



Federal Point Historic Preservation Society

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

Newsletter

Volume 14 No. 12

December, 2007

Darlene Bright, editor

December Meeting Annual Christmas Party

In lieu of its regular monthly meeting, the Federal Point Historic Preservation Society will have its regular annual Christmas Party on **Monday, December 17, at 6:30 pm, at the Federal Point History Center, 1121-A North Lake Park Blvd., adjacent to Carolina Beach Town Hall.** Members and the general public are cordially invited.

Come prepared for a good time! Bring your favorite covered dish and invite your friends (prospective members.) Mrs Deborah Hockenbury will lead the entertainment including games, songs, stories, and a very special reindeer (Judge Rudolph.) John Golden will be appearing with his bag of Christmas music.

Last Month

Celebrated author, accomplished photographer, outstanding graphic design artist, esteemed college professor, avid nature lover, successful body builder, and all-around very nice guy, Danniell Norris, introduced Volume II of his brand new book, "Carolina Beach, NC, Friends and Neighbors Remembered " Daniel spoke about the book and showed many of the pictures included. Unfortunately his entire shipment of books got waylaid in customs so he had none to sign. Thankfully the books have now arrived and the History Center now has plenty of copies. Daniel plans to be at the December 17 meeting to sign copies for everyone.

Birth of the United States Constitution

By Leslie S. Bright

Referencing "American Political and Social History", By Harold Underwood Faulkner, 1937.

Part 1 of 2

As the American colonies were developed, people from every economic, religious, political and cultural status, from many geographic settings came to America seeking greater opportunities. Understandably, many were able to step out of their former class, dictated by aristocracies, and now achieve a greater independence on them. As time passed, these independent thinkers, pursuing various occupations, began to feel new pressures from the mother country, England, through excessive tariffs and taxations levied upon them, and unwanted legislation.

England expected the colonies to provide troops and funding for waging war with Spain and France with no consideration for the colonies' problems at home. Much resentment occurred and the various colonies' elected officials began protesting. Resentments and stronger feelings that the colonies should govern themselves and control their own destiny resulted in the American Revolution and war with Great Britain.

The hard fought war, with the aid of France, and other factors unfavorable to Great Britain, resulted in colonial independence.

The original 13 colonies had joined together to defeat one of the most powerful nations in the world. Except for the Declaration of Independence and the Continental Congress acting as a central committee, each sovereign colony or state now stood alone.

"The necessity of a stronger union was obvious and a committee of the Congress, of which John Dickinson was the leading spirit, drafted the Articles of Confederation. In the enthusiasm following Burgoyne's

surrender, these articles were submitted to the states, and by the midsummer of 1778 ten had ratified. Maryland, the last state to ratify, withheld her consent until March 1, 1781, so that the Articles of Confederation did not go into effect until that year.”

While the Articles of Confederation solved many problems and made contributions toward national unity, it did not confer upon Congress power to tax or regulate commerce and did not set up a national judiciary. It did give power to declare war, borrow money, administer Indian affairs, and the post office, regulate the value of metallic coins, fix the standard of weights and measures, and settle certain disputes between the states.

“Important as were the Articles of Confederation in our constitutional history, they failed to provide the strong cohesive force necessary for the growth of national unity. The states, as the years went by, seemed to be drifting apart.” As this feeling grew among a minority of leaders, it was inevitable that further efforts should be made to strengthen the Union. After several attempts to get all the states’ delegates together, Alexander Hamilton called for another “convention to meet in Philadelphia in May, 1787, to consider ‘the situation of the United States, to devise such further provisions as shall appear to them necessary to render the constitution of the federal government adequate to the exigencies of the Union.’ Congress issued the call, being careful to restrict the business of the convention to the ‘sole and express purpose of revising the Articles of Confederation,’ and providing that the finished work be reported to Congress and accepted by the legislatures of the states.

That the advocates of a stronger central government were alert to the opportunity is evidenced by the quickness with which all the states but Rhode Island appointed these delegates. Of the sixty-two delegates appointed, fifty-five attended the sessions and thirty-nine signed the final draft. It was a distinguished group, representing, as it did, many of the ablest leaders of the states. From Virginia came George Mason; Edmund Randolph, the governor; James Madison, “Father of the Constitution”; and George Washington, who was to preside over the sessions. New York sent Alexander Hamilton; Delaware, the constitutional lawyer, John Dickinson; New Jersey, the able William Paterson; Connecticut, Roger Sherman and Oliver Ellsworth; Massachusetts, Rufus King and Elbridge Gerry; South Carolina, John Rutledge and the two Pinckneys. Second to none was the delegation from Pennsylvania, including the many-sided Franklin, the distinguished Jurist, James Wilson, the brilliant Gouverneur Morris, and the able financier, Robert Morris. Among them were many who had played an important part in the revolutionary movement and were destined for distinguished places in the future government. Able and distinguished the group undoubtedly was, it was also conservative. It represented the right wing of the revolutionary movement and was composed, says one historian, ‘of practical men of affairs – holders of state and continental bonds, money lenders, merchants, lawyers, speculators in the public land – who could speak with knowledge and feeling about the disabilities they had suffered under the Articles of Confederation.’ Of those in attendance, more than half were either investors or speculators in public securities. Virtually all represented the privileged and wealthy classes; the common man was without a hearing. Notably absent were minister at Paris; Thomas Paine was deep in the revolutionary movement in Europe; Patrick Henry refused to attend because, as he said, he ‘smelt a rat’; and Samuel Adams was not elected.”

Holiday Tales for the Child in all of us By Rebecca Taylor

Isn’t it wonderful how the holiday season brings out the child in all of us? Here are some special holiday stories with a clear connection to North Carolina that everyone in the family, young and old, will enjoy.

Just off the press is *THE SHELTERING CEDAR* a delightfully simple picture book written and illustrated by Anne Marshall Runyon. Set on a wintry Ocracoke Island Christmas Eve it tells the story of nature’s interdependence. During a fierce Nor’easter a low growing Southern red cedar provides refuge for birds and beetles, Mantids and toads. Bright watercolors do a wonderful job of capturing the colors of a winter beach and one can almost smell the sharp cedar fragrance. This is a story of a very different kind of Christmas tree.

SHELTERING CEDAR, published by Portal Press, is just out, in fact it has a 2008 copyright date. But it is currently available from amazon.com (no discount) and barnesandnoble.com (20% discount) or ask one of our local bookstores to order it.

Set closer to home is IRENE JENNIE AND THE CHRISTMAS MASQUERADE by Irene Smalls and illustrated by Melodye Rosales. Christmas was a time of celebration even in the slave quarters in coastal North Carolina. The *Johnkankus*, a tradition brought from West Africa by way of the West Indies by the slaves was a cross between the European traditions of caroling and New Years Eve masquerade. The exhilarating musical parade featured bright costumes and wild animal masks as well as both drumming and singing as it wound through both the slave quarters and the plantation houses creating holiday joy for everyone, master and slave alike.

Be sure not to skip the author's note, which provides considerable detail into the historical origins of this little known bit of local heritage. Published by Little Brown in 1996, it is currently out-of-print but both amazon.com and barnesandnoble.com list a number of used copies in nearly new condition.

The North Carolina connection to my very favorite Christmas story of all time is though its author William Sydney Porter who was born and grew up in Greensboro and is buried in Asheville. Known better by his pen name, O Henry, the author wrote hundreds of stories known primarily for a twist in the ending. Among his most famous stories GIFT OF THE MAJI is found in many Christmas story anthologies. A number of standalone editions have also been published including a winsomely evocative 2006 version illustrated by Lisbeth Zwerger and published by Simon and Schuster.

"One dollar and eighty-seven cents" was all Della had with which to buy her new husband the perfect Christmas gift. This simple story of small and large sacrifices made for love says much to members of our modern "consumer" culture. Take time to share this wonderfully though provoking story with your family circle during a lull in your frantic holiday hustle.

Society Notes

Support our Business Members!

BB&T
Bank of America
Britt's Donut Shop
Coastal K-9 Bakery, Inc.
Fort Fisher Restoration Committee
Frank's Pizza
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Got-Em-On-Live Bait Club
Hanover Iron Works, Inc.
Historical Society of Topsail Island
Island Florals by Roxanne
Island Gazette
Island True Value Tackle and Hardware
Laney Real Estate Company
B. Parker Protective & Lock
Pleasure Island Chamber of Commerce
Pleasure Island Fresh Market
Dr. Vincent Smith, DDS
Snow's Cut Monthly Magazine
Taylor's Heating & Air, Inc.
Tucker Bros. Realty Company
Zorba's Steak & Seafood

- **Membership Information:** Debbie Price, Chairperson. So far this month we've received TWO holiday gift memberships. (But won't reveal the names until after the gift giving season.) Don't forget, a gift membership means they'll be reminded of your thoughtfulness every time our monthly newsletter arrives. *Our current count is 214 personal members, and 23 business members.*

- **Newsletters:** If you wish to **receive** your FPHPS newsletter electronically, please send an email request to fpfps@yahoo.com. To ensure that your message is not overlooked, please put the word "NEWSLETTER" in the subject line.

- **History Center News!** *A huge thanks to Thomas Grey, one of our new members, for donating 25 vintage postcards to our collection. With Elaine Henson's expertise and help we will use them to establish a special postcard collection in our archives.*

In November, our volunteers at the History Center included; **Jeannie Gordon, Lois Taylor, Ron Griffin and Pat Bolander.** They helped a total of 32 visitors to the Center.

Don't forget the **Attractions Coupon Books**, they make nice Christmas gifts! Also, we have plenty of Elaine Henson's POSTCARD HISTORY OF CAROLINA BEACH and Daniel Norris's CAROLINA BEACH, NC: FRIENDS AND

NEIGHBORS REMEMBERED VOL # 2 now available in the gift shop. Call or leave a message on the center phone, 458.0502 and we'll set copies of either aside for you. Daniel will be signing at the December 17th meeting!

A special thanks to the **Town of Carolina Beach** for their donation of \$3,000 and the **Town of Kure Beach** for their donation of \$1,700. These funds help meet basic operating expenses and for the development of our reference library, oral history interviews, and other projects and programs to connect us to the community.

● **Winter Jazz at Cape Fear Museum.** Live music every month, 6 until 8pm! December 7-Jack Krupicka & Julie Rehder; January 4-Sea Pans; February 8-Grenaldo Frazier; March 7-L. J. Johnson Quartet; April 4-The Riverside 8 with Laura McFayden. Free for Museum members; \$5/person for nonmembers. Bring friends and food for an evening of jazz!

Officers

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Vice-President – Cheri McNeill
Secretary – Lois Taylor
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