

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA**

**SESSION 2005  
RATIFIED BILL**

**RESOLUTION 2005-33  
HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 774**

A JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THOSE WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE DISMAL SWAMP CANAL ON THE TWO HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF THIS HISTORIC LANDMARK.

Whereas, the Dismal Swamp Canal is a 22-mile waterway that serves as part of the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway; and

Whereas, the Dismal Swamp Canal is the oldest man-made continuously operating waterway in the country, opening to boating traffic in 1805; and

Whereas, Colonel William Byrd II proposed the Dismal Swamp Canal in 1728 after surveying the boundary between North Carolina and Virginia; and

Whereas, in 1793, slaves and other laborers began the arduous task of digging the canal by hand, completing the work approximately 12 years later; and

Whereas, the Dismal Swamp Canal is a living monument to the sacrifices of the men who built it; and

Whereas, one of those men was Moses Grandy, born into slavery in Camden County around 1786, who after many years of working on the canal was able to purchase his freedom with a portion of his earnings and whose life story was recorded in the 1843 narrative, "The Life of Moses Grandy; Late a Slave in the United States of America;" and

Whereas, today, the Dismal Swamp Canal attracts approximately 2,000 pleasure boats annually; and

Whereas, the Dismal Swamp Canal is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, designated as a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark and recognized as part of the National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Program; and

Whereas, partners in a year-long celebration of the Dismal Swamp Canal's 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary are the Dismal Swamp Canal Welcome Center, Dismal Swamp State Park and Natural Area, Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge, Virginia Canals and Navigations Society, City of Chesapeake, and Elizabeth City State University; and

Whereas, future plans for the Dismal Swamp Canal include the Dismal Swamp State Park, which will be made possible due to the efforts of the late Dr. Joseph Armstrong Gill, a conservationist and avid outdoorsman, who was instrumental in persuading the State to purchase land in the Great Dismal Swamp for use as a park; Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate, the House of Representatives concurring:

**SECTION 1.** The General Assembly honors the memory of Moses Grandy and the many other laborers who constructed the Dismal Swamp Canal.

**SECTION 2.** The General Assembly honors the memory of Dr. Joseph Armstrong Gill for his role in helping the creation of the future Dismal Swamp State Park.

**SECTION 3.** The General Assembly encourages the citizens of this State to take part in activities commemorating the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Dismal Swamp Canal.

**SECTION 4.** The Secretary of State shall transmit a certified copy of this resolution to the Dismal Swamp Canal Welcome Center.

**SECTION 5.** This resolution is effective upon ratification.  
In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 26<sup>th</sup> day of  
May, 2005.

---

Beverly E. Perdue  
President of the Senate

---

James B. Black  
Speaker of the House of Representatives