



## ***Historic Edenton One of America's Prettiest Towns Turns 300***

Edenton has been making history for 300 years. During that time its people helped unseat the King of England; became the center of life for forefathers who were instrumental in establishing the principles and values upon which our nation was founded.

Edenton survived the Revolutionary and the Civil Wars. Visitors will find historic homes and three National Historic Landmarks preserving our heritage for future generations. The states oldest, still in use, Courthouse stands above the village green looking toward Edenton Bay, as it did when built in 1767. Recently awarded the distinction by Forbes.com as one of America's Prettiest Towns, Edenton shows her age with pride.

Founded on November 6, 1712, Edenton will celebrate its 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary from November 6, 2012 through December 2013. Edenton served as the first Colonial Capital until 1743. Today, Edenton boasts an active, alive Downtown District surrounded by fine examples of Jacobean, Georgian, Federal, Greek Revival, and Victorian homes allowing visitors to see the fabric of America's architectural styles come alive. Historic Edenton Visitor Center's provides guided tours daily from its 108 North Broad Street location.

More important than buildings are the founding men and women who put Edenton on the map, as they built a state and a nation. Joseph Hewes, signer of the Declaration of Independence and godfather of today's US Navy – served as Colonial Secretary of the Navy. Hugh Williamson, signer of the United States Constitution convinced a skeptical North Carolina to ratify the proposed constitution after first rejecting doing so until the Bill of Rights was included. Samuel Johnston, whose home, Hayes Plantation is still in daily use, was North Carolina's Governor 1787-1789, and was a US Senator in the first sessions of Congress. After the successful battle for independence, Johnston was the first man elected President of the Confederation. He refused the offer due to ill health. Johnston presided at the NC constitution ratification debates and helped Williamson secure its adoption; at the time Johnston was the Governor of NC.

Penelope Barker, organizer of the Edenton Tea Party in 1774 proved herself to be one of the most courageous women of all time. The famous Boston Tea Party was staged by men dressed to disguise their identities, not Penelope and her Edenton Ladies; all 51 signed their names and sent their petition to King George saying, NO to his taxes. A century later Harriet Jacobs, authored *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*.

James Iredell was only 38 years old when George Washington chose him as a Justice in the first US Supreme Court. His home stands a few blocks from the 1767 Courthouse.

This Preserve America Community was named one of the National Trust's Dozen Distinctive Destinations because of this rich history combined with the cultural and natural highlights below.

### **Paddling the Nooks & Crannies...**

Six (6) trails, part of the North Carolina Paddle Trails, weave through our river, sound and creeks giving paddlers an experience accompanied with wildlife and scenery that cannot be matched, along with a sense of well-being. A total of ten (10) camping platforms can be reached and the adventurous can book overnight lodging on either Holladay's or John's Islands for total outdoor recreation enjoyment. Visit Paths of Chowan: [pathsofchowan.org](http://pathsofchowan.org)

### **Romance...**

Bed & Breakfast Inns, Fine-Dining, Boutique & Antique Shops, Arts Council with Rotating Exhibits, Art Galleries, Historic Homes, and Scenic Parks within the historic district of this charming town lend itself to rest and relaxation with that special someone that cannot be found just anywhere. This total package can also lead to a little hand-holding along the waterfront breakwater on Edenton Bay as well as a perfect setting for weddings with backdrops that complete the whole picture.

### **Civil War...**

Commemoration of the Sesquicentennial of American Civil War 2011-2015 has taken on a life of its own with tours regarding Harriet Jacobs' escape from slavery via the Maritime Underground Railroad, The Edenton Bell Battery, an artillery unit organized locally using guns cast from the bells of churches and municipal buildings and Occupation of Edenton homes by Union forces such as the 1<sup>st</sup> New *Edenton/Battle of the Albemarle Sound* in Edenton Harbor are both part of the North Carolina Civil War Trail sharing a story of their own. [nccivilwar.com](http://nccivilwar.com)

### **Lighthouse...**

Now settled over Edenton Bay, the 1886 Roanoke River Lighthouse started life in 1903 as a warning signal at the mouth of the Roanoke River and there it stood for 52 years, a marine salvage moved it to Edenton in 1955 and placed it on land at Filbert's Creek. This one-and-half story screw-pile structure will become an interpretive site when restoration is complete. Stay tuned to learn more about this collaborative effort. [edentonlighthouse.org](http://edentonlighthouse.org)

There are many reasons to visit Edenton, its history and beauty are but a few; its people and charm touch you and make you want to stay.

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