

# Federal Point Historic Preservation Society

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

## *Newsletter*

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Darlene Bright, editor

### **April Meeting**

The Federal Point Historic Preservation Society will hold its regular monthly meeting on Monday, April 16, 2007, 7:30 PM, at the Federal Point History Center, 1121-A North Lake Park Blvd., adjacent to Carolina Beach Town Hall.

Our own Mr. Ron Griffin will speak on Genealogy and how DNA may be used as a tool in its research. Ron has been involved in Genealogy over 20 years and is very knowledgeable on the subject.

Originally from New Jersey, Ron graduated from Rutgers University and Mass. Institute of Technology. He and his wife, Frances, and family spent many years in Silver Springs, Maryland, during his career as an aerospace engineer.

If you are interested in how to trace your ancestors, you won't want to miss this one. You'll never have to ask, **"Who's your Daddy?!"**

Members and the general public are invited to attend. Refreshments are served following the meeting.

### **Last Month**

Ms. Becky Sawyer of the Fort Fisher Museum and formerly employed at Bentonville Civil War Battleground for nine years, addressed an audience of approximately 35 members and guests. She spoke on "The Battle of Bentonville," the largest and final Civil War military event in North Carolina. Ms. Sawyer revealed the military strategy of both sides, and the struggle and valiant resistance by the Confederates (many from the recently occupied lower Cape Fear) in spite of being heavily outnumbered.

Becky is exceedingly knowledgeable in Civil War history and will certainly contribute to the preservation of history at historic Fort Fisher.

### **Message From Your President**

**Judy Rhudy Thompson**

Happy days are here again with all the beautiful weather lately and more to come this summer! Now is a good time to get outside and visit some of our many area historic sites.

Don't forget our historic cruise to Bald Head Island on May 20. This one could be the best one yet with Jack Fryar, John Golden, and Leslie Bright pointing out more than 50 historic features between Carolina Beach and Bald Head Island. I can't wait to sink my teeth into a delicious BBQ sandwich and listen to John Golden's music on the return trip. Get your tickets while they last and bring it with you signed so you may win a door prize.

The Kure Beach 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration, which began Saturday, March 31<sup>st</sup>, was a glorious occasion. The parade, food, crafts, fireworks, and music were wonderful. My favorite was the Federal Point Historic Preservation Society's display. I am so proud of our volunteers who prepared the bi-fold with pictures depicting the history of Kure Beach. Also, I appreciate all the hard work of those who pushed to get the Kure Beach brochure ready for the event, and all the others who took time out to man the display.

We are also happy to have Ron Griffin come and talk about genealogy this month. I never realized DNA might play a part.

I look forward to seeing you April 16<sup>th</sup>.

**Cape Fear River – Bald Head Island Historic Cruise**  
**Sunday, May 20, 2007**  
**1 to 6 pm**

The Federal Point Historic Preservation Society will hold a LOWER CAPE FEAR RIVER HISTORIC CRUISE on Sunday, May 20, from 1 to 6 pm, featuring a one-hour visit to the “Old Baldy” lighthouse and the Bald Head Island Museum.

The guided tour and entertainment, on board the *Winner Cruise Queen*, will feature historians, John Golden, portraying Blockade Runner Captain Roberts, Jack E. Fryar, Jr., author of “A Guide to Wilmington & The Lower Cape Fear,” and the “Coastal Chronicles” series, and Leslie Bright, retired from the Underwater Archaeology Unit at Fort Fisher.

Over fifty historic sites from Carolina Beach Marina, through the Intracoastal Waterway, and down the Cape Fear River will be identified. Bald Head Lighthouse, completed in 1817, is the oldest lighthouse structure standing on the North Carolina coast. Refreshments will be provided on the return trip.

Tickets are \$30 and may be purchased at the Federal Point History Center, adjacent to Carolina Beach Town Hall, on Fridays and Saturdays, 10 – 4 pm, or by calling 458-8684, 458-0502. Please leave a message.

**Submerged Secrets in the Cape Fear Region**

**Extracted from a Pamphlet by the North Carolina Underwater Archaeology Program**

**April 1981**

For over four centuries the sandy capes of North Carolina’s Outer Banks have exacted a heavy toll from mariners skirting the east coast of North America. From the beginning of European exploration in the Western Hemisphere this thin line of barrier islands has presented a serious threat to navigation. Stretching eastward into the Atlantic, the Outer Banks form a series of treacherous capes, shoals, and inlets along the western periphery of the cold Labrador and warm Gulf Stream currents.

Hatteras, northern-most of the three Carolina capes, extends shoalwater seaward into the vicinity of the frequently turbulent junction of these currents. There, strong compass-deflecting natural magnetic anomalies, and environmental conditions which support the development of sudden and destructive storms combine with shoals and currents to form a natural and effective trap for unwary vessels. While Cape Hatteras and Diamond Shoals have come to symbolize this “Graveyard of the Atlantic”, the names of the southern capes, Lookout and Fear, testify that they have commanded no less respect. By the third quarter of the sixteenth century, the Carolina coast had become a justifiably prominent feature on charts of the New World.

Historical records indicate that the first vessels of European origin came to grief along the North Carolina coast early in the sixteenth century. Perhaps the first of these was a vessel from the colonizing expedition organized by Lucas Vasques de Ayllon. With five hundred colonists and several ships, de Ayllon had set out from the island of Hispaniola in 1526. Their destination was a large and fertile river valley on the southeastern coast of North America that explorers in de Ayllon’s service had discovered in June 1521. Instead of making the desired landfall, de Ayllon’s ships were carried north along the coast until they made land in the vicinity of Latitude 33 degrees 40 minutes North. Here the expedition discovered a second large river which de Ayllon named Jordan. In attempting to navigate shoal water at the mouth of the river, one of the vessels of the expedition grounded and was rapidly beaten to pieces. Although de Ayllon abandoned his attempt to settle along what was probably the Cape Fear River, he remained in the area long enough to construct a replacement for the lost ship.

Since the loss of de Ayllon’s ship, thousands of vessels have been lost in North Carolina waters. While historical research has confirmed more than two thousand of these, there are doubtlessly hundreds more for which there are no records aside from the vessels’ remains. The remains of these ships and their cargoes provide North Carolina with an immensely valuable repository of historical and cultural information. Shipwrecks in North Carolina waters preserve extensive information about the development of marine and naval architecture from the beginning of the sixteenth century. As the shipwrights who constructed these vessels were

generally illiterate and worked with designs and skills passed orally from generation to generation, they left few records of their work save the remains of the ship themselves. Those records which were kept and did survive are generally of the most rudimentary nature. Aside from the documentaiton of warships and prize vessels, there are few records of ships' construction until the twentieth century. This is particularly true for the vessels which were built in the southeastern United States.

In addition to the remains of the vessels themselves, these shipwreck sites preserve extensive collections of artifacts which tell us frequently lost details of the development of both prehistoric and western culture in this hemisphere. The cargoes of lost ships record details of trade between expanding colonies, aboriginal populations, and the mother nations of Europe. These same remains provide insights into the social structures of both Europe and the New World. As a reflection of their cultural origins, shipwreck remains and their associated artifacts trace the transitions in our development. By their very numbers and types they identify routes of transporation, trade, and warfare.

## Society Notes

● **Membership Information:** We are pleased to welcome several new members this month: **Brenda Coffey** and **Doris Eakes** of Kure Beach, **Captain David Carl "Skippy" Winner** of Carolina Beach, and **Snow's Cut Monthly Magazine**, our newest business member. **Renewal Notices** are being sent on the anniversary of your joining the Society. We appreciate your prompt payment, saving the Society the expense of additional postage to send out a reminder. As dues invoices are mailed, we will be requesting an update of your personal information (address, phone, email address, etc). When you receive your next invoice, please take the time to verify your data and return the information form with your check.

### Support our Business Members!

A & G Barbeque and Chicken  
Austin & Son Garage, Inc.  
BB&T  
Bank of America  
Britt's Donut Shop  
Coastal K-9 Bakery, Inc.  
Fort Fisher Restoration Committee  
Friends of Brunswick Town  
Got-Em-On-Live Bait Club  
Hanover Iron Works, Inc.  
Historical Society of Topsail Island  
Laney Real Estate Company  
Pleasure Island Chamber of Commerce  
Dr. Vincent Smith, DDS  
*Snow's Cut Monthly Magazine*  
Taylor's Heating & Air, Inc.  
Tucker Bros. Realty Company

● **Newsletters:** If you wish to **receive** your FPHPS newsletter electronically, please send an email request to [fphps@yahoo.com](mailto:fphps@yahoo.com). To ensure that your message is not overlooked, please put the word **"NEWSLETTER"** in the subject line. **Thanks, Jeannie Gordon, Membership and Treasurer.**

● **Oral Histories:** Over the last several months, Ann and Jeannie have been pleased to record wonderful interviews with **Mike Robertson, Glenn Flowers, Ed Niedens and Ruby Klutz Beavers**. We appreciate referrals of individuals who can provide details about our island's history; and we are always on the hunt for photographs!! Hope everyone enjoyed the article in *Snow's Cut Monthly* on Kure Beach's 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration; the quotes ahat were provided came from our committee!

● **History Center News!** The History Center is now open on Fridays and Saturdays, 10:00 am – 4:00 pm, or other times by appointment. Thanks so much to our volunteers: Jeannie Gordon, Leslie & Darlene Bright, Ron Griffin, Lois Patton,, Pat Bolander, and Judy Thompson, who welcomed 23 visitors.

We are in desperate need of volunteers, especially on Saturdays. If you have some time that you can spare on any Friday or Saturday, please call 458-0502 – leave a message. We need you!

**Officers**

President – Judy Thompson  
Vice-President - John Gordon  
Secretary – Ann Hertzler  
Treasurer - Jeannie Gordon

**Directors**

Pat Bolander  
Donna Godkey  
Ron Griffin

James Dugan  
John Gordon  
Jay Hockenbury

Ray Flowers  
Richard Graham  
Sylvia Snook

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