

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2005
RATIFIED BILL

RESOLUTION 2006-15
HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 2890

A JOINT RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF HUGH MORTON.

Whereas, Hugh Morton was born on February 21, 1921, in Wilmington, North Carolina, to Julian Morton and Agnes MacRae Morton; and

Whereas, Hugh Morton was educated at Episcopal High School in Alexandria, Virginia, and at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; and

Whereas, Hugh Morton married the former Julia Taylor in Greensboro on December 8, 1945, and was the father of four children: Julia MacRae Morton, Hugh Morton, Jr., James M. Morton, and Catherine W. Morton; and

Whereas, Hugh Morton was a widely renowned photographer, whose subjects included athletes, politicians, musicians, wildlife, and the beautiful scenery of North Carolina; and

Whereas, Hugh Morton developed a love for photography at the age of 13 while attending camp near Linville, North Carolina, and, by the age of 14, his first photograph was published in Time magazine; and

Whereas, Hugh Morton served as a newsreel photographer in the Army's Signal Corps during World War II and was awarded the Purple Heart and Bronze Star after being wounded; and

Whereas, Hugh Morton served as President of the Carolinas Press Photographers Association, was a founder and Chair of the Southern Short Course in Press Photography, and founded the Grandfather Mountain Camera Clinic and the Grandfather Mountain Nature Photographers' Weekend; and

Whereas, Hugh Morton authored books featuring his photography, including "Hugh Morton's North Carolina" in 2003 and co-authored "Making A Difference In North Carolina" with Ed Rankin in 1988 and "The ACC Basketball Tournament Classic" with Smith Barrier in 1981; and

Whereas, Hugh Morton served as the producer and photographer of several films and documentaries, including "Masters of Hang Gliding," "The Black Bear," "The Highland Games at Grandfather," and "The Search For Clean Air," a documentary narrated by Walter Cronkite that ran nationally on the PBS Network in 1995; and

Whereas, Hugh Morton was a strong advocate for the environment, preservation, and conservation; and

Whereas, while Hugh Morton cherished photography, his love for Grandfather Mountain was widely recognized by all who knew him; and

Whereas, Hugh Morton inherited Grandfather Mountain from his grandfather, Hugh MacRae, in 1952 and soon after developed the mountain by extending the road to top, building the Mile High Swinging Bridge and a Visitor Center, and establishing a National Weather Service Weather Reporting Station, native wildlife habitats for native species, a nature museum, and a theater; and

Whereas, Hugh Morton resisted the National Park Service's effort to build the final 7.7 miles of the Blue Ridge Parkway through Grandfather Mountain, convincing the federal government to build the award-winning Linn Cove Viaduct, which directs the road around the mountain; and

Whereas, Hugh Morton donated over 4,000 acres of Grandfather Mountain to the Nature Conservancy to ensure the mountain's preservation; and

Whereas, Hugh Morton loved his native State and took every opportunity to promote it, serving as the first President of the North Carolina Azalea Festival in Wilmington, Chair of the USS North Carolina Battleship Commission, which helped save the battleship and bring it to Wilmington; Chair of the Save Cape Hatteras Lighthouse Committee; Chair of the Governor's Advisory Committee on Travel and Tourism; and as President or Chair of the Blue Ridge Parkway Association, North Carolina Travel Industry Association, Southern Highlands Attractions Association, North Carolina Botanical Garden Foundation, and the North Carolina Sports Hall of Fame; and

Whereas, Hugh Morton was instrumental in persuading the Department of Transportation to plant wildflowers along North Carolina's highways; pushed for the passage of the "Ridge Law," which prevented development of the State's mountains over more than 30 feet above the ridgeline; fought to protect the State against air pollution and acid rain; and petitioned the General Assembly to pass the Clean Smokestacks Act in 2002; and

Whereas, Hugh Morton served as a member of the North Carolina Board of Conservation and Development, Chair of the State Advertising Committee, Vice-chair of State Parks Committee, Chair of the AAA Carolina Motor Club; Chair of "Good Roads Committee," Chair of Western Carolina Tomorrow, and Chair of North Carolina Year of the Mountains Commission; and

Whereas, Hugh Morton helped launch the career of Andy Griffith, when he asked the young actor to entertain at the North Carolina Press Photographers Association banquet in 1950; and

Whereas, Hugh Morton was the recipient of many awards and honors, among them: the Distinguished Service Medal from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (1979); North Carolina Award (1983); Theodore Roosevelt Award for Conservation at the White House presented by President George H. W. Bush (1990); Outstanding Conservationist Award by the United States Fish & Wildlife Service (1996); North Carolina Press Association's North Carolinian of the Year (1997); Alfred Adams Award for Economic Development from the Boone Area Chamber of Commerce (2000); Phoenix Award from American Society of Travel Writers (2004); and Sue Wilmoth Award for the Advancement of Tourism from the Boone Area Chamber of Commerce (2006); and

Whereas, Hugh Morton was inducted into the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Journalism Hall of Fame (1990); became the first recipient of the Charles Kuralt Award for bringing exceptional, positive national attention to the State of North Carolina from the North Carolina Travel Industry Association (2000); was named to the North Carolina Business Hall of Fame (2002); was named the first inductee into the North Carolina Tourism Hall of Fame (2006); and was honored with the Hugh Morton Distinguished Professorship in Journalism and Mass Communication (2006); and

Whereas, Hugh Morton received honorary doctorate degrees from Belmont Abbey (1988), Lees-McRae College (1988), Queens College (2002), University of North Carolina at Asheville (2003), University of North Carolina at Wilmington (2004), Appalachian State University (2005), and North Carolina State University (2005); and

Whereas, Hugh Morton died on June 1, 2006, leaving the lasting legacy of Grandfather Mountain and hundreds of memorable photographs of this great State and its many citizens for generations to come; Now, therefore,

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

SECTION 1. The General Assembly expresses high esteem and regard for the extraordinary life of Hugh Morton, one of the State's most distinguished citizens.

SECTION 2. The General Assembly extends its deepest sympathy to the family of Hugh Morton for the loss of a beloved family member.

SECTION 3. The Secretary of State shall transmit a certified copy of this resolution to the family of Hugh Morton.

SECTION 4. This resolution is effective upon ratification.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 29th day of June, 2006.

Beverly E. Perdue
President of the Senate

James B. Black
Speaker of the House of Representatives