

Federal Point Historic Preservation Society

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

Newsletter

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January, 2005

Darlene Bright, editor

January Meeting

The Federal Point Historic Preservation Society will hold its regular monthly meeting, Monday, January 17, 2005, 7:30 PM, at the Federal Point History Center, 1121-A North Lake Park Blvd., adjacent to the Carolina Beach Town Hall.

Featured speaker will be Mr. Bennett Langley of the Cape Fear Civil War Shop. Mr. Langley will share a close look at the ordnance used by Confederate Fort Fisher and the U. S. Navy fleet during the final battle for Fort Fisher, January 15, 1865.

Mr. Langley is a native of the area, and through his passion for Civil War history, has developed a keen knowledge of arms, armament, and associated material of the period.

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

Last Month

Our Christmas parties are getting better and better. More food than you could shake a fork at, along with music and carols by John Golden, made for a grand old time at the History Center last month. Approximately 50 members and guests chowed down to a wide variety of dishes and desserts while anticipating a visit by "Old Saint Nick", and for some the grandbabies.

Thanks to each and everyone who brought dishes and helped out to make it the best yet.

Message From Your President

Patricia Gray Bolander

GREETINGS in this NEW YEAR! I hope all of our members had a pleasant holiday and are looking forward to the challenge of a new year. We have so much to look forward to, beginning with the 140th Re-enactment of the Battle at Fort Fisher. Thanks to all who have volunteered to help during this momentous occasion.

We hope you took advantage of the "Member's Discount" during the month of December and over the holiday. We are expanding the Gift Shop area and welcome any suggestions from the members.

THANKS again to all who helped with the Christmas Party. And a SPECIAL THANK YOU to Lynn Benson for her usual job of the beautiful decorations at the History Center.

The Craig Family

Pioneer residents of Federal Point and a Well Known River Pilot Family

By Bill Reaves

1867 – Mr. Jesse Craig, aged 77 years and 6 months, died at Federal Point on November 1, 1867.

1870 – Capt. Charles Thomas Craig, died at Summerville, near Charleston, S. C. He was born at Federal Point in September, 1831. At the age of 17 he went to Charleston, S. C. and became an apprentice on a pilot boat, and at the time of his death was considered one of the best pilots sailing out of Charleston. He died on the Tuesday prior to August 27, 1870.

- 1873 – Mrs. Ann Robinson, of Charleston, S. C., wrote the following: “I am a granddaughter of Benjamin Craig, who was appointed a pilot on the Cape Fear River about the year 1797. He was my mother’s father. He was a pilot and a soldier during the American Revolutionary War. My mother died on the 10th of February, 1872. She left six daughters. One of his grandchildren still lives in North Carolina”.
- 1875 – Ann M. Craig, wife of Joseph Craig, died and was interred at Federal Point. She was born June 16, 1807. She died in January, 1875.
- 1877 – Mr. Charles Craig reported that he had a valuable horse stolen from him on Sunday last. The animal had been turned out on the marsh to feed and the horse failed to come up as usual. A diligent search for him without success. This occurred in May, 1877.
- 1880 – Simon R. G. Craig, aged 27 years and 4 months, died in April 5, 1880. He was one of the Cape Fear River pilots. He was a brother of Rev. James W. Craig and a son of James N. Craig. The funeral was held at Federal Point on April 6th.
- 1880 – The pilot boat *Rosa Scarborough*, belonging to Messrs. Craig, of Federal Point, was struck by a hurricane and capsized in about 11 feet of water near Little Island, about 10 miles below Wilmington. The crew was saved when they took a boat which happened to be in tow at the stern.
- 1883 – Chesley A. Craig, aged 25 years and 10 months, died on Federal Point, September 21, 1883. Funeral was held next day from the residence of his father.
- 1883 – W. S. Craig, administrator for the estate of Thomas Craig, offered 400 acres of woodland on Federal Point for sale. It was advertised on October 7, 1883.
- 1884 – John B. Craig, between 65 and 68 years of age, a well-known tailor of Wilmington, died July 19, 1884. He was born at Federal Point. He suffered from paralysis severely for six years before his death. He was survived by his wife and several children. Burial was in Oakdale Cemetery.
- 1886 – James N. Craig, an old pilot on the Cape Fear River, died at his residence at Federal Point, aged about 68 years. He was called to the profession of river pilot in his early youth. He was the father of Rev. J. W. Craig, of Wilmington. His burial was on January 7, 1886. He died on the previous Wednesday afternoon.
- 1890 – Charles W. Craig died at his home, Fort Fisher, New Hanover County, on April 22, 1890. He was 53 years old. He was a well known pilot of the Cape Fear. He was buried in a coffin which he had made out of “fat pine wood” years and years earlier. He was removed from the Federal Point Cemetery on May 13, 1924, to the Oakdale Cemetery in Wilmington and interred in a plot owned by Miss Etta Craig.
- 1892 – Capt. E. C. Reed, of the Clyde steamship *Pawnee*, met up with an old friend, Capt. J. W. Craig, while he was in the port of Wilmington. A newspaper reporter was present and he wrote the following: Captain Reed talked about the days he ran the Federal blockade into the port of Wilmington during the Civil War. He said: “Yes, I made my first trip into Wilmington as a blockade runner, in the latter part of 1862, and Capt. Craig here piloted me in and out of port. I was commander of the steamship *Sumter*, a Confederate cruiser that had been renamed the *Gibraltar*, of Gibraltar. We flew the British colors, and cleared from Liverpool ostensibly for Callao, Peru. Our cargo consisted of ammunition and small arms for the Confederate government, and four Blakeley guns for the defense of Charleston, S. C.” This interview took place on January 6, 1892.

1894 – Mrs. Eliza C. Craig died at the residence of her son, Capt. M. T. Craig, of Southport, on Sunday morning at the age of 75 years and 4 months. Another son was Rev. J. W. Craig, of Wilmington. She died in February, 1894.

1897 – Sterling F. Craig, of Wilmington, was advertising a farm for sale on August 26, 1897. It was located in Federal Point Township, about 4 miles from Carolina Beach. It contained 103 acres, running from the Cape Fear River to the Atlantic Ocean. About 35 acres was cleared and under cultivation. The ground was adapted to truck farming and the growing of peanuts and potatoes. There were a number of fruit trees and grape vines on the land. There was a five-room dwelling and a kitchen in the rear. To be sold cheap for cash.

1898 – R. E. Craig, of Columbia, S. C., was visiting Wilmington on June 30, 1898. It was his first visit to the city since the Civil War. He remarked that he was stationed near “Sugar Loaf” (also called Camp Wyatt at the time) toward the end of the war as a member of the Second South Carolina Cavalry. He was astonished at the progress of the city and vicinity since those war-time days. (Sugar Loaf was located on Federal Point, north of Fort Fisher.)

1901 – J. B. Brinkley, of Federal Point, was advertising a 27-acre farm for sale. It was known as the old Charles Craig Place. It was good truck farming land and was conveniently located for fishing. It contained apple and peach trees and a lot of grape vines. It also contained a 6-room house and the necessary out-buildings. It was advertised March 23, 1901.

Many members of the Craig family continue to reside in the Myrtle Grove Sound, Federal Point Township.

(From the newspaper files of Bill Reaves, Wilmington, NC, 1997)

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. Thanks to all who have responded promptly! Our renewals are up! Your support of our local preservation efforts with your membership is very important as it is the lifeblood of our organization.

● **Board of Directors Meeting** will be held 9:00 am, January 31, 2005, at the History Center. All Board members are encouraged to attend this important meeting. For more info, please contact John Gordon, Chairman.

● **History Center News!** The History Center is opened every Friday and Saturday, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm, or other times by appointment. If you wish to volunteer, please sign-up at the Monday meeting, or call me at 458-8684. We really need your help. Thanks to our volunteers: Pat Bolander - 7 hours; Jeannie Gordon - 45 hours; Leslie Bright - 38 hours; and Darlene Bright - 31 hours. Our attendance was down this month with only 12 visitors to our Center. Thanks to Lynn Benson, Lois Walton, Pat Bolander, and Mike Blasko for helping with the decorating and setting-up for our Christmas Party.

We have two new books in our Gift Shop – “The Coastal Chronicles, Volume II”, by Jack E. Fryar, Jr. More popular history stories of the coastal Carolinas as seen in Coastal Chronicles magazine. “Scoundrels, Rogues and Heroes of the Old North State”, by Dr. H. G. Jones. Entertaining stories about the heroes and the ne'er-do-wells who make Tar Heel history so colorful. Also, our new Society publication, “Fort Fisher Fortress and Battles, As Recalled by Colonel William Lamb”, will be available soon. Keep a sharp eye out!

● **Fort Fisher News!**

October, 2004 - September, 2005 - Captain Thomas J. Purdie's Uniform, a special exhibit featuring an artillery uniform worn by Confederate Col. Thomas J. Purdie, stationed at Fort Fisher early in the war. Purdie Battery, thought to be named in his honor, was the location of the famous Armstrong Cannon. The uniform, along with his saber, valise and canteen will be on loan from the Averasboro Battlefield Commission. This is an opportunity to see a very rare item!

January 15th & 16th, 2005 – 140th Anniversary of the Capture of Fort Fisher. This will be a large living history program featuring special tours and demonstrations. A battle recreation followed by tours and cannon demonstrations highlight Saturday's event. Our Society will be serving those dee-licious country sausage dogs on Saturday, the 15th – proceeds will go toward supporting the Armstrong Gun Exhibit Fund.

For the latest info about programs at Fort Fisher call (910) 458-5538, or email at fisher@ncmail.net.

● **Attraction NEW 2005 Carolina Coast Dining & Value Guide** is now available! Treat yourself and your friends! This is one of our easiest and best fundraising projects - the books sell themselves. Everyone, please take a few books to sell and make this a successful fundraising experience.

Officers

President - Pat Bolander
Vice-President - John Gordon
Secretary - Darlene Bright
Treasurer - Jeannie Gordon

James Bartley
Leslie Bright
Barbara Hoppe

Directors

Lynn Benson
James Dugan
Beth Keane

Mike Blasko
John Gordon
A. E. "Punky" Kure

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