

New Exhibits at Beaufort History Museum

Written by Editor

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Something very old is new again at Beaufort's famous Arsenal. Beaufort History Museum, which occupies the second floor of the historic building, has completed the renovation of its Exhibit Hall and it is now open to the public.

"Since 1939 we have been Beaufort's history museum," said Larry Koolkin, a Director and Co-chairman of the Exhibits Committee. "Coming home to the Arsenal has allowed us to 'repaint the canvas' and present our extensive collection, telling the 500-year history of the Beaufort District, in a fresh way that engages all ages."

HW Exhibits, a Charleston-based exhibit design firm, created the new design based on the Museum's impressive collection of artifacts and images. The firm, headed by Carol Poplin, the HW Exhibits Director, also handled the fabrication and installation of the exhibits.

The Museum's materials display history of the Beaufort District in storyboards organized into separate subject areas such as First People, European Exploration, Rice and Cotton, the Civil War, 20th Century Tourism and more

There are three sections:

- *Ecology* – examining how Beaufort District's history is tied to the region's geography, climate, landscape and ecology
- *Discovery and early settlement* – exploring American Indian life ways through early exploration European settlement, the plantations era and the Civil War.
- *Modernization and growth* – focusing on 20th century industries such as oystering phosphates, the military, truck farming and tourism.

"This is a very exciting and important time for Beaufort and for the Museum. We have

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come a long way but our journey has just begun,” Koolkin said. “ The new exhibit hall represents Phase I of the renovation. Phase II, due to be completed next year, will include larger, centrally placed displays and visitor interaction enhanced with leading-edge technology. We think visitors will embrace this chance to experience the history of our area and that they will especially enjoy our ‘user friendly’ approach.”

The Arsenal address is 713 Craven Street. Normal BHM hours of operation are 10:00 am – 4:00 pm, Monday – Saturday. Docents are on duty to provide information and conduct tours. Please visit beauforthistorymuseum.com or the BHM Facebook page for updates and news from the Museum.