

BIO on John Walker Guss
Historic Properties Superintendent, Alamance Parks Department
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as of 1/2023

John Walker Guss is the current Historic Properties Superintendent of the Alamance County Parks Department headquartered at Cedarrock Park in Burlington, North Carolina. He was born in Asheville, North Carolina growing up throughout North Carolina while his father held a successful 23-year executive career with Burlington Industries. Burlington is considered home, where John graduated from Walter Williams High School. While there, he played on the school's first two North Carolina State Championship football teams. Following high school, John went on to study at the University of Georgia joining Pi Kappa Phi fraternity and graduating with a degree in Marketing.

After college, John had the privilege of working on the Oscar winning film, *Glory*, through his interest of Civil War reenacting. He then pursued a more than 13-year career in film and television production beginning at Universal Studios Florida. In addition to working as a stand-in and hand double in *Glory*, John became an assistant director and earned membership into the Directors Guild of America, which he is still active. Some of his numerous film and television credits include *Gettysburg*, *Rose & The Jackal*, *Return To Lonesome Dove*, *Andersonville*, *Class of 61*, *Traces of Red*, *October Sky*, *Claudine's Return*, *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*, *Forces of Nature*, and *Black Dog*.

John began a full-time career in historic preservation in 2001 serving as the site manager at Fort James Jackson National Historic Landmark in Savannah, Georgia. He returned to his home state in 2005 and became the Director of Marketing and Development at Historic Rural Hill in Huntersville, outside of Charlotte, home of Revolutionary War patriot, John Davidson. In May 2007, he accepted the position as site manager of Bennett Place State Historic Site in Durham, where the largest surrender of the American Civil War occurred. He oversaw the renovations of the new museum gallery and theater, and coordinated the 150th anniversary commemorative events of the American Civil War.

Following 8 years of successful service with the state of North Carolina he accepted the position of Parks Superintendent with the Alamance County Parks Department where he oversaw the development of the Haw River Trails and daily operations of the county park system. In May 2018, he was promoted to Historic Properties Superintendent within the Alamance Parks Department and began directing the development of the Textile Heritage Museum in Historic Glencoe. Since being appointed, he has initiated opening the museum as a full-time historic site and led the expansion and restoration of the museum properties to now include the house of the Glencoe Mill Superintendent. John is currently building support for a Textile Heritage Trail through Alamance County with plans for other communities and states with textile heritage to join in this economic development of local and regional textile tourism.

During his professional career in parks and historic sites, John has produced historical documentary films, written and published numerous historical articles and books, more notably, *The History of Pierce County, Georgia*, *Fortresses of Savannah, Georgia*, *Savannah's Laurel Grove Cemetery and Fort Pulaski*, all published by Arcadia Publishing. While at Bennett Place State Historic Site he contributed to "With Malice Toward None", the new Appomattox National Park orientation film, *Because No One Else Would: The History of Durham, NC*, and has been interviewed by Our State magazine, WRAL-TV, UNC-TV, WGHP-TV, Tar Heel Traveler, and was featured on UNC Weekend with Deborah Holt Noel in March 2021.

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He has also steered numerous fundraising campaigns, which have included renovations for the museum exhibit gallery and theater at Bennett Place and a capital campaign of raising \$310,000 in just 3 weeks to preserve historic land once belonging to the Bennett Family Farm. Currently he is overseeing the preservation and restoration of the Superintendent House in Historic Glencoe dating to the beginnings of Glencoe Mills in 1880.

John engages his community having served recently as Commander of the area Sons of Union Veterans Camp and currently serves as the President of the Sons of American Revolution Alamance Battleground Chapter. He is also involved in other social and church related organizations. He enjoys traveling across America touring historic landmarks, museums, and parks while also participating in outdoor activities to include living history and reenacting American history, hiking, kayaking, horseback riding, watching movies and theater, attending concerts, and viewing college and professional sports, especially his 2021 & 2022 National Champion Georgia Bulldogs football team.