

Federal Point Historic Preservation Society

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

Newsletter

Volume 12 No. 3

March, 2005

Darlene Bright, editor

March Meeting

The Federal Point Historic Preservation Society will hold its regular monthly meeting, Monday, March 21, 2005, 7:30 PM, at the Federal Point History Center, 1121-A North Lake Park Blvd., adjacent to the Carolina Beach Town Hall.

Mr. Marvin Nicholson of Galivants Ferry, SC, will speak on "Blacks in the Confederate Military". Mr. Nicholson, an educator and obvious history enthusiast, has been active since 1994 in Civil War reenactments throughout North Carolina and South Carolina. He portrayed William Mack Lee, personal body servant of General Robert E. Lee, at the 135th reenactment of Gettysbury.

Mr. Nicholson is a honorary member of Sons of Confederate Veterans, The General Lewis Armistead Camp in Jacksonville, NC, and Litchfield Camp, Conway, SC.

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

Message From Your President

Patricia Gray Bolander

We are sincerely grateful to James Bartley, Site Manager for Brunswick Town/Fort Anderson, and Dr. Chris Fonvielle, Historian, local Author, and Professor at UNC-W, for presenting the amazing story of Fort Anderson's Garrison Flag and the remarkable journey that will be in bringing that flag back to Fort Anderson (Brunswick Town Museum). With the support Brunswick Town has given our Society in the past and help from the Site in building our History Center, we can support this endeavor individually and the Society as a whole.

I hope everyone will be over their winter colds and the "BUG" that has been floating around, so you can enjoy St. Patrick's Day along with an early Easter holiday.

Spring needs to hurry up this year!

Browse our gift shop and find a gift for a friend or "TREAT YOURSELF". We still need Docents for The History Center so we can maintain our "OPEN HOURS" on Fridays and Saturdays.

Your continued help is sincerely appreciated.

Sedgeley Hall Club Carolina Beach, N. C. (1897-1910)

Extracted from Wilmington Star Newspaper Articles Collected By Sandy Jackson

On September 8, 1897, W. A. French, Jr., W. L. Smith, R. W. Wallace, John Harper, D. C. Love, H. E. Bonitz, E. Schulken, H. D. Springer, and others, met to organize a beach club at Carolina Beach. Captain John Harper offered a season ticket on his *Steamer Wilmington* to any young lady offering the best name for the club. Captain Harper donated 200 feet of land 200 yards from the "Castle" and a stone's throw from Battery Gatling.

The first Club roster for the clubhouse included J. C. Stevenson, J. M. Stevenson, John J. Fowler, H. J. Gerken, W. A. French, Jr., James Reilly, Dan O'Connor, J. S. Hartsell, Fred Bolles, R. H. Pickett, G. F. Dewy, H. L. Vollers, H. D. Springer, S. J. Springer, Fred Kidder, E. G. Parmele, E. L. Hart, R. W. Wallace, Walter Bergen, Phillip Piatt, E. C. Cohen, M. W. Divine, J. N. Brand, Herbert McClammy, John H. Sweeney, R. S. Collins, Fred Dick, J. W. Yates, A. D. Brown, William L. Smith, H. C. McQueen, V. E. Zoeller, D. McEachern, W. A. Willson, Jr., F. W. Kerchner, Eli Wooten, W. A. French, Sr., F. R. Hawes, John W. Reilly, N. E. Gillican, Louis Skinner, W. H. Howell, D. C. Love, C. W. Yates, C. W. Yates, Jr., J. C. Shepard, Jr., H. E. Bonitz, Benjamin Bell, J. H. W. Bonitz, H. O. McArthur, E. P. Boatwright, J. E. Bunting, H. G. Fennell, W. G. Sale, J. H. Hinson, R. H. Cowan, E. P. Bailey, V. Hall, Alex Campbell, E. Schulken, Charles H. Cooper, T. E. Brown, James Allen, T. W. McBryde, Frank Newsom, T. H. Wright, John M. Wright, Ed Huggins, C. W. Polvogt, J. H. Newberry, S. P. Collier, Jr., C. Martin, R. H. Grant, E. Forshee, R. F. Warren, R. C. Piatt, T. C. James, William Dodson, W. A. Dick, W. H. Yopp, James H. Cowan, and T. W. Clawson.

Miss H. M. Whitaker won the contest with the name "Atlantic", however, during a meeting on the eve of January 6, 1898, the name was changed to "Sedgeley Hall" after the grandest colonial residence of the Cape Fear, "Sedgeley Abbey", located approximately two miles north of Carolina Beach near Telfair Creek. Said residence's south wing stood at the head of an avenue of oaks until about 1875.

The Club's Charter was granted February 12, 1898. Henry E. Bonitz, Architect, and Messrs. Stout and Tyler, contractors of Wilmington, started building Sedgely Hall on March 2, 1898. The *Steamer Wilmington* brought 12 competent carpenters and towed a barge of lumber for its building. The Club was opened to the public on May 28, 1898.

Hanover Transit Company extended their railroad with 10 pieces of railroad iron to the Sedgeley Hall Clubhouse. *Steamer Wilmington* owned by Captain John Harper, made 3 trips down river from Wilmington to the railroad terminus at Doctor's Point where passengers completed their trip to Sedgeley Hall on the "Shoo Fly" train. A round trip ticket was 35 cents.

The public, according to announcement up to 5:30 o'clock, had ample opportunities for inspection. Everybody took advantage of the opportunity too, and roamed through the building to heart's content. They could not but be pleased with it. Painted a light olive with maroon and dark olive trimmings and Indian red roof, it harmonized charmingly with the surroundings and looked just as cool and airy as one could wish. The first thing after the color that was noticed was the great amount of varandah space. Here was room a plenty to sit and drink in the bracing breezes from old ocean. No fear of being crowded, for you had 240 running feet of verandah, 12 feet wide. This was on the first story; the second story had the same. Entering the building you were in the auditorium or dance hall. This was 30 by 40 feet in dimensions. Over it was a swinging balcony of 140 running feet and with six feet width from which spectators could look at the dancers without being in the way, Sedgeley Hall Club being the second in the state to adopt this exceedingly convenient arrangement. On the south side of the auditorium was a ladies' parlor, 15 by 22 feet, and lunch room 13 by 14 feet. On the northern end were located two gentlemen's apartments for smoking, lounging, etc., with the same dimensions as those on the south end. There were also conveniently arranged lavatories and the club was excellently equipped with improved plumbing and drainage. A broad flight of stairs led up to the second floor where there were four roomy apartments which could be used as bedrooms or lounging rooms for ladies or gentlemen. All parts of the building were abundantly supplied with chairs and hammocks and other arrangements for comfort and recreation. There were two octagonal bath houses on the west side of the clubhouse. One was for ladies and one for gentlemen, and both had shower baths attached. Fully 350 feet of gangways were suitably placed around the clubhouse. Mr. Dan W. Galloway, the custodian, was clever and obliging and an expert swimmer – bathers need not fear when he was around. Thus it would be seen that those who went down to inspect had every reason to be satisfied and to congratulate the architect, Mr. H. E. Bonitz; the contractor, Mr. T. F. Tyler, and the energetic president and secretary, Mr. W. A. French, Jr., and Mr. W. A. Willson, Jr., all of whom, with the Executive Committee, had worked faithfully for the completion of the Club.

Sedgeley Hall Club remained a grand attraction for the beach goers and dance enthusiasts during the summers of 1898 and 1899, in spite of threats by several storms. On October 30, 1899, a severe storm, which destroyed almost all of the cottages on Carolina Beach, knocked Sedgeley Hall from its foundation and floated it back approximately 20 feet while damaging most of the piazzas.

On December 29, 1900, Sedgeley Hall property was sold to Andrew Smith for \$1,000.00 at public auction. What happened to Sedgeley Hall Club after the sale remains sketchy at best. The following advertisement appeared in the Wilmington Star News, July 6 – August 12, 1902:

“Club For Rent. Advertisement – For Rent. Sedgeley Hall at Carolina Beach. Suitable for a family, fishing, or marooning parties. Apply to D. O’Connor, Real Estate Agent, Wilmington, N. C.”

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.

● **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 - 4 hours; Jeannie Gordon - 4 hours; Leslie Bright - 20 hours; and Darlene Bright - 40 hours. Even though we have not been open every Friday and Saturday, due in part to the weather, and lack of volunteers, we had 27 visitors to our Center this month. Numerous inquiries from folks wanting information about Carolina Beach Inlet, the Snow’s Cut Bridge, Jubilee Park, Carolina Beach History, and in particular, the Boardwalk and the Bame Hotel, have kept us busy.

We participated in “Be A Tourist In Your Own Hometown”, on Sunday, March 6th, which boosted our attendance. Thanks to our volunteers, Pat Bolander, and Leslie & Darlene Bright for helping with this event.

Leslie spent some time this month working on our permanent sign out front. It is now ready for the logo and lettering.

Henriette Wiegler hasn’t been at her home in Carolina Beach a lot lately, but that hasn’t stopped her from developing a Library Catalogue, and working on ideas for getting our Library organized. Thanks, Henriette!

● We will be selling the **2005 Carolina Coast Dining & Value Guide** until April 1st. Get your copy while they last!

● **Federal Point History Center** is now listed in Insider Guides’ community calendar on the web. Go to www.insiderinfo.us, click on the map for Wilmington, scroll thru the calendar.

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

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Mike Blasko
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