

Federal Point Historic Preservation Society

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

Newsletter

Volume 12 No. 11

November, 2005

Darlene Bright, editor

November Meeting

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

Special guest, Mr. Harry Willard Clough, will share his military experiences as a US Marine between 1929 and 1956. Mr. Clough, born April 15, 1910, in Michigan, entered the US Marine Corps in 1929 and traveled throughout the world, including China, Camp Lejeune, NC, and the Pacific Islands. He was present and survived the attack on Pearl Harbour, Hawaii, during World War II.

Mr. Clough, retired, but still active, lives with his wife, Eleanor, in lower New Hanover County, North Carolina, since 1956, with four children.

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

Last Month

Mrs. Elaine Henson, member and Carolina Beach history enthusiast, with the assistance of Mrs. Beverly Tetterton of the New Hanover County Library, presented a fascinating power point history of Carolina Beach, illustrated with a vast collection of postcards collected by Elaine. The program, Part 1 of 2, was one of our best yet, attracting more than 50 members and guests. Look for Part 2 in the coming year.

We thank Elaine and Beverly for doing an outstanding job. The program was filmed and may be viewed on VCR at the Federal Point History Center.

Message From Your President

By Judy Rhudy Thompson

I am elated with the success of our BBQ Fundraiser. I regret my work prevented me from helping out, however, the BBQ plate my husband, Danny, brought me was the best yet! We all appreciate the efforts of those of you who helped to make this fundraising event both fun and successful. It is a pleasure to be part of an organization with people who care about our Society and promoting the history of Federal Point. Let's make the coming year even more successful. Spread the word to all your friends and let's strive to make our accomplishments ever greater. And don't forget, we have unfilled committee positions. Ask your officers if you wish to become more involved. We really need YOU!

North Carolina, Reluctant Confederate, Part 2

(Extracted From "North Carolina" by H. T. Lefler and A. R. Newsome, UNC Press)

Governor Vance said "North Carolina is badly treated. She is ignored. She has no voice in the Cabinet. She is raked for conscripts as with a fine tooth comb. Her troops are always placed in the forefront of the hottest battles. Her sick and wounded are scattered through every hospital in Richmond, and are treated by physicians appointed from other states. A large portion of her people are suspected of being disloyal. The people of North Carolina are long suffering; but Mr. Davis would do well to bear in mind that it is the last straw that breaks the camel's back...North Carolina must be the equal of the other states of the Confederacy, or she will leave it, and endeavor to take care of herself."

Vance insisted that all persons employed by the state, even the most minor officials as well as workers in factories, were necessary to the operation of the state government and therefore exempt from Confederate conscription. He thus secured the exemption of several thousand North Carolinians from military service.

Confederate authorities held that conscript officers should judge as to whether an individual was subject to conscription. Vance declared that this was the function of the North Carolina courts, and he refused to interfere with the work of “that coordinate branch of the government which intrudes upon nobody, usurps no authority, but is, on the contrary, in great danger of being overlapped and destroyed by the tendencies of the times.” Twice he issued orders to militia officers forbidding them to arrest “any man as a conscript who had been discharged by a writ of habeas corpus issued by any judge of competent jurisdiction.”

As the war dragged on year after year with increasing suffering and death and with diminishing prospect of Southern victory, a numbing war weariness settled upon the people, many of whom longed for an end of the “mistaken, destructive, and futile conflict” which was being fought “chiefly by the common people to preserve the slave property of the wealthy few.” Some 23,000 soldiers and 423 North Carolina officers deserted the army. Many reasons existed for desertion: strong Union sentiment, especially in the mountain area; resentment at the Confederate Conscription Acts; long absence of soldiers from home; the unsatisfactory furlough policy of the army; appeals from home and the desire to return to suffering wives, children, and other loved ones; and, above all, the feeling of futility. Many of the deserters were not disloyal at heart; they were “simply fathers gone mad.” Regardless of the causes, civilian indifference and non-cooperation became widespread. Vance’s eloquent appeals and even his use of the militia were ineffectual in stopping desertion, though some 8,000 North Carolina deserters did return to the service. Whole neighborhoods in “deserter country” were terrorized by deserters, “buffaloes,” and bushwhackers.” Proximity to the Virginia battleground and the suitability of the eastern swamps and western mountains as hiding places made North Carolina a haven for deserters from the Confederate armies – and, to a lesser degree, from the Union armies. North Carolina led the Confederacy in the total number of deserters, but it also led in the number “returned from desertion.” And its proportion of deserters was about that of the general average for both Northern and Southern armies – around one-fifth.

Only a terrible war could have transformed the prosperous and progressive North Carolina of 1860 into the divided, defeated, and exhausted North Carolina of 1865. More than 40,000 of its strongest men, ranging in age from sixteen to sixty, lost their lives, slightly more from disease than from battle. Thousands who returned were handicapped for life by the loss of arm, leg, eye, or by other injuries. War conditions also took their toll of civilian deaths, and untold thousands of soldiers and civilians were impaired in strength and health by disease, worry, hard work, and scarcity of food, clothing, and medicine.

The war was likewise a ruthless destroyer of economic resources. The armies of the United States destroyed and carried off millions of dollars worth of property. Railroads, factories, public buildings, bridges, roads, churches, schoolhouses, private homes and barns were destroyed or in need of repair. A capital investment of over \$200,000,000 was wiped out by the abolition of slavery – what Charles A. Beard called “the most stupendous act of sequestration in the history of Anglo-Saxon jurisprudence.” Millions of dollars in revenue from local, state, and Confederate taxes went for war expenditures and the care of the needy. Citizens, banks, the Literary Fund, the University of North Carolina, colleges, and other institutions, which had loaned money to the state and Confederate governments faced bankruptcy because Confederate bonds were worthless and state bonds had depreciated greatly in value and might be repudiated. With Confederate and state currency worthless, few people had any cash or credit facilities. Many stores, newspapers, academies, colleges, factories, and banks had closed. The defeat of the Confederacy threatened the collapse of all banks, colleges, the University, the state public school system, and other institutions and businesses. Thousands of citizens were reduced from affluence to poverty. The war had “bled North Carolina white.”

Tired, maimed, hungry, penniless soldiers straggled home to find cattle and stock gone, barns and cribs and smokehouses empty, clothes worn out, farms run down, and buildings, fences, and tools in bad repair. With little but their land, labor, and the memory of defeat, these soldiers and their families courageously went to work to wrest a meager living from the soil and to rebuild their fortunes and their state.

Society Notes

Support our Business Members!

A & G Barbeque and Chicken
Bank of America
Branch Banking & Trust Company
Britt's Donut Shop
The Cottage Restaurant
Friends of Brunswick Town
Fort Fisher Restoration Committee
Got-Em-On-Live Bait Club
Hanover Iron Works, Inc.
Historical Society of Topsail Island
Laney Real Estate Company
Dr. Vincent Smith, DDS
Taylor's Heating & Air, Inc.
Tucker Brothers Realty Company

● **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.

● The Society's **Annual BBQ Fundraiser** was held on Saturday, October 29th. We were blessed with a beautiful, sunny day. We served over 200 plates of delicious BBQ with all the trimmings. Thanks so much to Bowman's Seafood Restaurant, Gary & Kendal Doetsch, and Bill & Birdie Clark for their generous donations of hushpuppies, slaw, and beans. And we cannot forget the wide variety of baked goods, which were a big hit, donated by Society members! We appreciate all the volunteers, who helped out: Chris Bell, Carol Green, DK

Dempster, Paul Slebodnik, Lois Patton, Don & Donna Godkey, Pat Bolander, Cheri McNeill, Leslie & Darlene Bright, John Gordon, John Nelms, Jim Dugan, and especially, Robert Bright, of Jacksonville, and Gerald Bright, of Morehead City, who came and helped their brother with the pig. Approximately 75 people, some new to the area, took advantage of the opportunity to visit the History Center and view the exhibits. Many accolades were received.

● **History Center News!** In addition to 58 members and guests who came for the program, and visitors during the BBQ event, we had 34 visitors to our Center this past month. Thanks to our volunteers: Jeannie Gordon – 6 hours; Darlene Bright – 30 hours; and Leslie Bright – 8 hours. D. K., Pat, and Cindy shared 46 hours working at the Center. Thanks to Charlie Grissom for donating a copy of the history and genealogy of "Burrows-Burriss-Newton and Allied Families, Volume 1, 1611 – 1974," compiled by James Henry Burriss, III. The History Center is open every Friday and Saturday, 10:00 am – 4:00 pm, or other times by appointment. Helping hands are always needed to work in doing inventory and indexing files, photos, and other materials. If you can spare an hour or two, please let us know.

● We still have copies of the **2006 Attactions Dining and Value Guide For Sale!** What a Deal! Save money while supporting your local History Society! Only \$25.

● **Clean-Up at the Newton Cemetery!** Was held on Saturday, November 5th. Thanks so much to volunteers: John & Jeannie Gordon, Pat Bolander, Sylvia Snook, Ron & Frances Griffin, and Roy & Joyce Brewer (Joyce is with the Fort Fisher Chapter of the UDC).

● **Candlelight Tour!** The Lower Cape Fear Historical Society at the Latimer House is sponsoring the 32nd annual Old Wilmington by Candlelight Tour. It will be Saturday, December 2nd from 4-8 pm and Sunday, December 3rd from 2-6 pm. LCFHS is looking for individuals or couples who can serve as docents. The shifts are 2 hours each. Please call Elaine Henson at 763-8056 if you can help.

● **First Annual Enchanted Airlie!** Every Friday and Saturday night from November 25th to December 7th, 5-9 pm, Airlie Gardens will be transformed into “Enchanted Airlie”. It will be alive with holiday lights and festivities for the whole family. There will be a model train display, Santa, a gift shop, food and beverages, performances all with a holiday lights show to dazzle all ages. They need many volunteers to make this possible. Call Susan Hickman at 763-1900 if you can help.

Officers

President – Judy Thompson
Vice-President - John Gordon
Secretary - Darlene Bright
Treasurer - Jeannie Gordon

Lynn Benson
James Dugan
Ron Griffin

Directors

Mike Blasko
Ray Flowers
Jay Hockenbury

Leslie Bright
John Gordon
Cheri McNeill

Federal Point Historic Preservation Society
P. O. Box 623
Carolina Beach, NC 28428