

A banner year for historic preservation

Written by Allen, Joy

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Wilmington, NC - 2016 is a banner year for historic preservation both locally and nationally. This year marks the 50th anniversaries of Historic Wilmington Foundation and the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as well as the 125th anniversary of the National Society of the Colonial Dames of America.

Historic Wilmington Foundation kicked off its anniversary celebration on March 8 with a reception at the Governor Dudley Mansion for Stephanie Meeks, President and Chief Executive Officer of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. NSCDA-NC's incoming President Margaret Hamilton and Executive Director Joy Allen represented the State Society at the event.



Following the reception, Meeks gave a presentation about the progress of the historic preservation movement since the passage of the 1966 act that created the National Register of Historic Places and other programs, which identify, evaluate and protect the nation's historic resources.

The same year that the National Historic Preservation Act became law, the NSCDA celebrated its 75th anniversary. Collectively, the National Society and individual State Societies already owned 39 historic properties, the majority of which have since been listed on the National Register of Historic Places or as part of a National Register District. Among these were North Carolina's Burgwin-Wright House in Wilmington, Joel Lane House in Raleigh and the Fourth House in Old Salem. Clearly, the Colonial Dames – including North Carolina Dames - were pre-eminent pioneers of preservation. Today, the NSCDA and its corporate societies own and/or actively support 84 historic sites. [To learn more…](#)

The NSCDA has planned activities throughout the year to commemorate its 125th anniversary. Currently, the anniversary web page features a history video series to highlight some of the Society's accomplishments in historic preservation, education and patriotic service. [Visit the NSCDA web site for more information.](#)

This May, Historic Wilmington Foundation will celebrate its anniversary by observing National Historic Preservation Month with extra zeal. Activities slated for May 7 include tours of the Burgwin-Wright House. [Check HWF's web site for more details.](#)

Meanwhile, the Burgwin-Wright House has planned two presentations for National Historic Preservation Month: "Saving the Burgwin-Wright House" is the story of how the NSCDA-NC

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saved the property and “The Ladies, God Bless Them” chronicles historic preservation achievements of the National and North Carolina Societies.

The Burgwin-Wright House also has jumped on board the National Trust’s social media campaign honoring Preservation Month. The public is invited to visit the museum house, pose for a photo with the “This Place Matters” banner and post it to social media.

Busy days ahead promise to raise awareness of the importance of preserving America’s architectural heritage, while celebrating the success of three influential preservation organizations.

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