



THE SOUTH CAROLINA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Prepared for the Economic Development Subcommittee
of the Ways and Means Committee

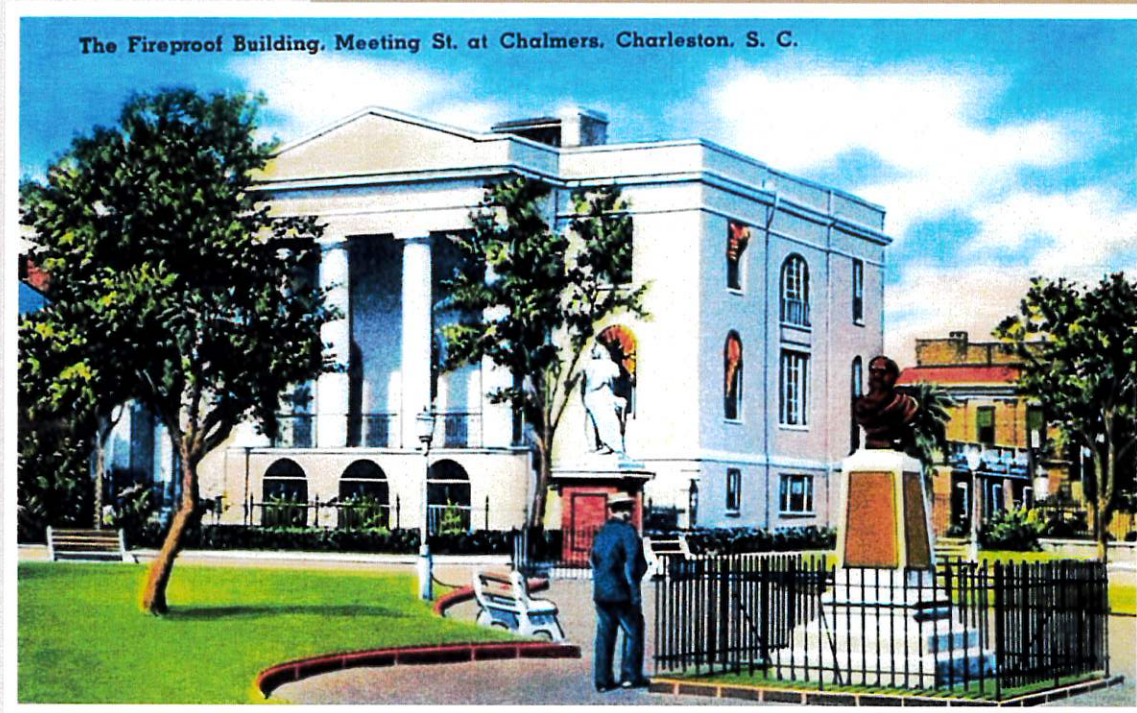


The South Carolina Historical Society, established in 1855, is the state's oldest historical institution, dedicated to preserving and promoting the history of South Carolina.

With over 350 years of state history encapsulated in its vast collection of rare books, manuscripts, maps, and artifacts, the Society offers an unparalleled glimpse into the cultural, political, and social history of the region.

Over the decades, the South Carolina Historical Society has expanded its mission beyond preservation, actively engaging the public through educational programs, exhibitions, and publications.

OUR HISTORY





ARCHIVES

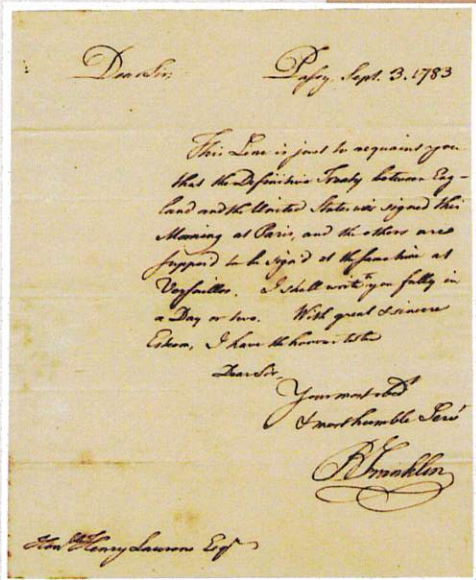
The South Carolina Historical Society Archive, located in the Reading Room on the third floor of the College of Charleston's Addlestone Library, houses a diverse collection of materials that document the state's history.

The archive includes manuscripts, letters, journals, maps, drawings, photographs, and artifacts. These objects offer a unique window into South Carolina's past, shedding light on the people, places, and events that have shaped the state's and the nation's history.

MUSEUM

The South Carolina Historical Society Museum, located in the Historic Fireproof Building in downtown Charleston, showcases the state's history through engaging exhibits and artifacts.

The museum features a variety of displays, including items related to South Carolina's colonial past, the American Revolution, the Charleston Renaissance, and beyond. Visitors can explore the stories of the people, places, and events that have shaped the state, offering a deeper understanding of South Carolina culture and its historical significance.



ABOUT US



Mission

The story of South Carolina is the story of America. The mission of the SCHS is to collect, preserve, and share the stories of all South Carolinians and use these stories--from significant historical events to everyday moments--to promote visibility, understanding, engagement, and conversation.

Vision

The story of South Carolina is the story of America. As such, it reflects the achievements and the challenges, the successes and the failures, of the American experiment. As the only statewide, private, non-profit historical organization, founded in 1855, the South Carolina Historical Society seeks to be the preeminent interpreter of that history to the broadest possible audience.

South Carolina History is American History. The events—both inspiring and challenging—that shaped our state also shaped the nation.



2024 Impact

By investing in the preservation and promotion of South Carolina's cultural and historical heritage, we not only honor our past but also drive economic growth. Heritage tourism, historical sites, and cultural initiatives attract visitors, create jobs, and stimulate local economies.

Supporting these efforts ensures that future generations can learn from our history while contributing to a thriving economic landscape in South Carolina.

Calendar Year	2024	2023	2022
Museum Admission	11,166	6,112	4,147
Program Attendance	780*	861	718
Architecture Tours	16	-	-

* Annual Fall Tour Event, with an expected attendance of 150+, was canceled due to the impacts of Hurricane Helene.

Dollar Admission Impact



In 2024 the Historical Society lowered museum admission costs from \$12 to \$1



Engagement

The \$1 admission policy allows individuals from varied socio-economic backgrounds to engage with South Carolina's history.

Tourism and Local Community

By maintaining affordable admission, we attract tourists who contribute to the local economy and encourage residents to explore and appreciate their heritage. This dual benefit strengthens community ties and promotes cultural tourism.

Educational Opportunities

Affordable access to SCHS enhances educational opportunities for students and educators.

These efforts resulted in almost double museum attendance in 2024.



Quarterly FREE Family Days

Family Day is a quarterly program designed to make South Carolina's history accessible to all, eliminating financial barriers so that local and visiting families can engage, learn, and connect.

This free admission day invites families to explore the museum's kid-friendly interactive exhibitions, participate in hands-on activities, and contribute to a community art projects. Through dynamic, engaging experiences, Family Day fosters a deeper appreciation for South Carolina's unique history, creating lasting memories for visitors of all ages. It's more than just a day at the museum—it's an opportunity to inspire curiosity, spark conversations, and make history come alive for the whole family.

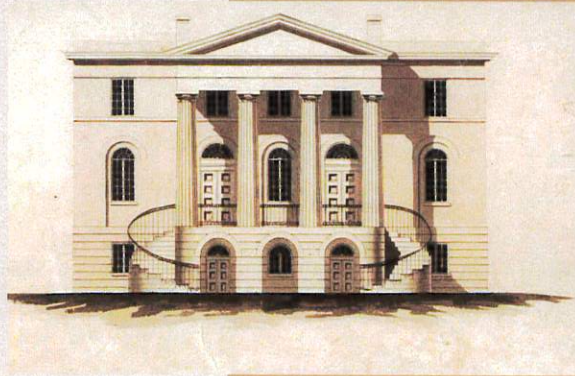


In 2024 the South Carolina Historical Society's began offering weekly architectural tours of the historic Fireproof Building, a landmark designed by Robert Mills, Charleston native and America's first professionally trained architect.

The **\$5 tour** provides visitors with a deeper understanding of the building's innovative design, historical significance, and architectural features.

The tour highlights how architecture reflects the cultural and historical shifts of the time, connecting visitors to the broader narrative of South Carolina's past.

Architecture Tours



Remaining Accessible



To continue offering accessible programs and engaging more individuals in South Carolina's history, the South Carolina Historical Society seeks funding to offset costs.

Our \$1 admission policy and quarterly Family Day program ensure accessible engagement with South Carolina's history for all ages, while \$5 architectural tours of the Fireproof Building provide insights into the state's past through Robert Mills' innovative design.

However, the funds from these activities currently do not cover the full cost of operating the museum.





FY25-26 FUNDING REQUEST

The South Carolina Historical Society is seeking \$458,000 in state funding to continue offering dollar admission, expand its signature architecture tours of the historic Robert Mills building, and provide free admission once a quarter on Family Days, which feature additional educational activities designed for pre-K through middle school students.

Additionally, these funds will allow us to strengthen marketing and promotional initiatives, ensuring that South Carolina's history reaches a broader audience both within the state and beyond.



TOTAL REQUESTED: \$458,000

Recurring Expenses

\$235,000

2.5 FTE/3 PTE

\$70,000

Annual Exhibition

Maintenance and

Museum Operations

\$70,000

National Historic Landmark

Building Upkeep

Non-Recurring Expenses

\$5,000

Program Supplies

\$78,000

Branding, Marketing,

Advertising



250th Anniversary of the American Revolution

As we approach the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution, this is a pivotal moment to deepen public engagement with our history. South Carolina—and Charleston in particular—has been recognized by the national 250th Commission as a significant site in the nation's revolutionary story.

By enhancing visibility, accessibility, and educational opportunities, we will inspire a broader understanding of South Carolina's critical contributions to the founding of our nation.

This milestone offers a unique opportunity to connect the state's history to the national narrative, highlighting the enduring relevance of our shared past for future generations.



An American Soldier.



Taking SC History On the Road

State funding will not only enhance access to South Carolina's history within the walls of the historic Fireproof Building but will also allow us to expand our reach through dynamic programming across the entire state.

By developing educational programs, interactive workshops, lectures, and traveling exhibits, we can connect with schools, libraries, and local organizations, ensuring that South Carolina's stories are shared and celebrated statewide.

This support will enable us to bring history directly to communities, creating opportunities for engagement beyond the Lowcountry.





INCREASE OUR IMPACT

With support from state funding, we will amplify our reach through strategic marketing, expanded free access, and dynamic educational programs. These efforts will ensure that everyone—regardless of background or location—can experience the history of the entire state of South Carolina and its vital role in shaping the nation’s story.

THANK YOU!



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