

HISTORY ON THE LOOP

The Battle of Plymouth

By Claude Milot

For more than two decades, Plymouth, the quiet little town on North Carolina's Roanoke River, has awakened from hibernation on the last weekend in April with its Annual Living History Weekend featuring the re-enactment of the Battle of Plymouth, the South's last major victory in the Civil War.

On April 28th and 29th, history comes alive as Civil War enthusiasts come together for "Thunder on the Roanoke." The roar of guns will be heard along the riverbank, as volunteers from around the country re-enact the battle that began on the afternoon of April 17, 1864, and continued for two weeks with the Confederate ironclad *CSS Albemarle* blowing away the Union Navy.



When the soldiers are not skirmishing on Main Street, visitors will be able to mingle with them in their encampments on the town green adjacent to the Port O'Plymouth Museum. There will also be history presentations, artillery demonstrations, and guided tours of the nationally registered historic district. On Saturday night, the featured event will be the Torchlight Tour that begins with period music performed for waiting guests at the United Methodist Church, followed by guided tours by lantern light through the streets. Re-enactors will surprise visitors as they depict scenes that materialize out of the shadows and into the torchlight.

Come and enjoy the pageantry and smell the gunpowder smoke. Plan now to experience history on the Albemarle Loop.

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Additional Notes:

Local knowledge for approach to Plymouth Landing Marina:

The approach to the Roanoke River and the cruise up the river to Plymouth is straightforward. Use NOAA Chart 12205. After passing under the power lines crossing the Albemarle Sound just east of Edenton, head SSW to marker Green "1RR", which marks the beginning of the channel into the Roanoke River. The channel makes a hard left into the river after markers Green "5" and Red "6". The River is well marked and has good depth (8 feet and more) all the way up to Plymouth, which is five miles upriver.

Two miles upriver is the Route 45 fixed bridge, which has a vertical clearance of 50 feet. This will preclude taller sailboats from going any further upstream.

As you approach Plymouth on the south bank of the Roanoke River, the Plymouth Landing Marina can be seen near the western end of the waterfront. The marina is new, having been built in 2012, and is a member of the Albemarle Loop. There are 9 fixed slips that can accommodate boats up to 55 feet in length. The larger boats (>40 feet) should use the easternmost slips, which are a little larger and have 50 amp power. There is also 30 amp power available at the other slips. The marina has fresh water and a pump out, but no fuel. Contact Dockmaster Brenda on 252-217-2204 before mooring to get instructions and assistance in docking. There is a 2-3 knot current at the marina so take this into account as you approach your slip.

There are a couple of restaurants in downtown Plymouth, which are very good but have limited hours. Plymouth has a storied history, especially during the Civil War, and there is an excellent museum and floating replica of a Confederate ironclad on the river. Brenda is a font of knowledge and can tell you everything you ever wanted to know about Plymouth. She'll even take you on a tour of the lighthouse if you ask her. This is a replica of the original Plymouth lighthouse, which is now at the Edenton waterfront.

If you have a dinghy with motor, take a trip around Huff Island, between the Roanoke and Middle Rivers. You will see many different animals and birds, including bald eagles.

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