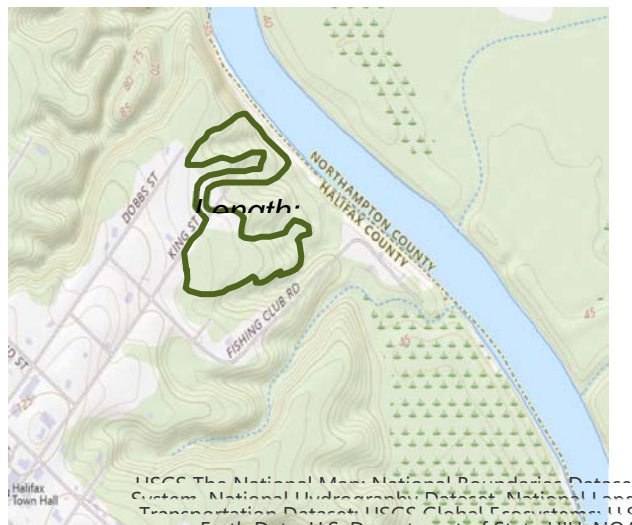
FOHH has received a wonderful gift from the Halifax County Historic Association, a longstanding organization which voted in May to continue only as a social group. More than ten years ago, this organization supported a comprehensive survey of the historic buildings in our county and subsequently, published an 800+ page book, *The Historic Architecture of Halifax County*. Although many of the books have been sold over the past years, there remain additional ones which have been given to FOHH to market. We are appreciative. The profits will directly impact projects in the historic district. IF you do not have one of the books, this is your chance to purchase at a reduced cost of \$60 instead of the original \$75. They make wonderful holiday and wedding gifts...a gift that gives on giving because one can learn much about the history, the families, and the communities of our county. **FOHH will sponsor a Bite of History at the Halifax County Library on September 13<sup>th</sup> at 5:30-6:30 and Karen Vaughan will make a presentation on the Historic Architecture of the Halifax County.** She is familiar with historic houses and preservation since she lives in the house featured on the cover of the book. The library is also having an open house that day and will be offering a book reading session for children during the Bite of History for parents who would like to bring their children with them. Light refreshments will be served. **One of the books will be given FREE to a person who attends the Bite of History presentation.**

FOHH continues to collaborate with Historic Halifax Restoration Association, the Halifax 250<sup>th</sup> Commission, and other significant nonprofits organizations with efforts to promote Historic Halifax. One project focuses on the development of a **book on the history of Halifax 1776.** The Society of Cincinnati is a major supporter and has contracted with Jason Stroud, as assistant professor at Greensboro College who also has local ties since he taught high school social studies in Roanoke Rapids several years ago. The stories of Historic Halifax have not been fully told. The people who lived and met in Halifax were major contributors to obtaining independence from England and development of the United States of America. Stay tuned.

Secondly, a project supporting **walking trails along the Roanoke River** is underway. A committee have been working with David Griffin, a grant writer from Rocky Mount, to make natural trails for tourists to visit the waterfront. Halifax developed as a river town with extensive commerce when rivers were the highways. The topography is quite signficante with the high banks and ravines. Lafayette arrived there, Lord Cornwallis left the occupation of Halifax during the Revolutionary War by crossing the river, the Ram Albemarle was iron-clad, and the Underground Railroad led freedom seekers away from bondage.

The Tourism Organization is in the process of developing a kayak/canoe takeout. There are discussions about the possibility of a larger park area adjacent to the walking trails.

To ensure no damage is done to any essential archeological sites along the river front, the site has requested that state officials conduct an archeological survey of the area to determine any locations of historic buildings such as warehouses.



Proposed walking route.

### **Another date for your calendar: February 27/29, 2025.**

Halifax will be involved in the celebration of the Bicentennial of the Lafayette Tour. Lafayette visited Halifax on February 27<sup>th</sup> 1825 and continued on to Enfield the next day. The re-enactment will begin at the river, with a welcome to the Marquis de Lafayette, feting him with toasts. After a dinner in his honor and the evening at the Eagle Tavern, he spoke from the balcony of The Cellars, the next day. This home is owned today by one of the FOHH board members.

The Lafayette Commemoration begins with a kick-off on August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2024 in Sandy Hook, New Jersey. Celebrations are being planned throughout the states. There will be commemoration in Raleigh on March 2/3 and Fayetteville on March 4/5. Note that Fayetteville was named in his honor. The full schedule of events for this two year commemoration is on the following website: [Lafayette 200 – Bicentennial of Lafayette's Farewell Tour 2024–2025 the Nation's Guest](#)



DON'T MISS IT.

**KEEP UP WITH THE HAPPENINGS:** State events will be posted on [Home Page | america250 \(nc.gov\)](#). Events in Halifax will be posted on the Tourism website: [visithalifax.com](#). Also check out FACEBOOK posts for historic Halifax and Friends of Historic Halifax.

**The Friends of Historic Halifax invites your support and involvement.** Your membership and contributions will directly impact our county in their efforts to attract folks from near and far to come visit and learn. In the past several years, FOHH contributions have supported events and projects such as purchases of flagpoles and microphones, decorations and refreshments for events, speakers, literature, landscaping, and the purchase of furniture. If you are interested in being a volunteer at the site, site employees can offer suggestions. Thank you for your support.

Please encourage your friends and family to join us. We are proud of our history and the part we played in the founding of this country. There are many stories to tell..... the Underground Railroad, the Ram Albemarle, Sir Archie, Andrew Jackson, the Masonic Lodge, Lord Cornwallis, Lafayette, George Washington, Cornelius Harnett, the Native Americans, John Paul Jones, and William R. Davie and the founding of the first state university at Chapel Hill.

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATONS can be obtained either at visitors site/Tap Room or by emailing [FOHH1776@gmail.com](mailto:FOHH1776@gmail.com).  
BOOKS: The Architecture of Historic Halifax are on sale at the visitors site/Tap Room or at the Halifax County Library.