

6-2002

Under the Dome - June 2002

McKissick Museum--University of South Carolina

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UNDER *the* DOME

MCKISSICK MUSEUM NEWSLETTER • JUNE 2002

A Showing of Silver



This pair of silver goblets was presented to Preston S. Brooks in 1856 by the citizens of Columbia for his "gallant conduct." After Brooks attacked Senator Charles Sumner with a cane in the U.S. Senate chambers, South Carolinians presented him with many commemorative canes and silver goblets to show they supported his actions.

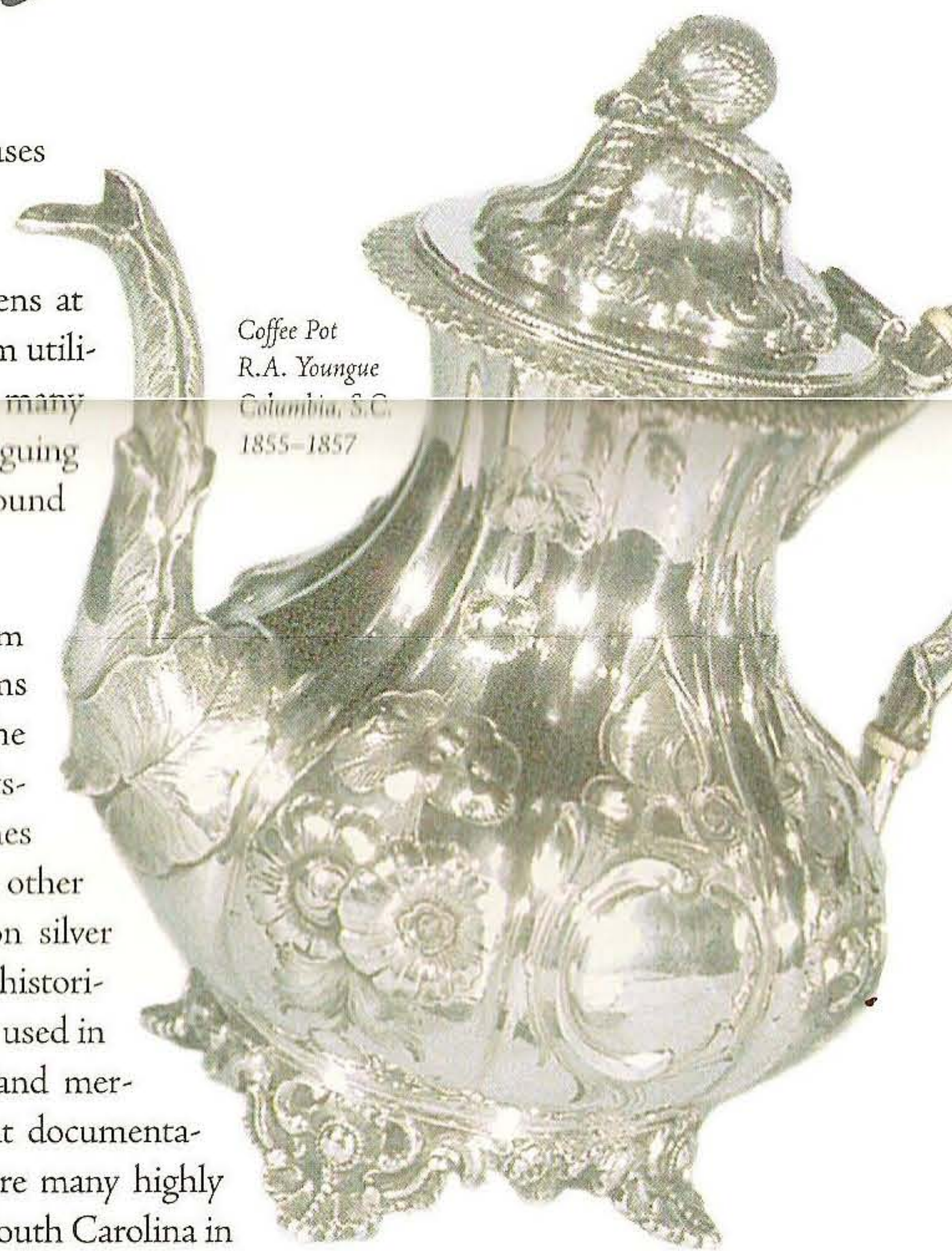
A major exhibition which showcases South Carolina silver and explores its cultural significance, "Palmetto Silver: Riches of the South," opens at McKissick Museum on Sept. 15, 2002. From utilitarian flatware to decorative trophies, the many pieces displayed in the exhibit provide an intriguing picture of the various traditions that surround the crafting and use of silver wares.

The result of several years of museum research, the exhibit draws heavily on items from private collections throughout the South. They also represent the work of craftsmen throughout the state from Colonial times to the 20th century. Previous exhibitions in other museums have concentrated on Charleston silver made before the Civil War. Although most historians have previously thought that silver items used in the South were imported from New England merchants or even from England, recent documentation has indicated that there were many highly skilled silversmiths working in South Carolina in both the 18th and 19th centuries.

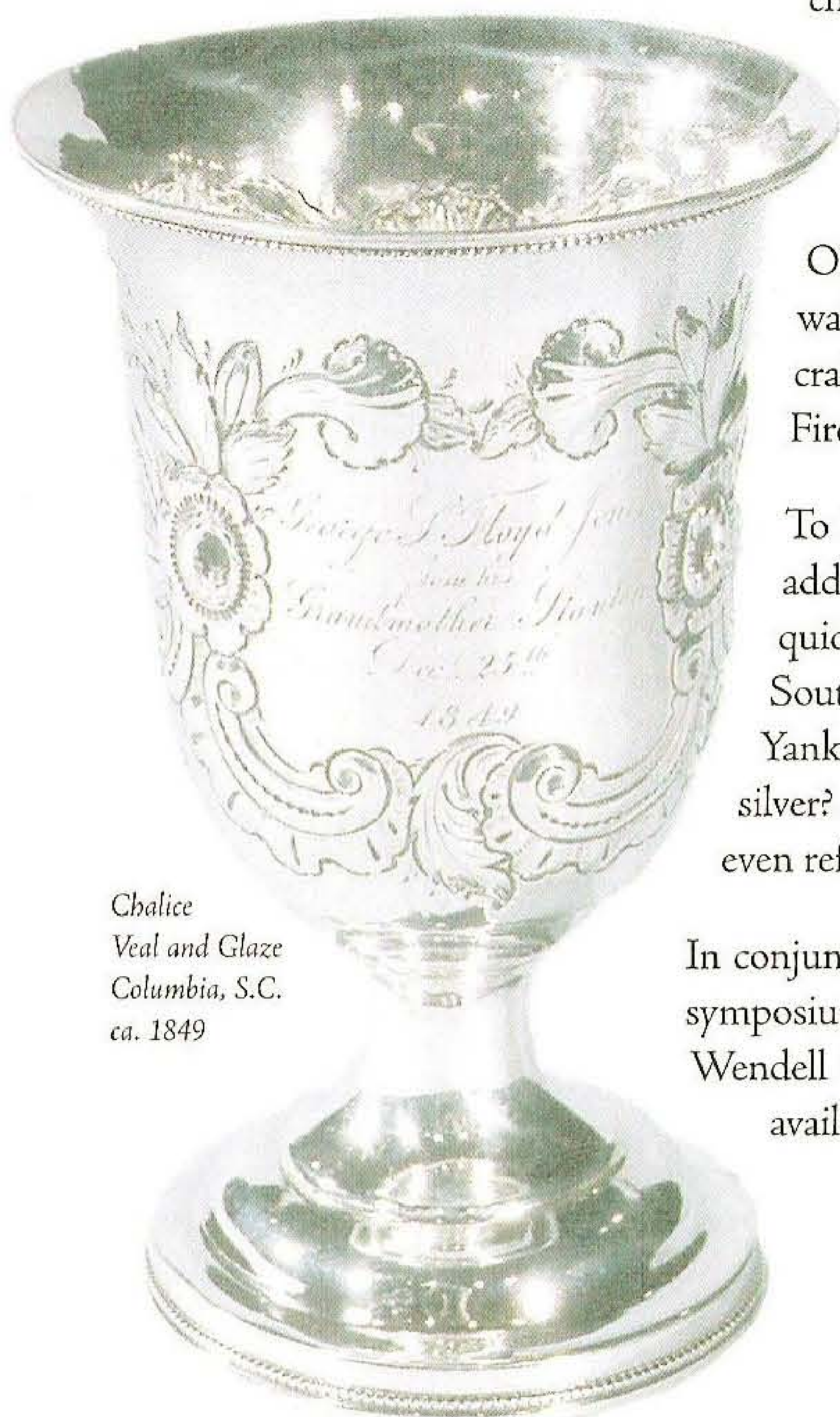
Objects featured in this exhibition include such diverse items as military swords and shotguns, walking canes, tea services, award trophies, and presentation pieces. An outstanding example of craftsmanship is a hand chased cream or milk pitcher presented to Columbia's African-American Fire Department in 1849.

To help visitors understand the complex role silver objects play in our lives, the exhibit will address the various ways in which these items are valued. While silver is a precious metal that can quickly be converted to currency, it has a more significant cultural meaning. Stories abound of South Carolinians hiding their silver from British troops initially and then from the "dreaded Yankee invaders." And who can imagine a wedding, anniversary, or retirement celebration without silver? According to curator Karen Swager, "Silver has come to denote wealth, social pedigree, and even refined taste."

In conjunction with the exhibition, the College of Liberal Arts' Townsend Lecture Series will host a symposium on "Southern Silver" on Saturday, Oct. 26, 2002. Noted antiques expert and historian Wendell Garrett will be the keynote speaker. Information on this event and related programs is available at the museum's Web site and by telephone, 803-777-7251.



*Coffee Pot
R.A. Youngue
Columbia, S.C.
1855-1857*



*Chalice
Veal and Glaze
Columbia, S.C.
ca. 1849*

BLOCKBUSTER EXHIBIT BEGINS NATIONAL TOUR

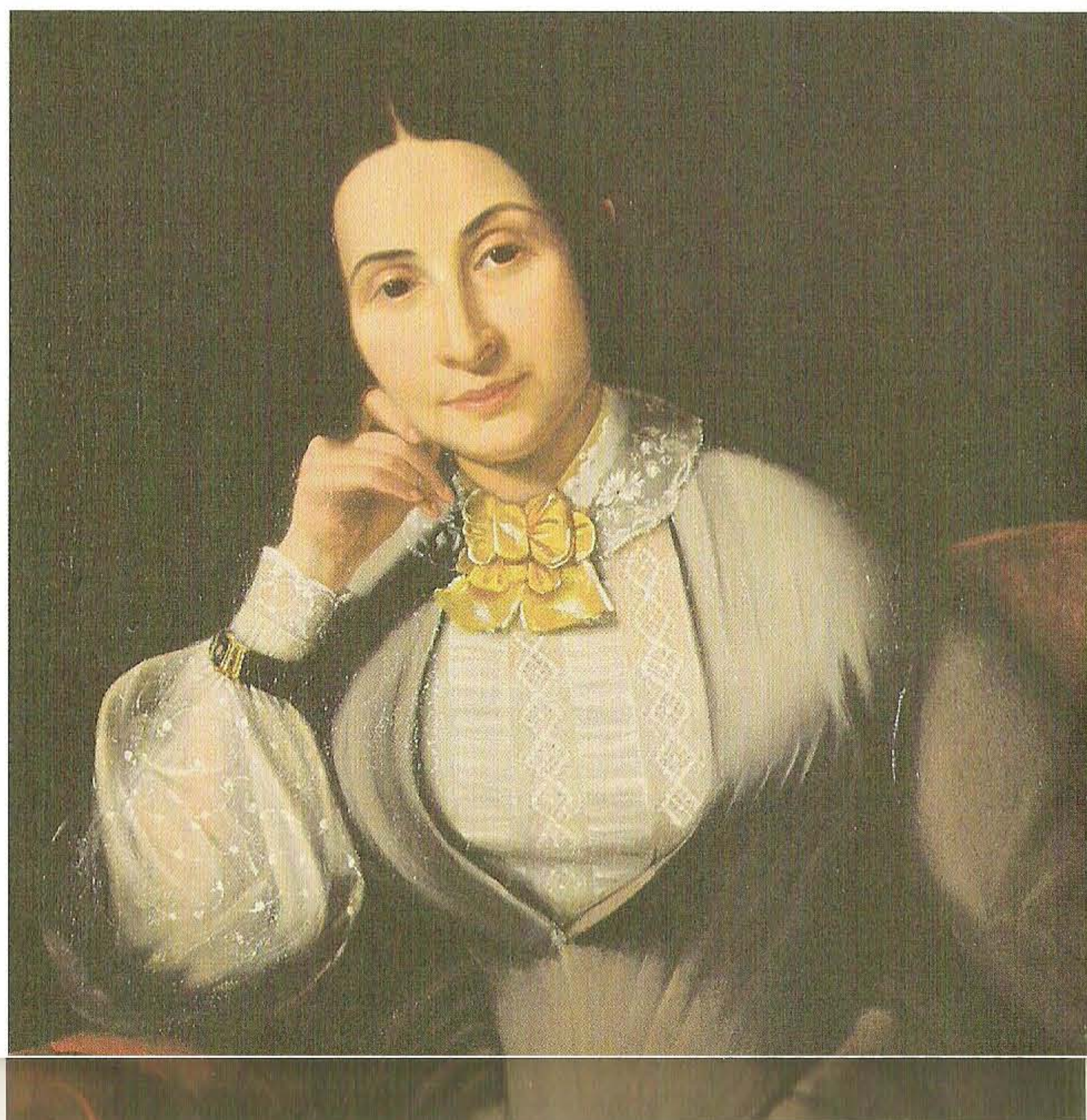
After an exciting four-month display at McKissick Museum, "A Portion of the People: Three Hundred Years of Southern Jewish Life" is set to begin a 16-month national tour. More than 15,000 people visited the exhibition at the University of South Carolina location. In addition, it was featured in the national news media. Both *The New York Times* and National Public Radio covered the groundbreaking initiative. And Senator Joseph Lieberman toured the exhibit while visiting South Carolina. "We had telephone inquiries from people as far away as Washington State, Texas, Massachusetts, and California. Tour groups came from Georgia, North Carolina, and Florida to see the exhibition," said museum director Lynn Robertson.



Schoenberg Family, Riga, Latvia, Photograph, 1911

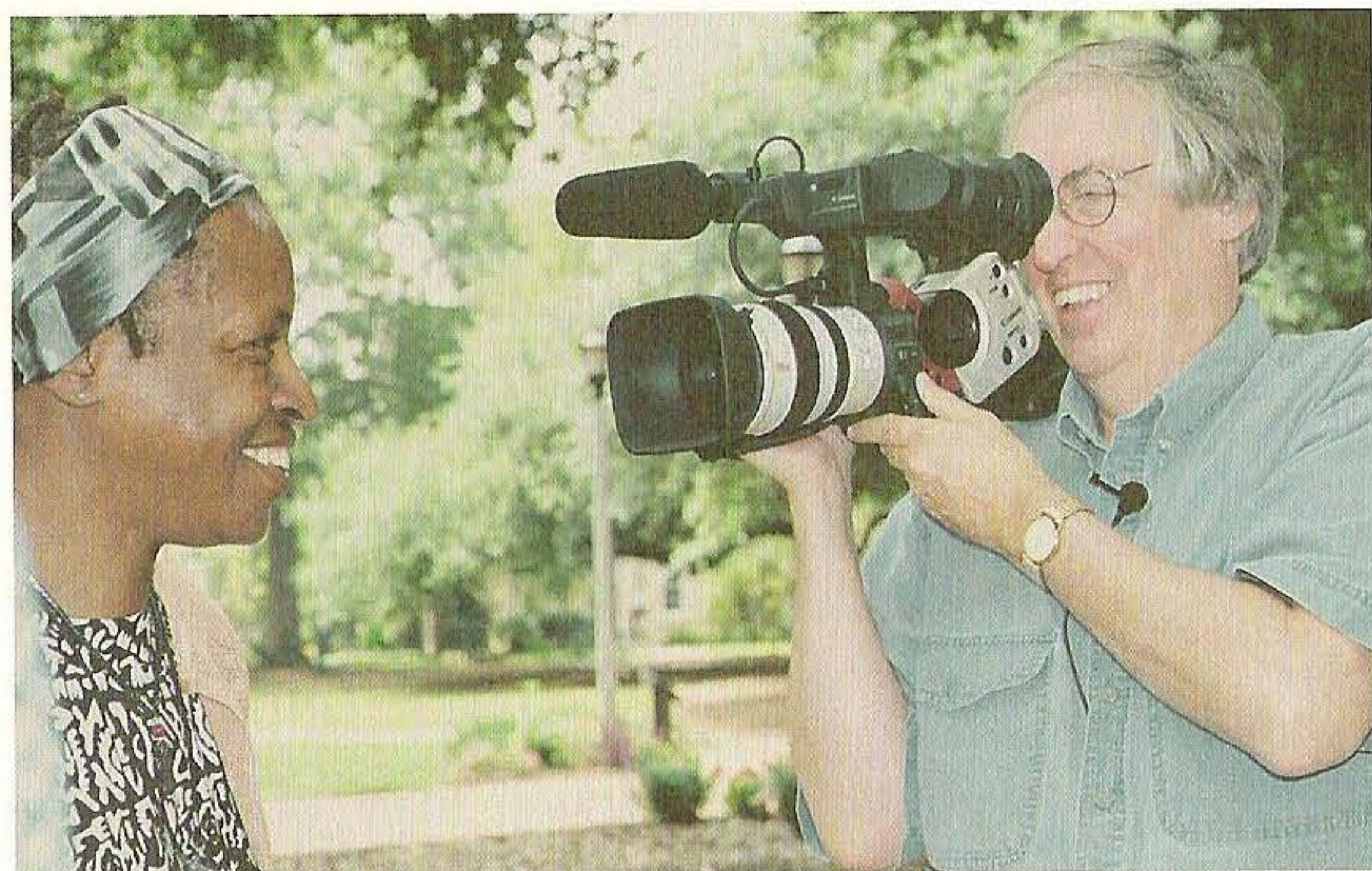
The result of eight years of in-depth research by curator Dale Rosengarten, the information presented in the exhibit breaks many of the stereotypes about what immigrants experienced in the South.

The exhibit opens on Sept. 12, 2002, at the Gibbes Museum of Art in Charleston. Also in September, the University of South Carolina Press will publish an illustrated color catalog of the exhibit. New York and Charlotte, N.C., are among the venues scheduled for 2003.



Isabel Rebecca Lyons Mordecai (Mrs. Moses Cohen Mordecai) (1804-1895) by Theodore Sidney Moïse, (1815-1894)

Museum Wins Film Award



Stan Woodward, producer-director of "Carolina Hash," interviews Vennie Deas-Moore, folk life researcher, about Willie Williams' Lowcountry hash.

McKissick was honored for its work with filmmaker Stan Woodward on the production of "Carolina Hash: A Taste of South Carolina." Focusing on a uniquely South Carolina tradition, the film received a "Golden Eagle" award for excellence in documentary film and video production from CINE. "Carolina Hash" competed against more than 1,000 entries from such producers as ABC News, Detroit Public Television, and Dateline NBC.

"This is one of the most prestigious awards a documentary film can receive," said chief curator Jay Williams. "The museum's extensive commitment to folk life and food ways made us the perfect partner to provide the research and fieldwork for Stan Woodward's imaginative film technique." Woodward has been nationally recognized for a number of his films on Southern food.

The film on hash grew out of a larger project on Southern stews that was the subject of an exhibition in 2000. A comprehensive film on stew traditions from Kentucky to Carolina and sponsored by the Southern Humanities Media Fund will be released to national public television stations this fall. The South Carolina Humanities Council sponsored "Carolina Hash." To complete both films Woodward met and interviewed dozens of "stew masters," cooks who go to great lengths to preserve the uniqueness of each local recipe and cooking technique.

With the final editing of "Southern Stews" near completion, the museum has launched a new collaborative filmmaking venture. With the support of two Lowcountry churches and the assistance of a number of University faculty and community scholars, the history of two well-known South Carolina camp meetings is being documented. Indian Field Camp Meeting celebrated 200 years of continuous religious service in 2000. Shady Grove Camp Meeting, also in St. George, S.C., has an equally longstanding and dynamic tradition. Over the next few months, the museum staff will be working with Woodward to capture the song, food, and religious spirit that defines the Southern camp meeting experience.

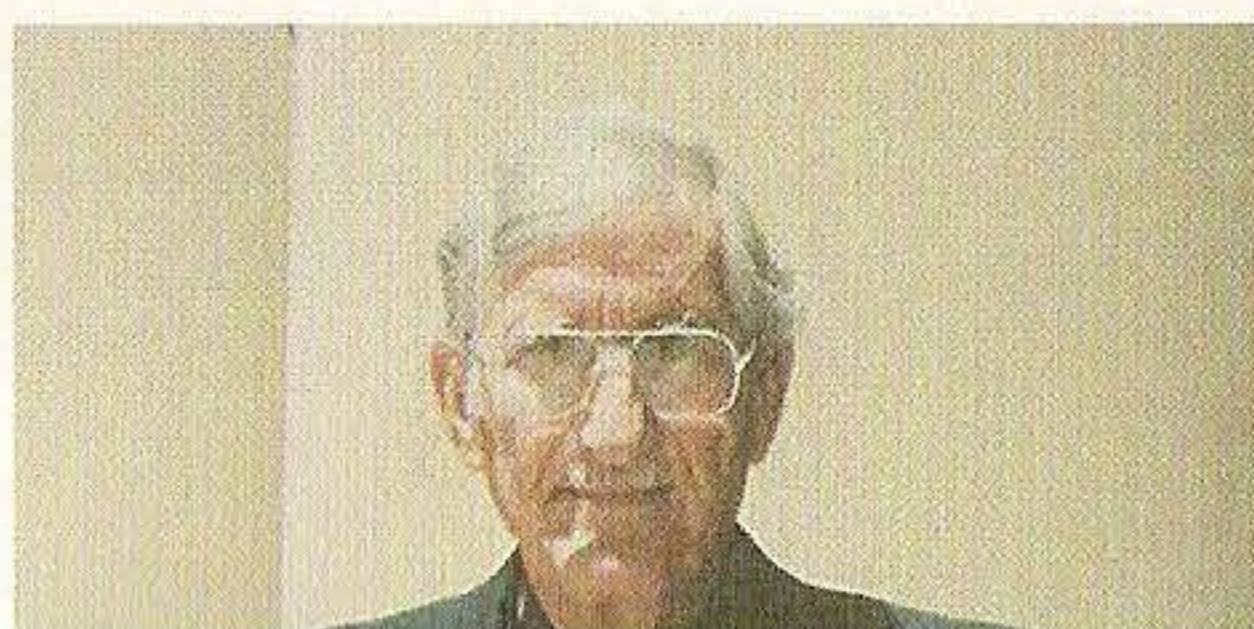
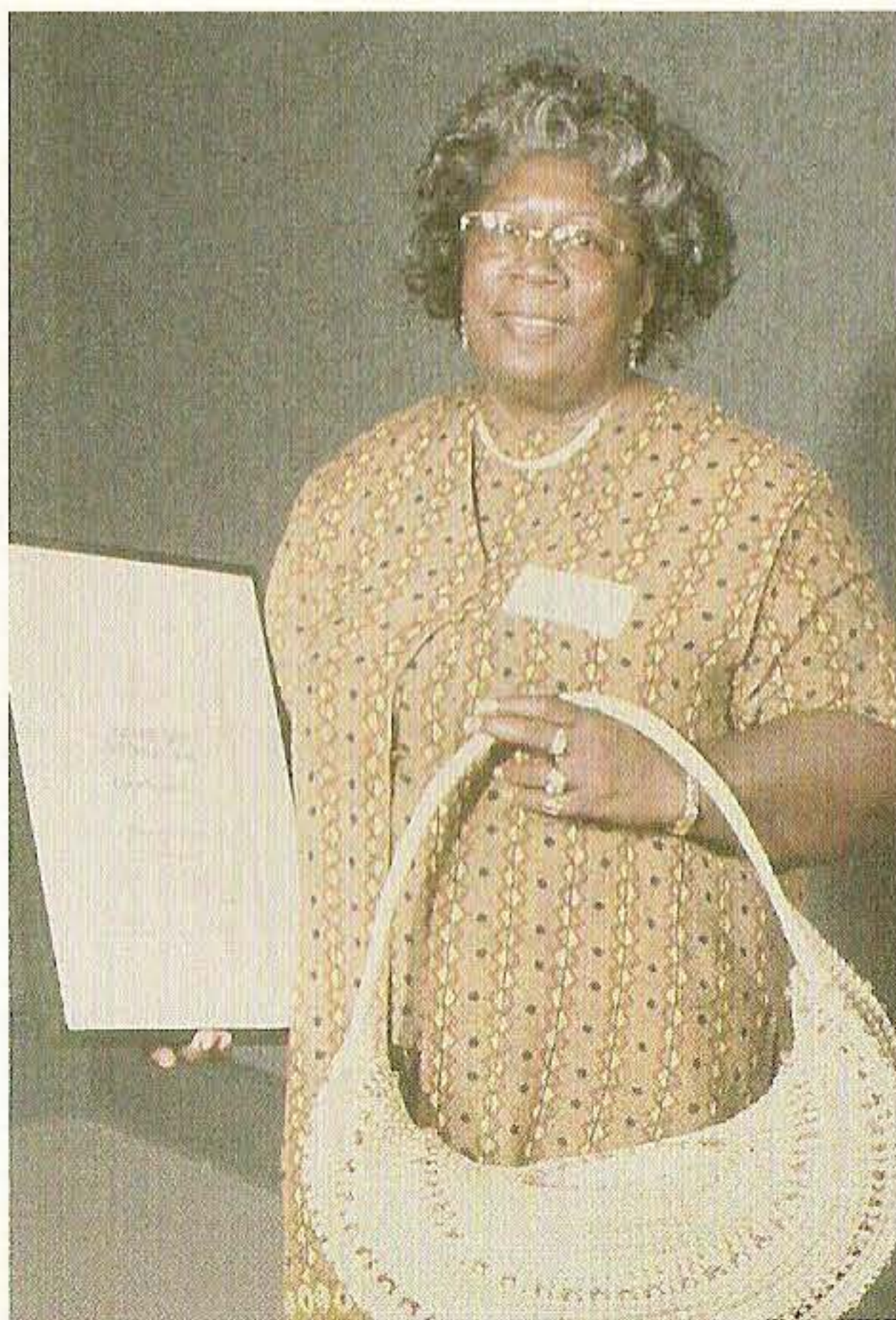


Filmmaker Woodward discusses South Carolina hash with Bill Moyers at awards ceremony.

Folk Artists Honored

Since 1988, 60 people have received formal recognition from the South Carolina legislature for their contributions to the traditional arts of our state. As recipients of the Jean Laney Harris Folk Heritage Award, they have been recognized for their lifetime achievements as creative artists or advocates of these rich traditions. Created by a legislative act in 1987, the award was previously known as the South Carolina Folk Heritage Award and was enthusiastically endorsed by the Joint Committee on Cultural Affairs and its chair, Harriet Keyserling. In 1997, its name was changed to honor Jean Laney Harris, former committee leader and a longtime supporter of South Carolina's cultural heritage.

The award is presented annually to traditional crafts persons, musicians, storytellers, and even entire church choirs. A special category recognizes folk art advocates who work to preserve traditions and interpret them for a broader audience. McKissick Museum and the South Carolina Arts Commission coordinate the event. In 2002, four artists were selected to receive the honor.



M. Jeanette Gaillard Lee (top), Mt. Pleasant, S.C.—Sweetgrass Basket Making (2000 Recipient)

Al Wall (bottom), Charleston, S.C.—Bluegrass Music (2001 Recipient)



The "Together As One" Hymn Choir of York County (2002 Recipients)

Neil D. Cost was recognized for his talents as a turkey call maker. He has been practicing the art of call making for over 70 years and has been called "the finest turkey call maker the country has ever seen."

Harriet Bailem Brown received the award for her contributions to sweet grass basket making. Brown is one of eight generations of basket makers, with five generations still practicing the craft. Also a gifted teacher, Brown not only provides instruction for family members, she also participates in numerous community events.

James Brown was honored for his original style of soul music, which draws upon his early gospel experiences. Many of his recordings call to mind the African-American sermonic tradition, elevating it to a universal level.

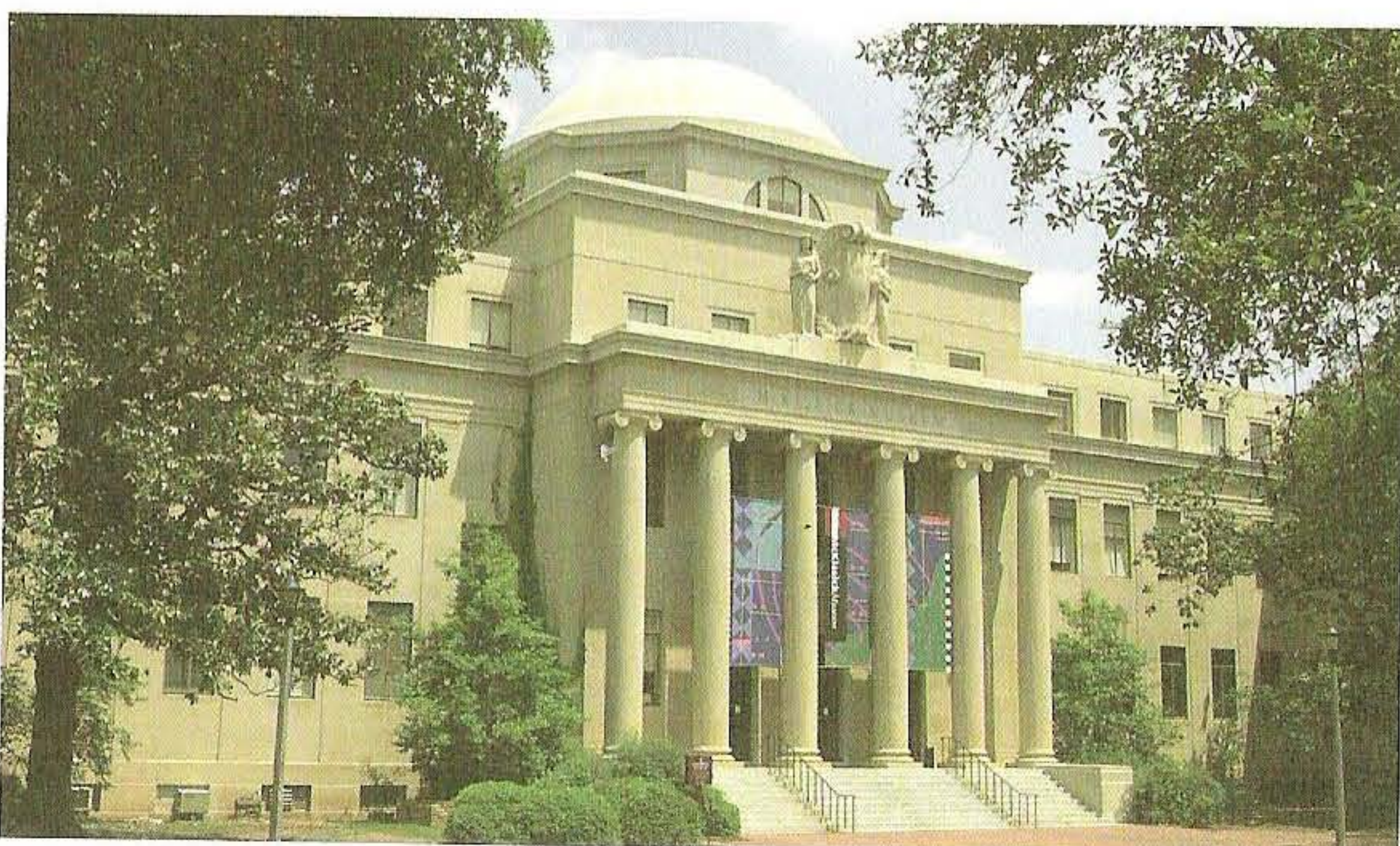
The "Together As One" Hymn Choir of York County received an award for its perpetuation of the hymn choir tradition. The choir's music grew out of early Calvinist worship services that took root in slave communities in South Carolina.

An advocacy award was presented to Jennings Chestnut Sr. for his contributions to bluegrass music. A skilled instrument maker, he has been a fan of bluegrass music since he was six years old. Currently, he works with individual musicians and organizes an annual downtown bluegrass festival in Conway, S.C.

The awards were presented before a joint South Carolina legislative session on April 24. McKissick hosted a reception featuring performances by the recipients.

Exciting New Season Ahead

Colorful banners displayed on the front of McKissick Museum herald the approach of a new academic year. "We have a number of exciting programs and events planned," said Lynn Robertson, executive director. "After the high level of community concern over the possible closing of the museum to help ease University budget cuts, we want to demonstrate that McKissick is a vitally important part of the University's academic program and an abundant community resource."



The 2002–2003 academic year opens with a significant exhibition and lecture series on South Carolina silver. A number of presentations are slated for fall and spring, in keeping with our goal to collect and document Southern folk life and traditions. Highlights will include an exhibit of the quilt holdings, a photo essay celebrating the Latino community of the Carolinas, a multimedia event that chronicles the musical traditions of old-time South Carolina country guitarist Ralph Smith, and the debut of the museum's current film project, "Southern Stews." The museum's first collections catalog will also be issued.

There has been an outpouring of campus and community support for McKissick following uncertainty regarding the museum's future. "In evaluating our role within the University and the broader community, we have set goals to better inform our audiences of the many offerings we provide," said Robertson. The College of Liberal Arts has created an advisory committee to help further integrate museum research, programs, and exhibitions into classrooms on the Columbia campus.

Exhibitions

Collections Highlights

"Sea Grass Baskets of the South Carolina Lowcountry"

+ through July 14, 2002

See examples of historic and contemporary pieces of the popular coastal basket making tradition.

"McKissick Quilt Collection"

+ through Jan. 26, 2003

Quilts, coverlets, and bedspreads from McKissick's holdings explore quilting as a traditional art form.

Public reception, Sept. 19, 2002, 5 p.m.-7 p.m.

"Recuerdos de mi Tierra" (Recollections of Home)

+ June 9-Aug. 11, 2002

This photo essay celebrates the cultural practices, beliefs, and values Latino immigrants bring to the Carolinas.

Members' reception, June 8, 2002, 3 p.m.-5 p.m.

"A Soldier's Musical Legacy"

+ Aug. 11-Dec. 15, 2002

Experience the guitar and dobro traditions of Ralph Smith, old-time country musician from Anderson County, S.C.

Public reception, Sept. 19, 2002, 5 p.m.-7 p.m.

"Palmetto Silver: Riches of the South"

+ Sept. 15-Dec. 1, 2002

Explore the making and use of silver wares in South Carolina.

Members' reception, Oct. 25, 2002, 7 p.m.-9 p.m.

Townsend Lecture Symposium featuring antiques expert Wendell Garrett, Oct. 26, 2002

Summer Camps

Archaeology Explorers I

+ July 8-12, 2002 + 8:30 a.m.-noon

+ rising third through fifth graders

Archaeology Explorers II

+ July 8-12, 2002 + 1 p.m.-4:30 p.m.

+ rising sixth through ninth graders

Two age-appropriate classes of archaeology explorers will learn the basics of South Carolina's early history through lively discussions, activities, games, and hands-on exploration. This will be a great opportunity for young Indiana Joneses to learn how archaeologists work. Explorers will visit the South Carolina Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology to talk with and see professional archaeologists working with artifacts and take a field trip to an active archaeological site.

Earth Explorers

+ July 15-19, 2002 + 8:30 a.m.-noon

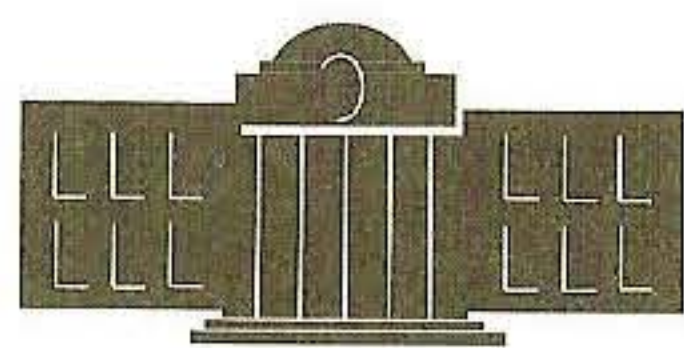
+ rising third through fifth graders

Rocks and fossils help tell the fascinating history of planet Earth and how its fluctuations and upheavals have influenced the lives of humans inhabiting it. Lots of hands-on learning activities offer opportunities to explore rocks and fossils, learn how to read various maps, and understand how landforms are created. Campers will tour the museum's natural science collection and take a field trip to a nearby quarry to see mining activities and view rock samples.

McKissickMuseum

McKissick Museum
University of South Carolina
Columbia, South Carolina 29208

Non-Profit
Organization
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Columbia, SC



McKissick Museum is located at the head of the University of South Carolina's historic Horseshoe in the heart of campus. All exhibitions are free and open to the public.

Gallery hours are 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday. The museum is open until 7 p.m. on Thursdays and from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Sundays. McKissick is closed on Mondays and Saturdays. Metered parking is available on all adjacent streets and in the lower level of Pendleton Street Garage.

A number of volunteer opportunities are available at McKissick Museum. Call 803-777-7251 for information on membership, tours, programs, and exhibits. Visit us on the Internet at www.cla.sc.edu/mcks/index.html.

