

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2013**

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**HOUSE RESOLUTION 1013**

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Sponsors:      Committee on Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House (Primary Sponsor).  
*For a complete list of Sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly Web Site.*

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Referred to:

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June 19, 2013

1    A HOUSE RESOLUTION HONORING THE LIFE AND MEMORY OF VOLLIS SIMPSON,  
2        A VISIONARY ARTIST.

3            Whereas, Vollis Simpson was born on January 17, 1919, on a farm in Wilson  
4    County to William Oscar Simpson and Emma Watson Simpson; and

5            Whereas, Vollis Simpson served as a staff sergeant in the Army Air Corps during  
6    WWII in the South Pacific; and

7            Whereas, Vollis Simpson established Simpson Repair Shop, a machinery repair  
8    shop, in Wilson County, and after a number of years, he also established a house-moving  
9    business; and

10           Whereas, after retirement, Vollis Simpson began making giant windmills known as  
11    "whirligigs" with materials he collected or spare parts left over from his businesses; and

12           Whereas, Vollis Simpson created unique and fanciful whirligigs that measured as  
13    wide as 55 feet and as tall as 60 feet with parts that reflected light that he displayed across the  
14    family farm in Lucama; and

15           Whereas, although a self-taught artist, Vollis Simpson's creations soon caught the  
16    attention of people from all around the world and made the farm a tourist attraction; and

17           Whereas, Vollis Simpson was commissioned to make whirligigs for the 1996  
18    Olympics in Atlanta, Georgia, the North Carolina Museum of Art in Raleigh, and the Visionary  
19    Art Museum in Baltimore, Maryland; and

20           Whereas, Vollis Simpson's whirligigs have also been exhibited at the High Museum  
21    of Art in Atlanta, Georgia, and at other locations, including New York, California, Canada, and  
22    England; and

23           Whereas, articles featuring Vollis Simpson and details of his artwork appeared in  
24    many national magazines and several books; and

25           Whereas, in 2011, Vollis Simpson was presented with the North Carolina Award,  
26    the State's highest civilian honor; and

27           Whereas, Phase I of the Vollis Simpson Whirligig Park will open in the Fall of 2013  
28    in the City of Wilson and will feature a large collection of Simpson's whirligigs that have been  
29    fully restored and prepared for display; and

30           Whereas, in recognition of Vollis Simpson's contributions to the State, the House of  
31    Representatives unanimously passed legislation earlier this year adopting Simpson's whirligig  
32    creations as the official folk art of the State of North Carolina; and

33           Whereas, Vollis Simpson leaves a legacy as an artist and craftsman that will be  
34    enjoyed and appreciated by generations to come; and

35           Whereas, Vollis Simpson died on May 31, 2013, at the age of 94; and



1           Whereas, Vollis Simpson was preceded in death by his daughter, Jeanie Simpson;  
2 and  
3           Whereas, Vollis Simpson is survived by his wife, Jean Barnes Simpson; a daughter,  
4 Carol S. Kyles; sons, Leonard Barnes Simpson and Vollis Michael Simpson; grandchildren,  
5 Allison Dunn, Valerie Dunn, Jamison Kyles, and Cassidy Kyles; and a sister, Eleanor Watson;  
6 Now, therefore,  
7 Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:  
8           **SECTION 1.** The House of Representatives honors the memory of Vollis Simpson  
9 and expresses appreciation for his life, his service to our country, and his artistry and  
10 craftsmanship.  
11           **SECTION 2.** The House of Representatives extends its deepest sympathy to the  
12 family of Vollis Simpson for the loss of a beloved family member.  
13           **SECTION 3.** The Principal Clerk shall transmit a certified copy of this resolution  
14 to the family of Vollis Simpson.  
15           **SECTION 4.** This resolution is effective upon adoption.