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The Lasts Days of Blackbeard the Pirate at Blue Ridge Community College May 3



The Arts and Humanities Series at Blue Ridge Community College in Henderson County will present 'The Last Days of Blackbeard the Pirate' by Kevin Duffus on Tuesday, May 3 at 7:30 p.m. in the Patton Auditorium. This program is made possible by a grant from the North Carolina Humanities Council, a statewide nonprofit and affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Admission is free and open to the public.



Researcher, author and documentary filmmaker, Duffus has published two books and produced four award-winning documentary films on North Carolina maritime history. Through extensive research, he solved the long-standing mystery of the missing 1854 Cape Hatteras Lighthouse Fresnel lens and discovered the lost history of the builder of the 1870 Cape Hatteras Lighthouse.

He has also produced documentaries in England, East Africa, Central America and the Philippines. His honors include a George Foster Peabody Award, the World Hunger Media Award, the Edward R. Murrow Award and the National Education Association Award.

Duffus observed that most historical accounts describing Blackbeard the pirate's last days were inaccurate, insufficiently researched, and, as it turned out, not nearly as interesting as the truth. After conducting extensive research at the archives of Great Britain, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and South Carolina, and exploring the pirate's favorite haunts at Bath, Ocracoke, and Philadelphia, he discovered the true facts about Blackbeard's last days that substantially change his story — and history.

Duffus discloses new information about how the pirate captain was cornered and attacked at Ocracoke in 1718, why he tried to escape rather than to fight back, and how his life might have been spared had he lived for three more weeks. He reveals the true meaning of a mysterious letter found in Blackbeard's possessions, and explores the possibilities of government conspiracies and coverups.

New research finds that many of the 25 pirates who remained with Blackbeard after the wreck of the Queen Anne's Revenge were sons of North Carolina families. And for the first time, Duffus proves that most of Blackbeard's captured crew members were not hanged in Virginia, and that one of them became a respected and wealthy landowner and the grandfather of heroes of the American Revolution as well as a Tennessee governor.

He exposes the truth behind many of the enduring Blackbeard myths—his Bristol, England, birthplace; his 14 wives; the burning of fuses in his hair to frighten his victims; and the countless tall tales of buried treasure, secret tunnels, and the shocking origins of the legend of his silver-plated skull used as a drinking cup by a secret society.

In all the new discoveries one revelation promises to stand-out as the most amazing. With the help of groundbreaking research by three courageous genealogists, Duffus shares long-forgotten clues to the potential identity of Blackbeard, beginning with a long-held myth about his sister, Susannah. The conclusions are staggering and certain to be controversial.

The Arts and Humanities Series is sponsored by Community Enrichment in the Community Education Department. For more information contact Martha Howell at (828) 694-1743 or at marthah@blueridge.edu.