

## **Press Release**

### **For Immediate Release**

**May 2, 2011**

### **May is Museum Month**

As it turns out May is a busy month for tourism and the cultural arts. Mount Airy has just hosted its first Bud Break Wine Festival featuring music, art and wineries from all over the state. National Tourism Week, an opportunity for folks who work in the industry to celebrate one of the nation's largest industries is just around the corner. What you may not know is that May is Museum Month and specifically May 18 is designated by the American Association of Museums (AAM) and the International Council of Museums (ICOM) as "International Museum Day."

The celebration of this day began in 1977, and provides the opportunity for museum professionals around the world to engage the public and alert them to the success and challenges that face museums today. According to ICOM, "Museums are an important means of cultural exchange, enrichment of cultures and development of mutual understanding, co-operation and peace among peoples."

Beginning in 1984, annual themes have been suggested to better coordinate international celebrations and the theme for 2010 is "Museums and Memory."

On a local level, the Mount Airy Museum of Regional History is celebrating this celebration as an opportunity to engage residents to become more actively involved with the museum. According to Matt Edwards, the museum's Executive Director, "Museum Month offers us a great reason to reach out and get this community more involved with the museum. May is our annual membership drive, and we're optimistic that having seen the quality of exhibits and programs we've presented in recent months the public will want to become more involved."

In addition to the annual membership drive, the museum will be hosting a series of special events during May in honor of museum month. On May 13 Millennium Charter Academy will be hosting a concert in the Museum Courtyard, May 14 the summer concert series "Toast and Jam" featuring Stony Knoll Vineyards and Casino Cruise returns, May 21 is a beginners knitting workshop, and on May 22 North Carolina Humanities Council Road Scholar Dr. Benjamin Filene will present a program called "Small Stories in the Big Picture: How Can Museum's Bring Ordinary Peoples History to Life."

With all that we've got going on this month, it is a great time to become part of our museum family" Edwards concludes.

For more information about the Mount Airy Museum of Regional History, call 786-4478 or visit online at [www.northcarolinamuseum.org](http://www.northcarolinamuseum.org).