

# The History of Morrow Mountain State Park

With Jeff Michael

Sunday Oct. 20th 2pm-4pm



As Morrow Mountain State Park prepares to celebrate the 75th anniversary of its opening in 1939-40, the Friends of Morrow Mountain State Park has scheduled a public presentation on the history of the park, scheduled for October 20 at the Morrow Mountain Park Lodge.

Jeff Michael, director of UNC Charlotte's Urban Institute, will give a presentation on the cultural and natural history of Morrow Mountain State Park, and ongoing efforts to document that history for future generations. Michael grew up in the shadow of Morrow Mountain in the Valley

Drive community, and over the years has been active with the Morrow Mountain State Park Advisory Committee and regional conservation efforts through The LandTrust for Central NC. A descendent of the Kirk family, one of the early pioneer families of the Morrow Mountain area, Michael has spent several decades hiking the trails of the state park with others knowledgeable of the park's rich heritage (many now deceased) and recording some of their stories associated with the park's numerous abandoned home sites, roadbeds and other cultural artifacts. Michael will give a visual tour of some of these places using maps and photos, and share some of the more memorable stories passed along to him over the years about one of Stanly County's earliest settlements. He will also talk about current efforts to document the park's history by the park's staff, the Friends of Morrow Mountain State Park, and volunteers such as himself.

People coming to the talk are being asked to bring any written recollections passed down to them through their families of ancestors living in or enjoying the area around Morrow Mountain for inclusion in the park's history documentation project. Historic photographs of buildings, sites and people associated with the land that is now part of the state park are also encouraged – digital scanners will be set up so that volunteers can make digital copies of those photos. "We hope people will come out to learn more about this fascinating history, but also to share their own stories and photos that have been passed down to them through their families," states Michael. "Because so much of the park's history was never recorded, we're truly dependent on oral history. Indeed, it would be silly to think that anyone such as myself can provide anything more than a partial understanding of the area's past, but hopefully the stories that we'll share with one another will inspire others to make their own contributions to our ever-evolving understanding of that past."