



Established in 2016, the UNC Community Histories Workshop (CHW) works with local communities to recover, preserve, and share the memories, stories, and materials that reflect the multi-layered histories of place. By helping to connect past to present we believe that communities can envision more just, inclusive, and democratic futures.

We do this by:

- Seeking out opportunities to transform adaptive repurposing of iconic sites into catalysts for community history and archiving
- Bringing together a coalition of diverse constituencies as partners in a common civic enterprise
- Re-vitalizing the power of historic places to attract and engage multiple publics for many purposes
- Creating safe spaces for the sharing of manifold experiences and contested memories
- Giving voice to silences and hopes
- Recovering exclusions and oppression
- Facilitating community conversations that encourage healing, common purpose and collective action

Our mission is manifested in our process. Our approach is collaborative at every level and at every stage.

- Within the workshop, faculty, undergraduate students, graduate students, and staff work and learn together
- Within the university we are trans-disciplinary and welcoming of partnerships with other units
- Within the state and nation, we work with other universities, government agencies, preservation organizations, foundations, and non-profits
- Within our communities, we partner with adaptive reuse developers, cultural heritage organizations, municipalities, community groups, and volunteers

Our work is important because it

- Advances the institutional mission and priorities of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
- Creates and tests new models for community engagement by public universities
- Demonstrates the transformative possibilities of the use of digital technologies in public history and public humanities
- Builds skills and capacity among local cultural heritage organizations and community groups
- Realizes synergies among research, archiving, pedagogy, undergraduate learning, and graduate training
- Helps to make the communities we serve better places to live, work, and play

We are guided by these values:

- Integrity and trust among all those with whom we work
- Diversity and inclusion
- Respect for local experience and expertise
- The highest ethical standards in all of our practices

Our administrative home is in the **Center for Urban and Regional Studies**. We are supported by the **College of Arts and Sciences** and benefit from our association with the **Digital Innovation Lab**. The projects we undertake depend upon gifts and grants from government agencies, foundations, businesses, non-profit organizations, university alumni, and other visionary individuals.

To date our partners have included

- UNC Department of American Studies
- Wilson Library (Southern Historical Collection, North Carolina Collection, N.C. Cultural Heritage Center)
- Office of Arts and Sciences Information Services (OASIS)
- Carolina K-12 and Carolina Public Humanities
- Preservation North Carolina
- Gaston County Museum of Art and History
- Braswell Memorial Library (Rocky Mount, NC)
- Capitol Broadcasting Company and Rocky Mount Mills
- City of Raleigh
- Dorothea Dix Park Conservancy Board