

# Federal Point Historic Preservation Society

P.O. Box 623, Carolina Beach, North Carolina 28428

## *Newsletter*

Volume 10 No. 1

January, 2003

Darlene Bright, editor

### **January Meeting**

Are you a Son of a Confederate Veteran? Attend the monthly meeting of Federal Point Historic Preservation Society, 7:30 pm, Monday night, January 20, 2003, at the Federal Point History Center, 1121-A North Lake Park Blvd., adjacent to the Carolina Beach Town Hall.

Paul Laird, Past President of the George Davis Camp of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, and current Chairman of the Fort Fisher Restoration Committee, will speak on the history of the Sons of Confederate Veterans' organization, it's intent and purpose.

Paul, an advocate and supporter of history, has been involved with and led the cause in many preservation projects during his almost 20-year tenure with the Wilmington Chamber of Commerce. Without his diligent and tenacious efforts, the protective revetment at Fort Fisher might not have become a reality.

Members and the public are cordially invited. Refreshments will be served following the meeting.

### **Last Month**

If you thought anyone left hungry or unhappy at the Federal Point Historic Preservation Society annual Christmas Party on December 17, 2002, you weren't paying attention. Lynn Benson prepared the setting with the help of her mother, Lois Walton, showing excellent taste and talent with candles, garland, and berries. Many of the "backbone" members brought dishes of ham, turkey, casseroles, vegetables, and desserts of cookies, fudges, pies, and jalapeno peppers. The crowd consisted of over 50 members, Carolina and Kure Beaches dignitaries, and guests from throughout the community.

### **Message From Your President**

**Patricia Gray Bolander**

We started the New Year with a bang and the successful promotion of the Federal Point Historic Preservation Society and the History Center at the 138<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Reenactment of the Second Battle for Fort Fisher on January 11. With the completion of the display cases, the History Center will now be open with expanded hours. And we encourage each of you to help with continuation of identifying old and historic properties for Plaque presentations. The first half of our year has been highly successful and we are looking forward to your active participation for continuing that success in the second half.

Thank you again for your support in the past and to our progress in the future with each of you, the Society's members, as participants.

**2002**

### **A Year In Review**

Our Society enjoyed many accomplishments last year with the help of volunteers and the community at large. We continued to grow with 12 new members, in addition to an increased number of renewed memberships. The following is a monthly breakdown, least we not forget:

**January** - Rhonda Billeaud presented a Colonial & Civil War toy demonstration; Society volunteers raised funds by providing sausage dogs at the 137<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle at Fort Fisher; and an organizational and planning meeting was held by the Federal Point History Center Exhibits Committee.

**February** - Gary Brown and Bert Felton spoke on the travels of John Larson through North Carolina in 1701; the Exhibits Committee completed designing display cases and began collecting photos, text, and artifacts for display.

**March** - Pat Bolander spoke on what our Society is about and projects in which we are involved; construction commenced on display cabinets at the Center. The Exhibits Committee met with Dick Roberts of the North Carolina Aquarium who volunteered input for the project.

**April** - Deborah Haywood spoke and presented a film on Masonboro Island; twelve Society volunteers participated in the Fort Fisher State Historic Site Park day by landscaping, cleaning, and repairing the grounds.

**May** - William H. Hall spoke on Confederate Naval Lt. Commander John Newland Maffitt; Danny & Judy Thompson constructed and donated a mobile audio-visual center stand for the History Center; the Exhibits Committee installed doors and painted the inside of the newly constructed display cases;

**June** – The Society held a community potluck picnic instead of its regular Monday night meeting; Pat Bolander, Darlene Bright and John Gordon attended a workshop, “Hometown History” sponsored by the Federation of NC Historical Societies; officers and Board members were elected for the coming year; 4<sup>th</sup> grader, Megan Goins, was presented a \$50 savings bond for her winning essay in our annual historical essay contest.

**July** – Kathy Southerly spoke on Colonial NC River Landing Sites; progress was made on all eight of the display cases and they were identified to be Cape Fear Indians, Colonial, Civil War, Carolina Beach, Kure Beach, Seabreeze, WWII, and revolving exhibit to change semi-annually.

**August** – Al Denn spoke on 18<sup>th</sup> Century Surgery and Apothecary; volunteers held a yard sale to help fund exhibits—a big success! A new computer system, including scanner was purchased and installed at the Center.

**September** - Derik Patten and Mike Edwards presented a film and discussion entitled “Shifting Sands—the Fort Fisher Hermit Story”; and the 2003 Dining and Value Guide fundraiser was kicked off for the coming year.

**October** – Dr. Lindley Butler introduced his latest book, *Pirates, Privateers and Rebel Raiders of the Carolina Coast*; our annual pig pickin fund raiser was held at the Center; and work continued at a frantic pace to complete the Exhibits.

**November** – The History Center exhibits were completed and the Open House was held on November 18—a grand celebration! John and Jeannie Gordon, Beth Keane, Jim Dugan, and Leslie and Darlene Bright, along with a host of support from others, volunteered a great deal of effort and time to achieve this milestone for our Society. The Society with the support and cooperation of Dean Lambeth of Kure Beach and the Carolina Beach School staff placed a historic marker on Carolina Beach School during a ceremony.

**December** – The Society held its annual Christmas Party with food, fun and fellowship.

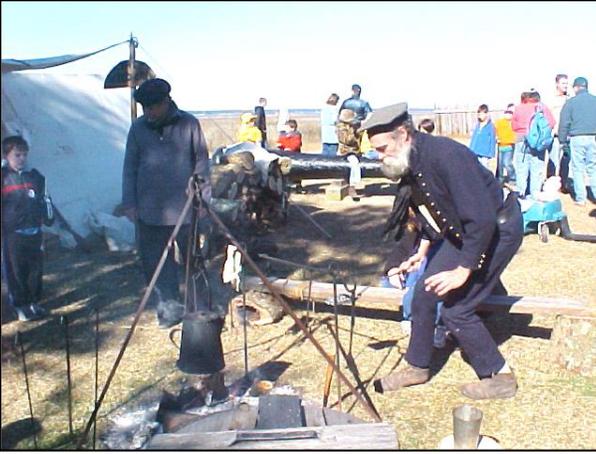
As we celebrate our achievements, we need to be reminded that our job is not finished. We desperately need more volunteers to help keep the History Center open and to continue with our preservation efforts in the Federal Point community.

## COFFEE

Ann Hertzler

Coffee consumption in the United States increased after the 1774 Boston Tea Party and became America’s national drink after the Civil War. The U.S. Army saw that soldiers always had coffee beans; however, coffee was nearly nonexistent in the South early in the war. In the last 3 months of 1864, 19 blockade runners carried beef, pork, beans, and coffee into Wilmington for the Confederate army.

A day’s **ration** in the Northern Army for every 100 men was 10 pounds of green coffee or 8 pounds of roasted and ground coffee and fifteen pounds of sugar. Officers appointed **company cooks** to prepare the coffee in the camp mess - coffee often described as ‘of inferior quality’. In the second year of the war a coffee extract mixed with sugar and milk packed in half-gallon tin cans was distributed to field armies, but this “undrinkable” beverage was soon discontinued.



A Ft. Fisher reenactor makes coffee—the kind that the grounds slide down real slow when it is just right. Courtesy of Ann

When coffee was issued **individually**, soldiers mixed their coffee ration with their sugar ration before it could get wet, spilled, or stolen and carried it in a paper, rubber, or cloth sack. Soldiers cooked coffee when taking a break, tired from the day's march, before settling in for the night, or before bivouacking. They used a pint or quart preserve can with wire bail on the end of a stick to boil coffee and sugar at the campfire.

Usually the longer a man served in the military, the darker he liked his coffee – “strong enough to float an iron wedge”. Coffee boiled for 30 or 40 minutes was stronger and more astringent. The improvised coffee ‘boiler’ soon became very, very black, inside and out, but was easily replaced with

cans used by commissioned officers and hospitals. Soldiers occasionally added milk from cows or with condensed milk of two brands – *Lewis* or *Borden* – purchased from the “sutler”. Some soldiers consumed 2 and 3 quarts of coffee a day

In contrast, better tasting, less astringent coffee is made in a clean coffee pot with water below the boiling point. An example is the “**coffee receipt**” in the *Manuscript Cookbook* of Robert E. Lee’s wife - pour boiling water over fresh grounds and boil for no longer than 3 minutes. In 1880 Miss Parloa noted that at least half of the housekeepers in this country still boiled coffee. Recommended weekly cleaning for family **coffee pots** for hearths or iron cook stoves in the 1800s was “scalding” (drop a few live coals or a spoonful or two of wood ashes in the boiling water until nearly cold) and “sunning”.

**Coffee substitutes** were used by soldiers as well as families in the Civil War. Advantages were their availability, cheaper cost, and lack of caffeine. Acorns, barley, beans, beets, bran, chestnuts, chicory, cotton seeds, dandelion, peas, peanuts, persimmons, rye, sugar cane seeds, sweet potatoes okra seeds, watermelon seeds, and wheat berries were parched, dried, browned or roasted and used to make ersatz coffee. **Tubers** like carrots or yams were cut into small pieces, dried, toasted and ground up. Samuel Adams’ recipe for rye coffee (1 cup rye = about 1 ¼ cups ground extra fine) was 1 or 2 tbsp ground rye/serving; add boiling water and boil 10 minutes. A “receipt” for coffee from ripe **acorns** was to wash them in the shell, parch until they open, remove the acorns, and roast with a little bacon fat. Directions in *Godey’s Lady’s Book* for **dandelion** coffee were to cut the roots into small pieces, roast in the oven till brown, and grind.

(*Lee Manuscript Cookbook* –1860-1890; Billings, *Hard Tack and Coffee*; Spaulding and Spaulding, *Receipts from the Pages of Godey’s Lady’s Book*; *WW Weaver 35 Receipts from “The Larder Invaded”*)

## Society Notes

- **Membership Information:** Renewal notices are being sent on the anniversary of your joining the Society. If you have been receiving a Newsletter, and we have not heard from you within 90 days of the billing date, your name will be placed in the inactive file and no Newsletter will be sent. You are encouraged to respond promptly. Your support of our local preservation efforts with your membership is very important as it is the lifeblood of our organization.
- **Welcome New Members:** Charlie & Letty Grissom and Henry & Lynn Liles, all from Carolina Beach.
- **Historic Wilmington Foundation's 37th Annual Membership Meeting, January 27, 2003, Graystone Inn, 100 South Third Street, 5:30pm - 7:00pm.** There will be a reception following the meeting, please call 762-2511 for more information.

● **History Center News:** We are in the process of enlisting volunteers to work on Fridays and Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., beginning Friday, February 7. If you are willing to set aside a little time to help keep the Center open to the public, please sign up at the meeting or contact Darlene Bright 458-8684 or 458-0502 (leave a message).

● Volunteers served delicious barbeque sandwiches and baked beans during events at **the 138<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Second Battle of Ft. Fisher** on Saturday, January 11. Thanks to Pat Bolander, Darlene & Leslie Bright, Brenda Campbell, John Gordon, Ann Hertzler, and Cheri McNeill.

**Officers**

President - Pat Bolander  
Vice-President - James Bartley  
Sec/Treas. - Darlene Bright

Lynn Benson  
Donna Godkey  
Beth Keane

**Directors**

Leslie S. Bright  
John Gordon  
A.E. "Punky" Kure

Jim Dugan  
Barbara Hoppe  
Cheri McNeill

*Anyone interested in membership in the Federal Point Historic Preservation Society can write to FPHPS, P. O. Box 623, Carolina Beach, NC 28428. Yearly dues are \$15.00, Individual; \$20.00 Husband & Wife; and \$25.00 Business. Help support our local preservation efforts with your membership.*

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