

Mordecai Historic Park



Mordecai Historic Park is located on the last remaining acres of the former Mordecai Plantation, historically one of the largest in Wake County. The plantation reached its height of 1,200 acres by 1860, and the family grew corn, wheat, cotton, and other crops. Sitting at the center point of the plantation, the Mordecai House was occupied by the family for five generations from 1785 until 1964. Also living on the Mordecai grounds in 1860 were the approximately 120 enslaved African-Americans who were responsible for most of the tasks on the plantation. Today, several Raleigh neighborhoods including Historic Oakwood and Hayes-Barton, stand on former Mordecai land.

Since the 1960s, the Mordecai Historic Park has resided as a historic site dedicated to teaching the history of Raleigh and North Carolina. We offer tours throughout the year, as well as a variety of special events. The site also features the Mordecai Visitor Center, which has an in-depth exhibit on the Mordecais and the enslaved population who once lived here.



Mordecai House

The Mordecai House is the oldest home in Raleigh on its original foundation, and was the seat of the Mordecai Plantation. The original portion of the home was built in 1785 for Henry and Polly Lane. The home acquired its name from Moses Mordecai, who twice married into the Lane family. After Moses' death, state architect William Nichols designed the 1826 Greek Revival addition.



Andrew Johnson Birthplace

Oral tradition identifies this building as the birthplace of President Andrew Johnson, the 17th President of the United States, on December 29th, 1808. At the time, this structure stood behind Casso's Inn on Fayetteville Street in downtown Raleigh and functioned as a kitchen. The original structure was pine, but only fifteen of the original exterior boards remain. The building has been moved four times, and in 1975, it was transported here and restored to its original 1790 appearance.



Plantation Office

Built ca. 1826, this building served as an office for the family as they ran the plantation. It may have also been used for the family's law practices.



Badger-Iredell Law Office

Built ca. 1810. For several years in the 1820s it was the law office of George Badger an eventual US Senator. He later sold it to another attorney, James Iredell, Jr. He served as governor of NC

and later also became a US Senator. This building was moved here in 1975 with help from Beth Crabtree and the Wake County Bar Association.



Smokehouse

Built ca. 1826, the smokehouse was an integral part of plantation life. A year's worth of meat could be stored in this building providing food for all who lived here. The meat was smoked then cured in

salt to help prevent the growth of mold and bacteria.



Federal Building

Built ca. 1847, this structure is sometimes referred to as an early post office because local tradition held that it was used for that purpose. Architectural and paint analysis indicate it was a

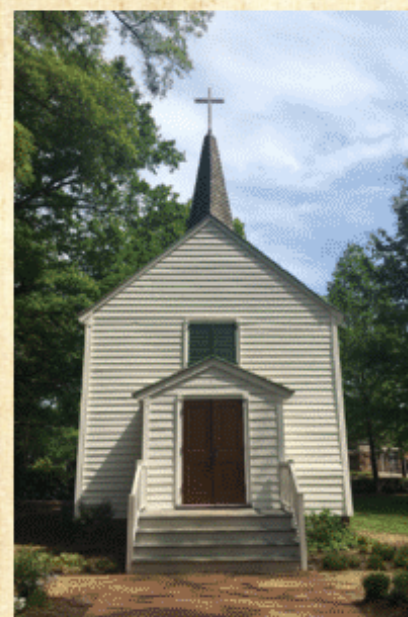
government structure of some type.



Allen Kitchen

Built in 1842 in Anson County in the yard of the Allen family home, the kitchen was moved to this park in 1968 and placed where the Mordecai kitchen once stood. In the Antebellum Era, enslaved cooks

worked in the Mordecai's kitchen to prepare food for the Mordecai family. Exterior kitchens were common in the South due to the great amount of heat generated from the fire.



St. Mark's Chapel

Built ca. 1847 by the enslaved carpenters on John Haughton's plantation near Gulf, North Carolina. An Episcopal chapel, it was only for the use of the Haughtons, their visitors, and the enslaved people on their plantation. These slaves sat in a segregated gallery above the main section of the chapel. St. Mark's was deconsecrated and moved to Mordecai in 1978.



Ellen Mordecai Garden

This is a recreated kitchen garden, based on first-hand descriptions by Ellen Mordecai in her book, *Gleanings from Long Ago*. The garden contains heirloom varieties of vegetables, herbs, fruits and

flowers appropriate for an 1830s garden.



MHP MAP QUIZ

Explore the map of Mordecai Historic Park & the descriptions of each building in the park. Then try your hand at some trivia questions!

**Which buildings at Mordecai Historic Park were moved from downtown Raleigh?
(Hint: there are 3)**

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-
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Mordecai House was first built in _____ and was added onto in _____.

was the 17th president & was born in Raleigh.

Which Mordecai family member described the garden at the park & what time period does it represent?

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Who were the two prominent lawyers that used the law office now located at Mordecai?

-
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_____ originally built
Mordecai House for his son & is called the Father of Raleigh.