

Federal Point Historic Preservation Society

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

Newsletter

Volume 12 No. 6

June, 2005

Darlene Bright, editor

June Meeting

The Federal Point Historic Preservation Society will meet, Monday, June 20, 2005, **6:30 PM**, at the Federal Point History Center, 1121-A North Lake Park Blvd., adjacent to Carolina Beach Town Hall, for their annual **“Pot-Luck Supper”**. Everyone is encouraged to come and bring their favorite dish. Also, bring a good appetite, because we always have lots of delicious foods and desserts. Before the dinner, we will be electing Officers and Board Members, so be prepared to vote your choice. A ballot will be prepared, so if you are interested in serving or wish to nominate a willing candidate, contact John Gordon at 458-7880. We will be electing all our Officers and four Board members.

Members and the public are cordially invited. Come, bring a friend!

Last Month

Mr. George Tregembo, his wife, June, and granddaughter, Sherry, of Tregembo Animal Park were featured guests at last month’s meeting, which was attended by approximately 52 members and guests.

The Tregembo family established Toe-Em-In Zoo on property purchased near Monkey Junction, January 5, 1953. This landmark on Highway 421 has housed many animals and has remained open to the public since. The Tregembos told of their many experiences caring for a large variety of animals which have included elephants, lions, hippos, and reptiles.

Message From Your President

Patricia Gray Bolander

Four years has a way of passing very quickly and now the time has come to “change the guard.”

I want to, once more, Thank You All for your support and help throughout the past four years. I am very proud of our accomplishments, but I could not have performed my duties without the membership backing those efforts.

Please, reinforce the PRESERVATION in our Society’s Name into your own lives. Preserving the Past gives Substance and Focus to the Future – the foundation to our children and grandchildren to build on.

Again, my sincere THANKS and deep APPRECIATION for the Society and its Members.

Cape Fear’s “Golden Age of Piracy”

(Extracted from “The History of a Southern State North Carolina”, by Hugh Talmage Lefler and Albert Ray Newsome).

Several of the laws passed in the period following the Indian Wars were designed to stimulate legitimate trade and to check smuggling and piracy, which were so prevalent that the colony acquired an unsavory reputation. As early as 1683 the Lords of Trade complained of the “harboring and encouraging of Pirates in Carolina and other Governments and Proprietys, to the great damage that does arise in his Majesty’s service.” It was charged that Governor Sothel had issued commissions “to Pyrates for rewards,” that Governor Archdale had “sheltered them,” and, years later, that Governor Eden and his secretary, Tobias Knight, shared their ill-gotten booty.

It is not too difficult to explain why smuggling and piracy were so prevalent from 1689 to 1718, and why this period has been called “The Golden Age of Piracy.” And it should be borne in mind that the attitude toward these questionable and illegal practices was different then from that which developed later. English trade laws were extremely unpopular in the colonies, and it was smart, proper, and profitable to evade them. Hence smuggling prevailed almost everywhere. Piracy was not considered an unmitigated evil and many of the pirates were regarded as respectable men and were sheltered and protected by the people. After all, they brought in many highly desirable articles which they usually sold at reasonable prices; they also helped to keep out French and Spanish vessels, and thus enabled England to expand its trade with the colonies. England was involved in wars during a great portion of this period (1689-1697 and 1701-1713), and this tended to stimulate smuggling and to promote privateering on a very large scale. The borderline between privateering and piracy is a slender one, and the “case history” of many a pirate reveals that he began his thieving career in a legal manner as a privateer, and then, when the war ended, he continued to prey upon the commerce of the enemy – as well as upon that of England and the colonies – as a pirate. There were other reasons for piracy: the natural yearning for adventure; the possibility of “getting rich quick”; unemployment and the desire for profitable occupation; and the weakness, inefficiency, and even collusion of port and other officials with these “sea robbers.” The peculiar nature of the North Carolina coast, with its bars of shifting sands and shallow sounds, made it difficult to police, and this affords some explanation of North Carolina’s primacy in piracy.

Stede Bonnet, a man of wealth and education, had retired from the British army and settled in Barbados, where he had a fine home and a good reputation. For some reason he joined Blackbeard’s gang; then separated from him, and went into piracy on his own, with headquarters along the Lower Cape Fear. His ravages against South Carolina shipping were so destructive that Governor Robert Johnson fitted out an expedition, headed by Colonel William Rhett, which came into the mouth of the Cape Fear River, and after a furious five-hour battle, captured Bonnet, who was taken to Charleston, tried, convicted, and hanged on December 10, 1718 along with twenty-nine other pirates. During November and December of that year, no fewer than forty-nine “Carolina pirates” were hanged at Charleston.

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.

Welcome New Members: Joe & Mararuth Capell; Richard & Norma Dean; Lois Patton; Candace McGreevy; and David & Alexis Matthews.

● **History Center News!** The History Center Staff is cooperating with Robin Robertson, student at UNC-W, who is interviewing and doing oral histories of people who have recollections of events in earlier years at Carolina Beach in preparation of her Master’s thesis. When Robin completes her study, a copy of her work will be given to the History Center. This should be a great reference tool for our Research Library.

A meeting between Jerry Parnell and History Center Director, Darlene Bright, sparked new energy into the efforts to publish a **Pictorial History** of Federal Point. Collected materials are being indexed. However, we need your help in rounding up more photographs and printed memorabilia, such as flyers, advertisements, etc. Your **active** participation in collecting materials for copying at the Center would be appreciated. If you have, or know someone who has, collections of photographs, contact me at 458-8684.

Lynn Benson is interested in forming a committee to decorate the History Center for inclusion in the **Island of Lights Christmas Tour**. If you wish to serve, please sign-up at the meeting or call the Center at 458-0502.

Society Members, John Gordon, Pat Bolander, and Leslie and Darlene Bright met with the architect hired by the Town of Carolina Beach, and answered his questions as to what space and special requirements are needed, particular to our Society, in planning the proposed Civic Center that the Town plans to construct on property adjacent to the History Center. If the plan is implemented, a new structure will replace the History Center in Phase II, scheduled to begin in approximately one year.

People looking for information and tickets for our Cape Fear River Cruise to Bald Head Island brought 59 visitors to our Center this past month. Thanks to our volunteers: Pat Bolander – 11 hours; Ron Griffin – 3 hours; Leslie Bright – 6 hours; Darlene Bright – 25 hours; Henriette Weigle – 7 hours; and Jeannie Gordon – 7 hours. The History Center is open every Friday and Saturday, 10:00 am – 4:00 pm, or other times by appointment. We especially need volunteers on Saturdays.

- The Society sponsored a Historic Cruise “guided tour” to Bald Head Island aboard the *Winner Cruise Queen* on May 22, 2005. The tour was conducted by Jack E. Fryar, Jr., John C. Golden, and Leslie Bright. The “sold-out” crowd enjoyed this unique opportunity to experience the rich history of the lower Cape Fear, culminating with a visit to Bald Head Island and the Old Baldy Lighthouse. In addition to our tour guides, we are deeply grateful to everyone who made this event possible, especially the Winner Party Boat Fleet and those Society members who sold tickets. Also, the following businesses who provided gifts for door prizes: Island Tackle & Hardware, Bowman’s At The Beach, A & G Barbecue and Chicken, Big Daddy’s Restaurant, Linda Fashions, Ocean Grill & Tiki Bar, The Cottage Restaurant, and DK Dempster. Our net proceeds was over \$2,000 and will provide funding for continued improvements to the History Center.

- **It’s Budget Time!** All Committee Chairs need to submit their plan and budget requirements to the Treasurer, Jeannie Gordon, (458-7880) for the budget year beginning July 1, 2005, as the Board will be meeting to develop and approve the Budget at their annual meeting in July.

- Our Society participated in this year’s Beach Music Festival on Saturday, June 4th. Thanks to volunteers: Leslie and Darlene Bright, Mike and Pat Blasko, Carol Green, Cheri McNeill, Lance Gurel, DK Dempster, Luana McGuerren, Richard and Nancy Graham, and Paul Slebodnik.

We welcome contributions to the Newsletter. If you have something you would like to share, please call me at 458-8684.

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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