

# Rural Hill

## TEACHER'S GUIDE TO PROGRAMMING

### *Trail Self Guided Tour*

Rural Hill is an historic site and working farm owned by Mecklenburg County and operated by Historic Rural Hill, Inc., a non-profit 501c-3. With two hundred and fifty years of history behind it, Rural Hill is a restoration in progress. Enjoy two hundred sixty five acres of magnificent rural vistas, a variety of farm animals and wildlife, a 5k wooded trail that encircles the property, and our historic buildings and reconstructions. With eleven structures in all, we have the perfect setting to provide cultural heritage events, educational programs, self or guided tours, and so much more! We welcome all visitors and students to Rural Hill, where history springs alive!

Teachers:

It means so much to us here at Rural Hill that you have chosen us to be the destination of choice for your students. We know that your time and theirs is precious. If there is anything that we can do to make your trip more enjoyable please do not hesitate to let us know. Our programs are designed to fall within grade specific NC Curriculum guidelines but are generally suitable for all ages and can be modified within reason to suit your needs. Please take the time to review the following materials, which serve as an introduction to your trip and program. Again, do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns that you may have.

Thank you so much,  
The Rural Hill Staff

**DIRECTIONS:****From I-77 North:**

From I-77 North take Exit 16B, Sunset Road West, traveling 0.2 miles. Merge onto Sunset Road and travel 0.6 miles. Turn Right onto Beatties Ford Road. After traveling 6.5 miles turn Left onto Neck Road. Rural Hill is located 2.1 miles on the right. Pull into the SECOND driveway for parking.

**From I-77 South:**

From I-77 South take the Exit 23, Gilead Road toward Huntersville, traveling 0.3 miles. Turn Right onto Gilead Road and travel 0.6 miles. Turn Left onto McCoy Road and continue onward for 1.7 miles. Take a Right turn onto Hambright Road, traveling 1.6 miles, then turn Right onto Beatties Ford Road. After 0.7 miles, turn left onto Neck Road. Rural Hill is located 2.1 miles on the right. Pull into the SECOND driveway for parking.

**From NC-73 West:**

From NC-73 West turn Left onto Beatties Ford Road, continuing 3.6 miles. Turn Right onto Neck Road. Rural Hill is located 2.1 miles on the right. Pull into the SECOND driveway for parking.

**From NC-73 East:**

From NC-73 East turn Right onto Beatties Ford Road, continuing 3.6 miles. Turn Right onto Neck Road. Rural Hill is located 2.1 miles on the right. Pull into the SECOND driveway for parking.

**BEFORE YOU COME:**

Please review the following reminders and recommendations prior to your departure:

- Return the enclosed Group Reservation Form with your deposit payment. Please make checks payable to: *The Catawba Valley Scottish Society Inc. (CVSS)*. This will confirm your reservation on our calendar, as well as let us know exactly when you will arrive and how many students to expect.
- Teachers, Parents, and other Adults are free with student groups.
- Please review the page entitled “*Site Etiquette*” with your students prior to arriving to Rural Hill and ensure that they understand what is expected of them.
- We would like you to arrive about 10 minutes early to allow the students plenty of time to check in and group themselves away from the bus(es).
- *Rural Hill is open all year in all weather.* If there are concerns regarding inclement weather and your group, please call ahead to let us know whether you are coming or rescheduling.
- There is no such thing as poor weather, just poor preparation! Please ensure that students are dressed appropriately for the outdoors and the weather at hand. Being one of Mecklenburg County’s highest elevations, Rural Hill is naturally windy. Because of this, it can feel 10-15 degrees cooler here than where you are. Our historic buildings have no climate control measures, if it is cold outside, it will be cold inside. *Please dress appropriately.*
- The maximum number of students per program is 30. If there is more than this, your group will be divided into two or more groups.

**SITE ETIQUETTE:**

Rural Hill has over two hundred and fifty years of history on site and the staff here have the obligation to protect it for the future. Please abide by the following written rules as well as any verbal instructions our staff may provide to you during your stay. Students who fail to follow these rules may be separated from the group, asked to hold a teacher / parent's hand, and / or made to leave the site. We request that you obey these rules and honor us as much as we honor your group for spending time with us.

- I. Rural Hill is a working farm. This means live animals and working machines and tools. Please do not chase, yell at, hit, or throw anything at the animals. Do not offer the animals any food unless instructed to do so. Please do not climb on or touch any piece of farm equipment. If a staff member or your teacher tells you to stop, **STOP**.
- II. Do not climb on, touch, step, or jump over fences: They are electric and **WILL SHOCK YOU**.
- III. Be aware that many of the things in and around our buildings are very old and fragile. Do not touch or pick up anything unless you are told its okay.
- IV. For the safety of our guests, do not climb on, in, or jump off any part of our buildings.
- V. Please keep any and all trash on your person until you can locate a proper receptacle. **DO NOT LITTER**.
- VI. No food, drink, or gum is allowed inside any of the buildings. Please finish all snacks prior to entering or leave them outside.
- VII. The entirety of Rural Hill is a **Non-Smoking** site due to the dry and



## Trail Tour

(Grades K-8)

### Time Required:

Allow at least 90 minutes for a tour of the whole trail, or at least 45 minutes per north or south side.

### Special Considerations:

**Teachers:** Please ensure that each group leader has at least one working cell phone for safety. Please review with each group the rules of the trail: No running, No yelling, No damaging plants, No harassing animals, and No throwing rocks or sticks. Poison Oak and Poison Ivy are both a problem and something to look out for on this, and any, trail in this area. If you are unsure what to look for, ask a Rural Hill staff person and they will show you how to identify the plants. During the warmer months, it may help for the group leader to carry a small stick to knock down spider webs crossing the path, and remember to always watch out for snakes!

**Activity:** As you walk the trail- continuously go over the following questions...

- Look around from time to time, what is different about where you are now compared to where you were five minutes ago?
- If you see something interesting, stop and look at it. What is it? Where did it come from? How did it get here?

- Some things to look for include deer, raccoon, and turkey tracks, owl pellets, snail shells, quartz, and bird feathers.
- Periodically, stop, and listen: what sounds do you hear? Are the sounds man-made or natural? Who can listen and name the most sounds?
- What, besides the lack of trees, are the differences between the wooded and open sections of trail? Think about temperature, wind, soil composition, plant life, etc...
- How many separate ecosystems can you identify? What might live exclusively in this area? What might live in all areas?
- If you were given a map, can you tell where you are by looking at it and your surroundings?