

EXPLORITAS PROGRAMS – SPRING, 2010

March 14-19, 2010 – **Comedy in Film/Folk Song History of the United States/Patrick Henry: For Liberty or Death**

- 1) Spend a rollicking time with America's greatest comedians and comedy teams, as well as a few modern favorites (Chaplin, Keaton and Lloyd, Laurel & Hardy, the Marx Brothers, Hope and Skelton). Early TV comics are also featured. Laughs galore!
- 2) Take a historical journey of our country through American folk songs. Learn and hear the significance of music as it applies to colonialism, independence, seafaring, railroads, cowboys, the Civil War and the dust bowl days of Woody Guthrie.
- 3) "Give me liberty or give me death". How did the speaker of these immortal words rise from the backwoods of Virginia to become the spokesman for the American Revolution? "Radical" is a term few wear with ease. Patrick Henry wore it with pride. Join us as we review the life of this controversial and influential American.

March 29-April 1, 2010 – (*Snapshot*) – **Comedy in Film**

Spend a rollicking time with American film's greatest comedians on the shores of beautiful Smith Mountain Lake in the heart of the unmatched beauty of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Study the genius of American comedy from individual clowns such as Chaplin, Keaton and Lloyd to the comedy teams of Laurel and Hardy, the Marx Brothers and other early television Comedians such as Jackie Gleason and Lucille Ball. Personal and rare film clips provide the basis for examining the universal themes of comedy. Take advantage of the beautiful setting at one of a number of historical attractions such as the Blue Ridge Parkway, the National D-Day Memorial, Booker T. Washington's Birthplace and National Monument and Thomas Jefferson's retreat, Poplar Forest.

April 11-16, 2010 – **Trails Across America/100 Years at the Movies/Kings & Queens of England**

- 1) America has a tremendous network of scenic and historic trails. Trace well known routes such as the Oregon Trail, the Pony Express Trail and lesser known ones like the Trail of Tears. Learn how and why they were created.
- 2) Movies and film making have changed dramatically over the years bringing us sound, color, the wide screen, 3-D and other innovations. Enjoy film clips and listen to anecdotes which demonstrate the incredible developments of this influential medium.
- 3) The English monarchy has always been, and remains today, a popular, fascinating topic. Learn how rulers such as William the Conqueror, Henry VIII, Elizabeth I and others built empires on wealth, greed, lust, intrigue, war and violent death.

April 26-29, 2010 – (*Snapshot*) – **Tears of Freedom: The Final Days of the Civil War**

Explore the oft-ignored stories of those most profoundly affected by the Civil War: the witnesses to the catastrophic battles and the era's 4 million enslaved Africans who watched their lives change as the conflict overtook Virginia. With Park Rangers and living-history interpreters from Petersburg and Richmond national battlefields, Appomattox Courthouse National Historical Site and Booker T. Washington National Monument, seek out the ramifications of this tumultuous period not commonly illuminated in books and films. From the challenges of the winter of 1864-65 to the transformations forced on the plantation mistress as her husband and sons left home for the battlefield, examine the lesser known tales of America's struggle to define freedom.

May 9-14, 2010 – **Wildflowers of the Blue Ridge Mountains/The Laugh Factories: 100 Years of Comedy in Film/Thomas Jefferson: The Public and Private Man**

- 1) This is a perfect time to experience the beauty of wildflowers native to the Blue Ridge Mountains. Join a field botanist and master storyteller to learn wildflower Identification, origin, habitats and folklore. Enjoy an informational hike at famed Peaks of Otter on the Blue Ridge Parkway.
- 2) Spend a rollicking time with some of American film's greatest comedians from the crazy world of Mack Sennett, comedy clowns (Chaplin, Keaton, Lloyd, Hope, Skelton), teams (Laurel and Hardy, Martin and Lewis) down to memorable early TV comics.
- 3) Historians have long been fascinated by Thomas Jefferson. His accomplishments as an author, statesman and President are well known; however, journey to another, private side to his life which is as interesting (and controversial) as his public image.

May 24-27, 2010 – (*Snapshot*) – **Teddy Roosevelt: A Man For All Seasons**

Theodore Roosevelt was one of the most colorful figures in American history. This course will examine this many sided man and attempt to capture the spirit of his era. Roosevelt's youth will be surveyed, along with his involvement in the Spanish-American War. His presidency supplies many topics: trust busting, the Square Deal, the Panama Canal, the Navy's world cruise and the conservation movement. The Roosevelt family's antics in the White House were also a source of national fascination. Finally, his post-presidential years were filled with controversy and adventure as he made a new bid for power in 1912 and led expeditions to Africa and Brazil. A trip to Booker T. Washington's Birthplace and Appomattox Court House will bring alive several of Roosevelt's passions.

June 1-4, 2010 – (Snapshot) – **The American Presidency: Sex, Drugs and Lies in the White**

House – Arguing about the relative merits of America’s past presidents is a popular national pastime. Through discussions with an expert historian, augmented by video clips and other media, examine why some presidents are revered as legends while others go down in history as failures and discuss what has and hasn’t worked when it comes to choosing a direction for the country. Consider the political buzzwords of “leadership” and “character” and gain a sense of their message in the context of the presidency. See what marital infidelity, substance abuse or dishonesty has to teach us about a president’s capacity to lead and learn more on field trips to Booker T. Washington’s Birthplace and National Monument and Poplar Forest, Thomas Jefferson’s personal retreat.

August 23-26, 2010 - (Snapshot) – **A 200 Year History: Robert E. Lee’s Ties to the Blue Ridge**

Mountains– Revel in the 200th anniversary of Robert E. Lee’s birth with a multi-faceted look at the accomplishments and adventures. Stonewall Jackson was a unique personal and military complement to Lee: review their relationship via a trip to Lexington, VA where Jackson taught at VMI and Lee served as the president of what would eventually become Washington and Lee University. Tour Jackson’s and Lee’s burial sites and inspect the only house Jackson ever owned. Visit Appomattox Court House– the historic site of the death of one nation and the birth of another- where Lee’s military career ended and the symbol of the South’s “Lost Cause” saw its ascendancy. Join a Lee scholar in discussions and discover the contributions and importance of this unique American figure.