



Dear Student Trip Planner,

It is time to plan an exciting school trip to a *new* destination! Dig North Carolina History in Washington County and uncover the rich heritage in this Inner Banks coastal county. We have seen a dramatic increase in interest in our area. The History Channel and UNC TV have both filmed productions here recently. We can help you plan a trip that focuses on the Maritime Heritage of the Roanoke River Basin and Albemarle Sound, Civil War, the Antebellum Period, the Colonial Era, and Native American history. From a State Park to a State Historic Site as well as 3 museums within 3 blocks along the Roanoke River, Washington County has a broad diversity to be discovered! We are located on Hwy 64 one hour west of Nag's Head and the Outer Banks, perfectly situated to be a one or two day stand-alone destination, or one day of a longer trip.

The Washington County Travel & Tourism Authority has the ability to make suggestions and customize a school trip to fit your desires. We are here to help make the most of your trip - whether you have a couple of hours on the way to the Outer Banks, or a couple of days to dig deep into our local history. Included in the packet is a summary of each subject and a sample one-day itinerary for you to peruse. Washington County can offer many different variations from our deep strata of North Carolina history and heritage.

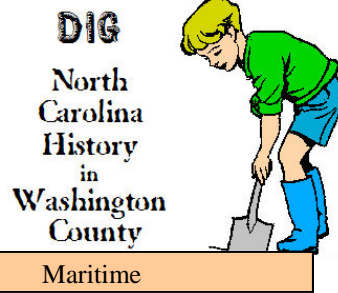
Come dig our history!

Shaylee Wright,

*Shaylee Wright*

Executive Director,  
Washington County Travel & Tourism Authority  
701 Washington St  
Plymouth, NC 27962 252-793-3248  
[www.gowildnc.com](http://www.gowildnc.com)





Located near the mouth of the Roanoke River Plymouth was the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest port in North Carolina at one time. There is a rich fisheries heritage here. From seining herring and shad in the Albemarle Sound to fishing pound nets and drift nets in the river, commercial fishing has been an important industry that today is a mere shadow of its former self. Crabbing is the predominant form of commercial fishing nowadays. In the early days, Plymouth was also an important source of naval stores, (ship's masts, spars, pitch, turpentine, etc.) Later agriculture became an important cargo exported from this region.

This maritime history can be experienced at the Roanoke River Maritime Museum through a wealth of photographs and displays as well as a collection of boats from the region. Across the street is the Roanoke River Lighthouse. Its exhibits tell the story of this once bustling port where various sailing ships, steamboats and barges frequented the customs house.

Browse exhibits and listen to fascinating stories at both sites. We can also set up presentations by actual commercial fisherman and depending on the season show your students some of the catch!

#### Civil War

Plymouth played a significant role in the Civil War and there is much to see and learn. The most successful ironclad of the Civil War did battle here and was eventually destroyed in what The History Channel titled, "The Most Daring Mission of the Civil War" in their 2005 documentary. It was the last significant Confederate victory of the war. An interesting aside is that many people are unaware of the strong Union sentiment and divided allegiances in Northeastern North Carolina. Close trading ties with Northern ports have existed since the area was first settled in the early 1700's. As a result, the strategic port of Plymouth, NC became an important base of operations and recruiting center for the North. In 1862, the Union Burnside Expedition placed 10,000 Union soldiers in Eastern North Carolina, 3000 of which were in Plymouth, NC. With occupation lasting for two years, white Union supporters, Free Blacks, and plantation 'run-a-ways' eagerly enlisted in the Union Army and Navy.

#### Ironclad CSS *Albemarle*

The Confederate ironclad ram, the CSS *Albemarle* was built up the Roanoke River in a cornfield and defeated the Union Navy in the Battle of Plymouth. In a subsequent battle in the Albemarle Sound the ironclad outlasted the Union Navy in a four hour pitched battle while being outnumbered 7 ships to one! But six months later it was destroyed in Plymouth in a daring commando raid led by William B. Cushing. Today you can see a demonstration using a 62' replica of the CSS *Albemarle* as well as a full scale replica of Cushing steam launch. There are many artifacts and a gifted story teller at the Port O'Plymouth Museum.

#### Black History in the Civil War

There were approximately three thousand Blacks from the area surrounding Plymouth to the Coast, and down to New Bern NC who joined the Union. There were three Black Army Regiments were formed in Plymouth; 1st. North Carolina Volunteers of African Descent, 2nd. North Carolina Volunteers of African Descent, and 37th U. S. Colored Troops. In addition, many blacks who were recruited here became parts of other Black regiments. At the fight at Battery Wagner in Charleston, SC as depicted in the movie "Glory", the all Black Regiment – the 54th Mass. Volunteers, had 4 men from Plymouth in the Union Uniform. However, in the actual battle, there were 108 men recruited in Plymouth that made up parts of other black regiments in the same fight.

At the Civil War Port-O-Plymouth Museum, there is a file with 3000 Black soldiers recruited from this area with complete data sheet on physical description, place born, occupation, place of service, and discharge data or place of death. Also, there were hundreds of Black men that joined the Union fleet stationed here at Plymouth under various commanders during Union occupation. Below is a picture of Black sailors here in Plymouth aboard the USS Miami.

**DIG**  
North  
Carolina  
History  
in  
Washington  
County



Antebellum

Washington County's most visited attraction is Somerset Place, an antebellum State Historic Site located on the shores of Lake Phelps near Creswell. Somerset offers one of the most comprehensive and realistic views of lifestyles of all plantation residents. Consisting of more than 100,000 acres Somerset was once one of the upper South's largest plantations. The plantation was in operation from 1785 –1865. During that period 50 white employees, two free black employees, and over 850 enslaved people lived and worked at Somerset. The plantation produced rice, corn, wheat, oats, beans, peas and flax. A saw mill also produced thousands of feet of cypress lumber.

Visitors tour the Collins Family Home and related dependencies including the Dairy, Kitchen/Laundry, Kitchen Rations Building, Smokehouse, and Salting House. In addition, there are a number of reconstructed buildings and archeological sites that can be explored.

Colonial

Also located near Creswell is the 200 year-old homestead of former North Carolina Senator Daniel Davenport. The Davenport Homestead is only 600 square feet and is built on cypress blocks instead of bricks. Each room of the house displays artifacts of daily life including a beautiful old loom found in the attic. There are a number of outbuildings that are typical to the period and are used during tours to present other aspects of daily life during the Colonial period.

Native American

Pettigrew State Park, adjacent to Somerset Place in Creswell, and the Port O'Plymouth Museum in Plymouth have artifacts and interesting presentations on Native American history in the area. Pettigrew State Park consists of 21,000 acres which includes Lake Phelps. There have been 30 Native American dugout canoes found in the lake. One of the canoes is the second oldest in the United States, (2,400 years old), while another is the longest, (36'), in the Southeast. The canoes are believed to be made by the Algonquian Indians. Other artifacts include clay pots and arrowheads.

The Port O'Plymouth Museum has a replica of a dugout canoe as well as pot shards and arrowheads representing 10,000 years of culture on the Roanoke and Cashie River basins. Listen to our renowned storyteller explain the fascinating history of the Moratoc, (Algonquian), Tuscarora, (Iroquois), and Catawba (Sioux ) Indians that were active in this area at one time. With advanced notice we can arrange to have a Native American in full regalia to assist with the presentations.

Other Opportunities



The Washington County Travel and Tourism Authority can help customize your tour to focus on any or all of the preceding topics as well as others. One of our local treasures here is Blackbeard the Pirate, professionally portrayed by Plymouth resident, Ben Cherry. Ben has shared the colorful pirate in more than 1,000 schools and museums from Seattle to the Grand Cayman Islands. Blackbeard must be booked in advanced and is subject to availability for a reasonable fee.

There was a thriving Moonshine Whiskey industry in the swamps of this and adjoining counties. We can arrange a tour and presentation on churches, cemeteries, farming, aquaculture, as well as birding, black bears, and butterflies!

Let us plan an unforgettable school trip for your class that will enrich and entertain your students. We are just a phone call or email away.



701 Washington St. // Plymouth, NC 27962 // Phone 252 793 3248 // Fax 252-793-2269  
Email [chamber@washconc.org](mailto:chamber@washconc.org) [www.gowildnc.com](http://www.gowildnc.com)



Your Guide  
To Begin Your  
**DIG** into  
Washington County



9:00 am

*Plymouth*

## Port O' Plymouth Museum and *CSS ALBEMARLE IRONCLAD*

In 1864 the second largest Civil War battle was fought in North Carolina, known as The Battle of Plymouth, and was the last major Confederate victory. Learn Civil War history and see impressive displays of Civil War artifacts. Moored behind the museum is a 63' scale replica of the Ram Albemarle, the Confederate ironclad.

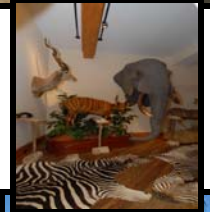


10:00 am

*Plymouth*

## *GOD'S CREATION WILDLIFE MUSEUM AND GALLERY*

From Alaska to Africa and the wilderness in between... See a diversity of mounted wildlife in an interactive setting. Visitors are mystically transported from a trapper's cabin in the Alaskan Outback to a safari tent in Africa's Serengeti. Interactive exhibits include touch tables with hides and antlers. Included in the museum's display are the Big Five, the most dangerous animals in Africa.



10:30 am

*Plymouth*

## *Roanoke River Lighthouse*

Sitting on the banks of the Roanoke River this river light was built from the original plans of the first 1866 lighthouse. Climb to the top and see a wonderful view of the river and a tour guide will give you ideas of what life was like for the lighthouse keeper.



11:00 am

*Plymouth*

## ROANOKE RIVER MARITIME MUSEUM

Learn about the importance of the Roanoke River Basin and how wildlife and fish were hunted in cypress canoes and later how steamboats and sailing sloops plied its waters in the 19th century. Check out the antique outboard motors and wood pleasure boats of the 1950's.



11:45 am

*Plymouth*



## LUNCH

Choose to have a picnic lunch on the river bank behind the Port O' Plymouth Museum or grab a sandwich at one of the downtown cafes. An assortment of favorite fast food restaurants are located on Highway 64. Please see complete listing on back.

1:30 pm

*Creswell*

## *Davenport Homestead Circa late 1700's*

Visit the home of Daniel Davenport, Washington County's first state senator and discover how life was lived by early settlers, over 200 years ago. Each room displays artifacts of daily life. See the loom house, the wash house, and even the outhouse.

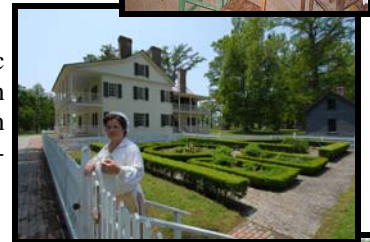


2:15 pm

*Creswell*

## *Somerset Place State Historic Site*

Tour one of North Carolina's largest antebellum plantations, including gardens, domestic dependencies including the Kitchen/Laundry, Dairy, Smokehouse and Salting House. Learn about the African culture and traditions and see reconstructed slave dwellings. Hands-on educational programs teach visitors daily plantation life and how human relations, technology and work methods, and family life have changed over time.



3:30 pm

*Creswell*

## Pettigrew State Park

Park rangers will guide you on exciting explorations— see and learn about the American Indian dugout canoes found on the bottom of Lake Phelps, hike Bee Tree Trail and walk through a sweet gum forest and Moccasin Trail leads you through a cypress and hardwood forest. Keep your eyes open— you might even see a fox!



5:00 pm



## *Onto your next adventure....*

Reminisce about your trip to Washington County. Discuss all the exciting and fascinating facts you saw and learned. Go over those mental notes you took so you'll ace that pop quiz. Get set for your next adventure!

Our tourism office phone is **252-793-3248** and email is **tourism@washconc.org**. Our staff will help plan your day or overnight trip and make all contacts for you. That way each attraction site's staff will be expecting you and have their programs geared towards your class and grade level.



## DOWNTOWN RESTAURANTS:

- Plymouth Bakery and Café
- The Book and The Cup
- The Garden Spot Café
- Norm's Ice Cream

## RESTAURANTS ON HWY 64:

- Wendy's
- Subway
- McDonalds
- Burger King
- Pizza Hut
- Golden Skillet
- Casa Grande
- Mama's Pizza
- Bojangles
- KFC/Taco Bell
- The Ram
- Little Man

\* If your students have brought their own lunches—picnic tables are located behind the Port O' Plymouth Museum.



### Distances to Plymouth from:

Rocky Mount	67	Fayetteville	137
Raleigh	123	Lumberton	193
Greensboro	202	Wilmington	413
Winston-Salem	227	Norfolk, VA	93
Charlotte	291	Richmond, VA	190

We want to encourage your class to take advantage of all there is to offer in and around Washington County. An overnight stay is a way to not be rushed at each attraction and is a way to see the historical sights in adjoining counties such as Chowan and Martin.

*Lodging facilities are as follows:*

- Holiday Inn Express
- Port O' Plymouth Inn
- Sportsman's Inn
- Pine Tree Motel



Please visit our websites to obtain additional information about Washington County:

- [www.gowildnc.com](http://www.gowildnc.com)
- [www.visitnc.com](http://www.visitnc.com)
- [www.visitplymouthnc.com](http://www.visitplymouthnc.com)

We have two websites with detailed information about our two annual events in April and May— Living History Weekend and NC Forest Festival.

- [www.livinghistoryweekend.com](http://www.livinghistoryweekend.com)
- [www.ncforestfestival.com](http://www.ncforestfestival.com)

**Go Wild!**  
in Washington County